

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
JANUARY 2015 FAIRFAX GENERAL DISTRICT COURT JUDICIAL SCREENING

JENNA K. SANDS

Ms. Sands graduated from Lindenwood College in St. Charles, Missouri with a Bachelor of Arts in 1997. She earned her Juris Doctorate from Washington and Lee University School of Law in 2000 and was admitted to practice law in the Commonwealth of Virginia that same year. She is married with two children and lives in Fairfax, Virginia.

EXPERIENCE AND LEGAL ABILITY

Ms. Sands served as a law clerk to the Honorable Judge Thomas H. Wood and Judge Humes Franklin from 2000 to 2001. She then clerked for the Honorable Judge Rossie Alston Jr. until 2002. Ms. Sands served as an Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney from 2003 until 2006. She also worked as an associate with the law firm of Phillips, Beckwith, Hall, and Chase. In 2009, she established the law firm of Hamilton, Petrocelli, Sprissler and Sands LLP where she currently serves as the managing partner. Ms. Sands focuses her current practice on criminal defense with 95 percent of her practice in that field. She also represents clients in General District Court on personal injury cases, family law, and contract disputes. Ms. Sands has also served a substitute judge in both Fairfax County General District Court and the Fairfax County Juvenile Domestic Relations since 2010.

FAIRNESS AND TEMPERAMENT

Ms. Sands has demonstrated her ability to be courteous and fair both as a practicing attorney and while serving as substitute judge. The Committee had concerns that Ms. Sands occasionally emphasizes the speed of her legal conclusions at the expense of more thoughtful deliberation. Additional experience would allow her to develop the wisdom and gravitas necessary to serve as a permanent judge of the General District Court.

PROFESSIONALISM AND INTEGRITY

Ms. Sands exhibited honesty and impartiality. The Committee noted that Ms. Sands would benefit from additional professional development. Her presentation to the Committee seemed to focus upon the process of the court. However, the Committee was concerned about issues relating to attention to detail as an attorney and as a candidate for the bench.

OVERALL EVALUATION

Ms. Sands is qualified for the position of General District Court Judge. The Committee believes Ms. Sands possesses the requisite talent and enthusiasm to serve on the bench; however, Ms. Sands would benefit from additional experience and a renewed dedication to the practice of law.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: QUALIFIED