EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
OCTOBER 2026 FAIRFAX GENERAL DISTRICT COURT JUDICIAL SCREENING

JAMES F. DAVIS

James F. Davis was born in Washington, D.C., in 1972 and lives in Chantilly, Virginia. He attended the University of Maryland in College Park, graduating in 1994 with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting, and received his law degree from George Mason University School of Law in 1997.

EXPERIENCE AND LEGAL ABILITY

Mr. Davis started his career at Greenspun Shapiro (formerly Greenspun, Shapiro, Davis & Leary, PC), where he handled traffic and criminal defense, personal injury, and civil litigation. In 2011, he opened his own firm and added landlord-tenant disputes and other civil work to his practice. He has also litigated in federal court and has helped small business clients form, run, and dissolve their companies.

Mr. Davis has practiced in Northern Virginia, and mostly in Fairfax County, since 1998. He has extensive experience on both the civil and criminal side and has appeared in the General District, Circuit, and Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Courts. In August 2022, he was appointed a substitute judge, and he sits in Fairfax County's General District and Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Courts.

The Committee asked Mr. Davis what he had done since his last interview in September 2024 to prepare for the position. Because his firm's work is mostly civil, he contacted the clerk's office and asked for additional traffic dockets as a substitute judge. He has since presided over more traffic cases. The Committee was impressed that he went looking for those assignments on his own in order to strengthen his skills.

Mr. Davis represented the 19th Judicial Circuit on the Virginia State Bar Council from 2014 to 2017 and served on the Fairfax Alcohol Safety Action Program Policy Board from 2008 through 2018. He is prepared to close his practice if he is selected for the bench.

FAIRNESS AND TEMPERAMENT

Mr. Davis has an appropriate judicial temperament. He spoke about the importance of patience and fairness toward attorneys and litigants, including people who come to court without a lawyer. He understands that a judge has to give people a chance to be heard while keeping a busy docket moving and applying the law, even when the result is a hard one.

Asked about younger attorneys, Mr. Davis remembered judges who took the time to guide him early in his career. He would like to do the same, and to help younger lawyers find experienced members of the bar they can learn from. He added that whatever help a judge offers, the judge has to stay fair to everyone in the courtroom.

Mr. Davis recognizes that for many people, General District Court is their only contact with the court system, and that how the judge treats them shapes what they take away from it. He has a calm, even demeanor.

PROFESSIONALISM AND INTEGRITY

Mr. Davis has the professionalism, integrity, and commitment to serve as a General District Court judge. He is well known within the Fairfax County bar and has spent most of his career in the County's courts.

He described becoming a judge as a natural extension of his trial practice and a higher calling. He enjoys the work and the people, and he appreciates the weight of the matters that come before the Court. He gave credit to his mentors for helping him develop as a lawyer and said there is always room to improve.

Asked about court efficiency, Mr. Davis suggested simplifying court forms and writing them in plain language so people can understand and complete them without help. The answer showed that he has paid attention to the practical problems people run into when they deal with the court system.

OVERALL EVALUATION

Mr. Davis brings extensive civil and criminal experience, deep roots in Fairfax County, and four years of service as a substitute judge. He showed patience and humility in his interview and a clear understanding of what the position requires. Since his last interview, he has expanded his experience by requesting and handling additional traffic dockets.

The Committee finds Mr. Davis especially well qualified to serve on the Fairfax General District Court and deserving of its highest recommendation.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: HIGHLY RECOMMENDED