



## REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS Wilton Rancheria Courts Appellate Panel Judges

May 8, 2020

To whom it may concern:

The Wilton Rancheria and Wilton Tribal Court is soliciting letters of interest and qualifications from individuals interested in serving as an Appellate Judge.

### **About the Tribe**

#### **Journey Statement**

Through the revitalization of culture, language, and traditions, we as Miwok and Nisenan people will work diligently to enhance the lives of Onikse'. Exercising self-reliance, by promoting health, wellness, economic success, and education to sustain our Tribal Community. Thus, preserving our ancestors' legacy for future generations.

#### **Vision**

A thriving self-sustaining Tribal Community reflective of culture, values, and traditions.

Wilton Rancheria is in the heart of the State of California. With headquarters in Elk Grove, California, located just south of the State Capital, Sacramento, Wilton Rancheria is the only Federally Recognized Tribe in Sacramento County. The members of Wilton Rancheria are descendants of the Penutian linguistic family identified as speaking the Miwok dialect. The Tribe's Indigenous Territory encompasses Sacramento County. We provide a robust offering of services to our community through a variety of Departments including: Cultural Preservation, Education, Elder, Enrollment, Health, Housing, Human Resources, and Indian Child Welfare. With year-round temperate weather plus a family-oriented community with easy access to two major freeways and the Sacramento International Airport, Wilton Rancheria is the ideal blend of traditional community values with access to state-of-the-art amenities.

Wilton Rancheria was terminated in 1959 by the federal government. After years of struggle, the Tribe regained its federal recognition in June 2009. In November 2011, the Tribe adopted its modern Constitution, and since that time, the Tribe's leadership has worked diligently to implement and further develop the tribal government. Wilton Rancheria's government is divided into four separate branches: a General Council, an Executive branch, a Legislative branch, and a Judicial branch. For more information about our Tribe please visit our website: <http://wiltonrancheria-nsn.gov/>

### **Judicial Branch – The Wilton Courts**

The Tribe's Constitution provides that the judicial branch of the Tribe shall be the Tribal Court. The Wilton Tribe's judicial branch consists of the Tribal Court, The Appellate Panel and the Traditional Court. Together they are known as the Wilton Courts.



Honorable Christine Williams, a Yurok Tribal member licensed to practice law in California, was appointed as the Chief Judge of the Wilton Tribal Court in March of 2020. The Judicial Branch is now being developed and implemented under the direction of the Chief Judge and according to the framework provided in the Constitution and laws of the Tribe. Judge Williams brings to the Wilton Rancheria Courts twenty years' experience in the field of Indian law and ten years' experience serving as a judge for tribes. The Tribal Court will hear a variety of cases primarily within the government/administrative law, family law and social services law fields initially.

Wilton Rancheria is carrying forward their cultural identity through the Traditional Court. The Traditional Court shall advise the Tribal Court on matters of custom and tradition, which represent the Tribe's common law. The Traditional court will serve as a non-adversarial forum for dispute resolution guided by a panel of elders from the Tribe. In this manner, the traditional values of Wilton Rancheria shall be kept at the forefront of the Tribal Court's decision-making process.

The Appellate Panel will be available for review of decisions of the Tribal Court. Transparency, accuracy, consistency and fairness are the foundation of the Wilton Rancheria Courts. The three courts work together to ensure a fair and accessible system of justice.

### **Commitment and Expectations**

Appellate Judges will be expected to work independently without assistance from the Chief Judge as to substantive matters. Experience hearing or handling appellate cases is strongly preferred. The expected appellate caseload is as low as no appeals in a year to potentially four or five. Appellate Judges will have an advisory role in development and improvement of court procedure. Those appointed will be expected to attend regular court development meetings related to court procedure. Appellate Judges may be required to participate in training specific to their role. While the time commitment is not expected to be significant, Appellate Judges will be expected to engage with the tribal leadership, staff and larger community in a meaningful way. Only applicants dedicated and interested in tribal nation building should apply.

### **Minimum Qualifications**

In order to qualify as a candidate for the Appellate Panel a person must be able to demonstrate they, are licensed to practice law in any state, are at least 35 year of age, have no felony convictions, have no convictions within the last ten years of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, corruption or dishonesty, have familiarity with Federal Indian law.

### **Submissions and Additional Information**

If interested, please submit a letter of interest and resume to [Tribalcourtinfo@wiltonrancheria-nsn.gov](mailto:Tribalcourtinfo@wiltonrancheria-nsn.gov). Submissions are due no later than May 20, 2020 at 5:00pm, California time. Appeals Panel Judges will be selected and appointed for a term of four years as an independent contractor by the Wilton Tribal Council. Native American Preference will be applied.

All communications and interviews relating to this solicitation will take place remotely via telephone or video or electronic submission to ensure the safety of the community during the COVID-19 health crisis.