

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
SEPTEMBER 2021 FAIRFAX CIRCUIT COURT JUDICIAL SCREENING

PATRICK MICHAEL LAWRENCE BLANCH

Mr. Blanch graduated from Millersville University of Pennsylvania in 2002. He earned his J.D. from The George Washington University School of Law in 2006. He was admitted to practice in Virginia in 2006 and in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia in 2010.

Mr. Blanch lives in Reston with his wife and two children.

EXPERIENCE AND LEGAL ABILITY

While in law school, Mr. Blanch interned with a government relations firm in Washington, DC. After his admission to the Virginia State Bar, he joined the Fairfax County Office of the Public Defender as an Assistant Public Defender, where he practiced from 2007 to 2009. He currently works at Zinicola, Blanch & Hart, PLLC, where he has practiced since 2009. He became a partner in 2011. Mr. Blanch's practice focuses primarily on criminal defense at both the trial and appellate levels. His representation has included thousands of individuals in retained, court-appointed, and pro bono capacities. Additionally, he has handled dozens of appeals for which the Virginia Supreme Court and Court of Appeals have issued published and unpublished opinions.

FAIRNESS AND TEMPERAMENT

Mr. Blanch has a reputation for having a good temperament as a colleague and opposing counsel. The Committee believes he will also have a good temperament on the bench. Mr. Blanch brought up the need to be cognizant of implicit and explicit biases while on the bench. This impressed the Committee and showed that Mr. Blanch will take a role as a judge very seriously and be fair to the parties before him.

PROFESSIONALISM AND INTEGRITY

Mr. Blanch is an attorney of integrity who is also known for his professionalism. The Committee heard that he was pleasant with opposing counsel and is willing to help other lawyers when they are in need. He has also taken complicated cases on a pro bono basis, including appeals.

OVERALL EVALUATION:

The Committee found Mr. Blanch to be incredibly passionate about the law and excited at the prospect of serving his community as a judge. While the Committee believes that Mr. Blanch's research and writing skills will serve him well in cases outside of criminal law, he could benefit from taking additional CLEs in aspects of domestic relations or civil litigation. Mr. Blanch would also benefit from serving as a substitute judge to gain exposure to other areas of the law, if possible. Overall, Mr. Blanch meets the requirements to serve a judge of the Circuit Court.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: QUALIFIED