

Rachelle Francis

(425) 350-9197

rachelledenisef@gmail.com

Stanwood, WA

May 5th 2023

Members of the Snohomish County Council
Robert J. Drewel Building
Eighth floor
3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S 609
Everett, WA 98201

Re: Application for Appointment--Snohomish County District Court—Cascade Division—Pos.2

Dear Members of the Snohomish County Council:

I respectfully request your appointment to the newly created second judicial position in the Cascade Division of the Snohomish County District Court.

My roots in the North County area, my breadth of experience in the overlapping areas of criminal law and behavioral health, my work ethic and passion for public service, my ability to communicate and collaborate, and my commitment to access to justice for all make me a uniquely qualified candidate for this position.

I have a deep connection to, and appreciation for, the North Snohomish County area. As a lifelong member of the community, I understand its rich history and culture. As a kid, I worked in some of the very fields that now have housing developments built over them, so I have experienced first-hand the transitions brought about by rapid growth and development in a rural area. This background would give me a deeper understanding and context for the issues that would come before me as a judge.

Along with community ties, I would bring expertise in both criminal law and behavioral health—two areas whose intersection has impacted our court dockets dramatically in recent years. Given this impact, it is crucial that we address the connection between untreated behavioral health issues and antisocial behaviors if we hope to decrease recidivism. My background would bring a level of insight into this overlay that few people have. My many years as a criminal trial attorney, as well as 14 years immersed in the defense of individuals with acute behavioral health issues, where I gained knowledge of diagnoses, symptoms, and our complicated treatment system, would make me an asset in discussions around causation of behaviors and

mitigation strategies, as well as the possible expansion of therapeutic and/or community courts.

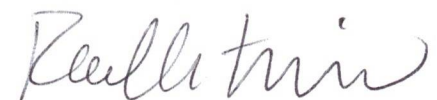
Additionally, my experience working in the field of behavioral health has expanded my ability to communicate, even with people who are in distress or crisis. Competence in areas such as de-escalation, expressing empathy, active listening, cultural competence, and creative and collaborative problem-solving are all valuable skills which would allow me to connect with litigants in the Court with compassion and humanity and convey to all participants a belief that they will be heard and treated fairly.

My skillset also includes administrative experience which I've gained over the past 3 years as a unit lead and supervisor. In this capacity, I developed policies and created systems which made the Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) Court more efficient while still protecting the rights of my clients. I have gained a reputation throughout my career as someone who believes in collaboration and cooperation to work toward beneficial outcomes, and indeed, have proven that I can exhibit those attributes under highly stressful situations such as the Covid-19 pandemic, when the prosecuting attorney and I worked directly with the bench to restructure our ITA court platform within a week.

Finally, the expertise, interpersonal, and administrative skills I have developed over the past 22 years as a dedicated public defender have all been honed during a tenure of public service to Snohomish County. The desire to serve my community is enduring, and I believe the opportunity to sit as a district court judge would utilize my entire skillset in new and different ways. I have been asked would I be able to take off my public defender "hat" after so many years, and to that I answer a resounding yes! My lifelong pursuit has been to serve others while facilitating access to justice for all. If appointed, my role as a judge would allow me to continue to do just that.

I humbly ask for your appointment to the second Cascade District Court Judge position. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rachelle Francis".

Rachelle Francis



Rachelle Francis
candidate for
Snohomish County District Court Judge
Cascade Division
Position 2

Rachelle Francis is a life-long native of our northwest Washington area, having grown up on Camano Island with her five brothers and sisters. She attended Stanwood High School, and from the time she was 12 years old worked picking spinach and strawberries, cleaning houses and boats to contribute to her family and ultimately to help pay for her education.

A graduate of the University of Washington, Rachelle was the first in her family to graduate from college. As she earned her law degree at Seattle University, she participated in the Street Law program and became inspired by the need for committed criminal defense lawyers.

Immediately after graduation, she joined the Snohomish County Public Defender Association and has remained there as a committed Public Defender for 22 years. Rachelle has developed a particular passion for addressing the serious mental health challenges which face our communities and has spent the last 14 years working in the Snohomish County Superior Court's Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) Court where she is now the Supervisor of the Public Defense attorneys. When COVID hit the courts hard beginning in 2020, Rachelle collaborated with the Snohomish County Prosecutor and the Bench to develop a viable platform for remote hearings, and consequently, the ITA Court never slowed down. Many of the innovations she developed over the past three years remain in place and provide access to hearings and protection of due process. Rachelle helped write policies for ITA Courts which were adopted by the Supreme Court for statewide use during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Rachelle's husband of 22 years, Mike Gleaves, is a Supervisor at PACCAR Technical Center, and the couple lives in Stanwood where they have raised four children. As a family, they all enjoy camping, hiking, and visiting our many National Parks.

Rachelle Francis

(425) 3509197

rachelledenisef@gmail.com

Stanwood, WA 98292

Dedicated public servant with over two decades of legal experience in the areas of criminal law and behavioral health in search of Judicial appointment to Cascade District Court, Snohomish County. Frequently praised as a compassionate, fair, and cooperative by my supervisors and peers, I can be relied upon to bring these qualities to the Bench and to the citizens that I serve.

EXPERIENCE

ITA ATTORNEY SUPERVISOR

Snohomish County Public Defender Association

Everett, WA

September 2021-Present

- Worked collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders to quickly implement remote procedures while safeguarding rights of clients
- Stayed abreast of advances in technology.
- Advocated for changes in policies within hospitals to achieve better outcomes for clients, such as access to records, expedient access to facilities, efficient sharing of information
- Assessed and adjusted staffing and scheduling in response to the dynamic needs at facilities
- Hired and trained attorneys
- Engaged in and provided numerous trainings related to mental health, client communication and active listening
- Contributed to strategic planning to guide decisions aligned with our organization's vision and goals.

ITA ATTORNEY LEAD

Snohomish County Public Defender Association

Everett, WA

February 2020-September 2021

- Oversaw day-to-day needs of unit
- Scheduled and ran unit meetings
- Maintained full ITA caseload
- Adjusted and advocated for needs of unit during Covid-19 pandemic
- Suggested and implemented changes within the unit to adjust to changing work conditions
- Advocated for prioritization of safety for attorneys and clients

STAFF ATTORNEY, ITA

Snohomish County Public Defender Association

Everett, WA

February 2009-February 2020

- Worked with clients experiencing Behavioral Health issues to restore autonomy over medical decisions when facing involuntary civil commitment
- Honed active listening skills and compassion to work effectively with clients in crisis
- Formed positive working relationships with all stakeholders in adversarial system to achieve better outcomes for clients
- Represented clients in 100's of ITA hearings, and trials, and used legal experience to craft persuasive arguments for clients' stated goals

STAFF ATTORNEY

Snohomish County Public Defender Association

Everett, WA

March 2001- February 200

- Worked in multiple capacities at SCPDA including handling Misdemeanor and Felony cases; Contempt of court cases; Out-of-State fugitive cases.
- Took 70+ cases to Jury trial, and argued dozens of pre-trial motions
- Prioritized positive interactions with the Prosecutor's office and the Bench
- Developed strategies to maintain positive mental health and avoid compassion fatigue while carrying large and demanding caseloads

EDUCATION

JURIS DOCTORATE

Dec 200

Seattle University School of Law, **Seattle, WA**

Awards & Honors

- Cum laude

BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A.) IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

Dec 199

University Of Washington, **Seattle, WA**

Awards & Honors

- Cum laude
- Phi Beta Kappa

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Jun 198

Stanwood High School, **Stanwood, WA**

Awards & Honors

- Graduated with honors

SKILLS

- Active Listener
- Fair
- Direct
- Compassionate
- Analytical
- Open-minded

CERTIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

- Licensed to Practice Law in Washington, June 14th 2001, #31137
- Attorney Training for Service as Pro Tem Judge, WSBA, 3/17/23-3/18/23



Rachelle Francis

candidate for

Snohomish County District Court Judge

Cascade Division

Position 2

Endorsements

(current as of April 20, 2023)

Snohomish County District Court Judges

Judge Tam Bui
Judge Steven Clough (ret)
Judge Doug Fair
Judge Beth Fraser
Judge Jeffrey Goodwin
Judge Anthony Howard
Judge Rick Leo
Judge Patricia Lyon

Other Snohomish County Judges

Judge Anna Alexander
Snohomish County Superior Court

Judge Valerie Bouffiou
Lynnwood Municipal Court

Judge Linda Coburn
Washington Court of Appeals (Div. I)
former Edmonds Municipal Court Judge

Judge Marybeth Dingley
Snohomish County Superior Court

Judge Michelle Gehlsen
King County District Court
former Bothell Municipal Court Judge

Judge Amy Kaestner
Everett Municipal Court

Judge Jessica Ness
Monroe Municipal Court

Judge Patrick Moriarty
Snohomish County Superior Court

Judge Whitney Rivera
Edmonds Municipal Court

Judge Jon Scott
Snohomish County Superior Court

Judge Paul Thompson
Snohomish County Superior Court

Commissioner Jackie Brudvik (ret)
Snohomish County Superior Court

Commissioner Susan Gaer (ret)
Snohomish County Superior Court

Commissioner Nicole Wagner
Snohomish County Superior Court

Attorneys

Arlene Anderson
Sara Ayoubi
Samuel Backman
Jennifer Bartlett
Ali Burton
Kelly Canary
Annika Carlsten
John Chase
Van Chu
Sonya Daisley-Harrison
Mikala Davis
Geoff Ens
Ana Faoro
Amanda Filteau
Jessica Fleming
Emily Fountain
Katherine Frazier
Will Gelvik
Christopher Graves
Emily Hancock
Sonja Hardenbrook
Michael Held
Emily Hiskes

Ben Hoekstra
Bill Jacquette
*Former Director
Snohomish County
Public Defender Assn.*
Kathleen Kyle
*Director
Snohomish County
Public Defender Assn.*
Jeremy Magnabosco
Lorcan Malone
Alex Manno
Joe Marshall
*Kenmore City
Councilmember*
Laura Martin
Brooks Mason
Jennifer McIntyre
Heather McKimmie
Colin McMahan
Tiffany Mecca
Max Mensinger
Fred Moll
Martin Mooney

Srikanth Naidu
Ama Okoro
Christine Olson
Rob O'Neal
Kari Petrasek
Gabriel Rothstein
Rachel Ryon
Ian Saling
Jason Schwarz
*Director, Snohomish County
Office of Public Defense*
Taylor Severns
Sarah Silbovitz
Daniel Snyder
Samantha Sommerman
Will Steffener
Eric Stickel
Jennifer Stutzer
Natalie Tarantino
Michael Topping
Cassie Trueblood
Jason Weiss

Community Leaders & Supporters

Brian Austin
Supervisor of Designated Crisis Responders
Vicky Beaty
Leona Berg
Snohomish County Public Defender Assn.
Lyndon Boyd
*Social Worker
Snohomish County Public Defender Assn.*
Michael Carlson
*Legal Assistant
Snohomish County Public Defender Assn.*

Chelaina Crews
Social Worker
Mikala Davis
*Mental Health Professional
Smokey Point Behavioral Hospital*
Janice De los Santos
*Mental Health Professional
Smokey Point Behavioral Hospital*
Rhonda Fausett
*Investigator
Snohomish County Public Defender Assn.*
Jared Gannon
Snohomish County Public Defender Assn.

Stacey Gannon

Arlington resident

Kamilah Gomez-Moini

Executive Assistant

Snohomish County Public Defender Assn.

Stuart Heady

Cole Hoglund

Snohomish County Public Defender Assn.

Eric Johnson

Social Worker

Snohomish County Public Defender Assn.

Kathy McCall

Investigator

Snohomish County Public Defender Assn.

Lee Michel

Snohomish County Public Defender Assn.

Brian Napolitan

Snohomish County Public Defender Assn.

Julia Newbold

Investigator

Snohomish County Public Defender Assn.

Julia Poulton

Investigator

Snohomish County Public Defender Assn.

Tracey Rainey

Mental Health Professional

Swedish Hospital

Todd Reeves

Investigator

Snohomish County Public Defender Assn.

Daisy Santana

Legal Assistant

Snohomish County Public Defender Assn.

Brian Splinter

Designated Crisis Responder

Peggy Steffener

Paralegal

Snohomish County Public Defender Assn.

Dave Vandegrift

Mental Health Professional

Smokey Point Behavioral Hospital

Sara Wilson

Administrative Manager

Snohomish County Public Defender Assn.

Angie Yahnke

Office Manager

Snohomish County Public Defender Assn.

Current & Former Elected Officials

Former Sen. Mary Margaret Haugen (10th LD)

Washington State Senate

Snohomish County Council
Robert J. Drewel Building,
Eighth Floor
3000 Rockefeller Ave.,
M/S 609
Everett, WA 98201

April 28th, 2023

Dear Council Members,

Please accept this letter of recommendation on behalf of Rachele Francis in consideration for appointment to the position of judge in the Cascade Division of Snohomish County District Court. I have worked alongside Ms. Francis since our earliest days as public defenders more than two decades ago. First as misdemeanor attorneys in District Court, then as we managed an expedited felony and fugitive caseload together, and now for 15 years as the primary Involuntary Treatment attorneys in Snohomish County. Through every configuration of her legal career, I have witnessed firsthand Ms. Francis's passion for upholding the Constitution through zealous advocacy and her unwavering commitment to justice.

From her earliest days as a defense attorney in Evergreen and Everett District Courts, Ms. Francis established a stellar reputation as both an outstanding litigator and a person of quiet but unquestionable integrity. In a field where theoretical adversaries are everywhere and it can be difficult to manage the many interests and personalities of opposing counsel, defendants, victims, witnesses, police, court staff, jurors and judges, Ms. Francis was known for her ability to seemingly get along with everyone. That personable style however was never to be mistaken for a casual or dismissive approach to her work; I often referred to her as our 'stealth attorney' because of her ability to present issues to prosecutors, judges, and jurors in ways that were so simple and clear and calm that theatrics were never a needed aspect of persuasion. Her significant – and successful - trial record in District Court showed a clear and thorough understanding of both the law and the rules of evidence and criminal procedure that many younger attorneys aspired to reach.

Although we never anticipated it when we first assumed the contract in 2009, Ms. Francis and I have spent the majority of our professional careers representing individuals facing civil commitment under RCW 71.05. The transition from the more predictable pace of criminal law to managing a high volume of fast paced daily bench trials with numerous experts within the civil context has provided a degree of experience in both systems that few public defenders achieve in their careers. Involuntary Treatment is a unique and complex vortex of issues; civil but quasi-criminal, legal in nature but layered in issues of medical and mental health. As the

Council knows well, commitment cases in Snohomish County have skyrocketed over the last two decades, with steadily increasing beds and facilities, legislative changes and expanding criteria for both detention and treatment. Throughout it all, Ms. Francis has continued to expand her knowledge and understanding of both the legal complexities of civil commitment and the constantly evolving science of mental health, always through the lens of compassion and a deeply rooted belief in respecting the autonomy and rights of every individual.

For over 20 years, I have witnessed Ms. Francis handle difficult cases, complex legal issues, vulnerable clients and emotionally charged witnesses; her commitment to respect for everyone in the process has never wavered. Her expertise with the most vulnerable citizens of Snohomish County, and her decades of experience working with the court system, the police, mental health services and other supportive organizations give her a deeply rooted understanding of the community, its resources, needs, and challenges. As a judge, I have no doubt that she would value the humanity and dignity of every individual who came before her and bring a level of compassion and respect for all that would truly serve the people of Snohomish County.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if I can provide any additional information or answer any questions.

Thank you for your time,

Annika K. Carlsten

Annika K. Carlsten, WSBA #32880
Snohomish County Public Defender Assoc.
acarlsten@snocopda.org
(206) 384-3987

June 1, 2023

Members of the Snohomish County Counsel
Robert J. Drewel Building
Eighth Floor
3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S 609
Everett, WA 98201

May it Please the Counsel:

I hired Rachelle Francis as an attorney at the Snohomish County Public Defender Association in March of 2001 and I remained in her direct line of supervision for 16 years. Rachelle always played an important role in the organization. Her experience there and the person she brought to that experience will make her an excellent judge in the Snohomish County District Court.

Rachelle began her legal career presenting cases to judges and juries in the District Court where she would now be presiding. It wasn't long before she was also representing clients on felony charges in the Snohomish County Superior Court. In addition to the standard public defender bill of fare she handled civil contempt of court and out-of-state fugitive cases.

After nine years and hundreds of misdemeanor and felony cases, Rachelle was appointed to a team that focused on representing clients in cases under the Involuntary Treatment Act, the law in Washington for legally confining people in need of mental health treatment. This was a job that required a sensitivity and understanding for which she proved to be well qualified.

During the last 14 years, Rachelle has represented hundreds of clients assuring that their rights were protected. While so doing she maintained a collaborative working relationship with the judges, prosecutors, expert witnesses, and hospital staff.

In recent years Snohomish County has become home for several new treatment facilities requiring a large team of lawyers doing the work that used to be done by two. Rachelle was appointed to be the attorney supervisor for that growing unit, hiring and training lawyers, managing the unit's operation, and being an advocate for policy changes to help the vulnerable clientele.

Rachelle Francis will bring her experience in many of the dimensions of the law to the District Court bench. Because she has resided in Snohomish County and lived with its people all her life, that experience will be an additional tool for dealing with the cases she must decide. She will enforce the law but with understanding and sensitivity. She will make an excellent judge in the Snohomish County District Court.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Bill Jaquette

Bill Jaquette
Former Director
Snohomish County Public Defender Association

Brian Splinter
1721 Hewitt Ave, Suite 401
Everett, WA 98201
253-691-8454
bsplinter@gmail.com

31 March 2023

Members of the Snohomish County Council
Robert J. Drewel Building
Eighth Floor
3000 Rockefeller Ave, M/S 609
Everett, WA 98201

To Whom it May Concern on the Snohomish County Council,

My name is Brian Splinter and I am a Licensed Mental Health Counselor that is employed as a Designated Crisis Responder (DCR) by Snohomish County Human Services. I have been employed as a DCR (previously, we were called Designated Mental Health Professionals, or DMHP) for 8.5 years. It is my pleasure to write to you to recommend Rachelle Francis for Cascade District Court Bench position in Snohomish County. When I started as a DMHP, was one of the Attorneys through the Office of Public Defense under the Involuntary Treatment Court. I worked very closely with Mrs. Francis for over eight (8) years as a DMHP/DCR, as I was tasked with testifying as an Expert Witness during Involuntary Treatment Court hearings. She was the Defense Attorney for many of the Respondents that were detained under the Involuntary Treatment Act and the hospitals wished to proceed with Probable Cause and Bench Trials for continued ITA hospitalization. She has handled 70+ jury trials, hundreds of Involuntary Commitment hearing in Superior Court, and has over 14 years of experience working with individuals with acute behavioral health (mental health and substance use) difficulties, as well as understanding their diagnoses, symptoms, impacts of trauma on their mental health, as well as the stigmatization of behavioral health diagnoses and treatment.

Mrs. Francis has been professional during my interactions with her and has been willing to speak with me into the evening hours, taking time out of her own personal time, when discussing the best route for getting her Clients the care they need and deserve, but also maintaining their civil and legal rights. I have always respected her opinions, as they are firmly rooted in case law, statutes, and protocols. She has been able to provide opinions that were understandable, easy to digest, as well as easy enough for someone without the legal background to be able to disperse to hospitals, families, and the community in multiple different situations. Her arguments, cross-examination, objections, and closing arguments were always well thought-out, citing different statutes and case law for the Judges/Commissioners to be able to follow along and investigate each specific matter, as well as articulate and eloquent in her delivery. I was never under the impression that the Client were upset about her representation of their rights.

Regarding working with my colleagues and I, as well as the hospital staff in each matter, she was open to feedback and questions from each party. Even when a DMHP/DCR or hospital employee did not agree with her opinions and decisions, she was able to listen to our reasonings behind disagreeing with her, empathize with our thoughts regarding these matters, and would provide further reasoning as to why her decision was the most appropriate at that time in representation of her Clients while still following ITA guidelines and protocols. She has been a strong advocate for the behavioral health system, representing her Clients in a manner consistent with someone who greatly cares for those suffering from behavioral health disorders and

symptoms. She has spent the last 22 years as a Public Defender, advocating for marginalized populations and people in crisis, as well as demonstrating her commitment to access to justice for all of her Clients. Due to these experiences, she has been working to explore expansion of therapeutic and community courts to help those with behavioral health needs. She, also, has extensive experience working with her Clients within the criminal legal system, which will make her a significant asset to the District Court.

The respect that Mrs. Francis exhibited to all parties involved in the Involuntary Treatment Court, as well as those involved in the process leading up to the court hearings, was very professional and was never argumentative. I never left a conversation with Mrs. Francis feeling as though my thoughts and feelings were being dismissed, even during periods of time when her decisions and opinions were in contrast with mine on particular cases. She treated her Clients, hospital employees, Judges/Commissioners, DMHPs/DCR, and the Prosecutors professionally with each encounter I observed. If family members or loved-ones of Respondents were present, Mrs. Francis took the time to talk with them, listen to what they had to say, and work with them on the best ways to implement their observations and opinions when it came to testifying to the Court. In many cases where the family were distressed when thinking about having to testify, Mrs. Francis worked with myself and the family to determine whether or not it was necessary for them to testify and would work to alleviate their distress in many situations because their testimony would not be needed. She has, also, trained and mentored numerous colleagues and has advocated for resources for units under her supervision, and her ability to address issues within the system and train her colleagues adequately has helped create a more-knowledgeable group of Public Defenders regarding the behavioral health needs and being empathetic and understanding of their Clients.

During the Court proceedings, Mrs. Francis made it very clear to everyone in the hearings that the hearings are open to the public, and informed each hospital/facility that they are to inform him if anyone wished to attend the hearings. Her willingness to provide her contact information to the hospitals/facilities demonstrated her desire to obey case law and court rules in each matter, as they would be able to contact her to let her know if someone was present to attend the hearings. Her knowledge and expertise in these matters helped her Clients perform to the best of their abilities, as well as understanding when to ask questions during cross-examination of the DCRs/DMHPs, in order to allow information to be provided to the Judge in these proceedings. When she would cross-examine the DMHPs/DCRs, or any of their Witnesses, she was always professional, understanding of the current mental state of her Clients at the time of the hearing, and was frequently able to appropriately redirect her Clients back to their testimony when their mental health symptoms would prevent them from answering questions in an organized or linear manner.

It is due to my experiences with Mrs. Francis, as well as my experiences with some of the Snohomish County Superior Court Judges and Commissioners, that leads me to believe that Mrs. Francis would be an excellent and exemplary addition to the Cascade District Court Bench. I believe that she has the ability and willingness to put forth the time and effort to research all laws, case laws, statutes, etc. that are required of someone in that position, as I have witnessed it myself in her work as a Defense Attorney for the Involuntary Treatment Court of Snohomish County. If I ever needed an attorney to represent me in any matter, or if a friend or loved one needed representation, I would not hesitate to call Mrs. Francis.

I am available if you have any further questions. Please feel free to reach out if I can be of any further assistance to you.

Thank you for your time and consideration of Mrs. Francis,



Brian Splinter
31 March 2023

2722 Colby Avenue, Suite 200
Everett, WA 98201

Members of the Snohomish County Council
Robert J. Drewel Building
Eight Floor
3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S 609

Re: Recommendation of Rachelle Francis for Appointment to Cascade District Court

April 10, 2023

Dear Council Members:

I am writing to recommend Rachelle Francis to the newly created judicial position with Snohomish County District Court – Cascade Division. I have known Rachelle for over 16 years, as a colleague at the Snohomish County Public Defender Association. Rachelle has the temperament, expertise, and knowledge to be a wonderful addition to the District Court bench.

Rachelle is smart, knowledgeable, and well-versed in being in a busy courtroom atmosphere. She has a wide base of legal knowledge and a strong desire to continue learning. I began my career by working alongside Rachelle in Everett District Court in 2006. She was always prepared, professional, and well respected by her clients, her colleagues, the bench, and the prosecutor’s office. I was lucky to have Rachelle as a mentor as I began my career and many others in my office can say the same – Rachelle has served as a supervisor and also as an informal mentor for numerous attorneys in our office.

Rachelle exhibits respect and kindness towards everyone she interacts with – from severely mentally ill clients facing involuntary commitments to the prosecutors on the “other side.” Rachelle is an even-tempered and thoughtful. She has an amazing ability to work with all stakeholders in the system to create policies and systems that benefit everyone.

I have no doubt that Rachelle Francis would be an asset to the Snohomish County District Court bench. She is a great attorney and a wonderful human being.

Sincerely,

/s/ Cassie C. Trueblood #37829
Cassie C. Trueblood | Attorney

March 29, 2023

Members of the Snohomish County Council
Robert J. Drewel Building
Eighth Floor
3000 Rockefeller Ave M/S 609
Everett, WA 98201

Re: Rachelle Francis, Candidate for Snohomish County District Court Judge,
Cascade Division, Position 2

Dear Council Members:

I have known Rachelle Francis in her capacity as a Public Defender in the Behavioral Health Unit since 2009. Working with clients experiencing behavioral health issues and representing the clients during Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) hearings require specialized skills. Ms. Francis demonstrated these skills, which include active listening, compassion, the ability to clearly provide information, and patience, at a superior level. Throughout the ITA process, Ms. Francis advocated diligently for her clients while also working collaboratively with all parties involved in the behavioral health system for outcomes that would best address challenging issues presented.

A specific example of Ms. Francis' collaboration, hard work, and leadership was demonstrated in March 2020. The Presiding Judge of Superior Court tasked the ITA lead team, which included the prosecutor, Ms. Francis, and myself, with initiating remote ITA hearings from six hospital locations. A working system was in place within a week. Ms. Francis' work, while safeguarding the rights of the clients, was invaluable.

The skills and abilities Ms. Francis has demonstrated with challenging clients, collaboration with all stakeholders in the Behavioral Health area, demonstrated leadership, kindness, compassion, and common sense, all would support her appointment to the bench.

Feel free to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Jacalyn D. Brudvik
Snohomish County Superior Court Commissioner
(Ret.)
Email: jacalynbrudvik@comcast.net
Telephone: 425-493-0366

Susan C. Gaer
16720 89th Avenue East
Puyallup, WA 98375

April 10, 2023

Members of the Snohomish County Council

Robert J. Drewel Building, 8th Floor

3000 Rockefeller Ave, M/S 609

Everett, WA 98201

Re: Rachelle Francis Recommendation for Appointment to Snohomish County District Court--Cascade

Dear Council Members,

I am writing to recommend Rachelle Francis for appointment to the Snohomish County District Court Bench. I have known Ms. Francis for more than twenty years and have observed her work as a supervisor, as a colleague, and as a judicial officer.

I worked for many years at the Snohomish County Public Defender Association. As her supervisor at the Association for several years, it was clear that she cared a great deal for her clients, had a deep respect for the law, and the willingness to do the work necessary in a difficult job. As a co-worker, she was thoughtful, kind and exceptionally calm and even tempered.

I left the Association in 2008 when I was appointed as a Snohomish County Superior Court Commissioner, and remained in that role until my retirement in 2020. During those years, Ms Francis appeared before me regularly in Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) hearings. ITA hearings often require an ability to adjust rapidly to unexpected events, and to handle unusually difficult clients. As a judicial officer, I appreciated her ability to recognize issues, prepare well, and calmly handle the difficulties often inherent in representing respondents in ITA hearings. She was notably kind to her clients in situations that others would not be able to maintain.

Ms. Francis has the good judgment, calm demeanor, and work ethic required of a judicial officer. Her appointment to the Snohomish County District Court would be an excellent addition to the bench.

Sincerely,

Susan C. Gaer

March 31, 2023

Members of the Snohomish County Council
Robert J. Drewel Building
Eighth floor
3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S 609
Everett, WA 98201

Dear Councilmembers,

I am honored to submit this letter of recommendation on behalf of Snohomish County District Court judicial candidate Rachelle D. Francis. Since 2007, I have been employed as a social worker for the Snohomish County Public Defender Association (SCPDA), where I currently serve as social work unit supervisor. I have been fortunate enough to work with Rachelle Francis for over 15 years. Rachelle and I have devoted our careers to helping clients with disabilities, acute mental health conditions, substance use issues, and those in crisis. Because our roles and responsibilities have so often intersected, I am especially familiar with Rachelle's experience, professional style, and character. Rachelle is a phenomenal attorney with a wealth of criminal and civil legal expertise. Having spent the early part of her career as a trial attorney in Snohomish County District Court, she went on to become a dedicated advocate for clients facing involuntary civil commitment under RCW 71.05 in Superior Court. It was during her 71.05 work over the last 14 years that I came to know Rachelle as an intelligent, thoughtful, and deeply compassionate attorney.

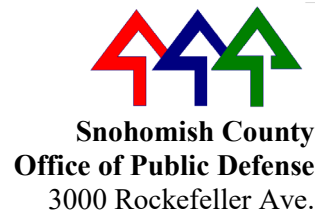
Rachelle has a gift for connecting with people from all walks of life in the spirit of collaboration and effective problem solving. Through her years of education, training, and accumulated practice wisdom, she has become the model attorney at SCPDA for cultural awareness and sensitivity. These attributes extend well beyond the attorney-client relationship and manifest in the way she interacts with colleagues, judges, prosecutors, experts, treatment providers, and community members. Rachelle consistently treats others with respect, kindness, and consideration. In turn, she is highly respected both within the legal community and among community stakeholders.

While her exceptional interpersonal skills are obvious to those who know her, Rachelle also has the distinction of being a big picture thinker when it comes to important issues inherent in the legal system. She is particularly attuned to the ways bias and inequity based on race, class, gender, and ability are systematized and institutionalized. A strong believer in equal access to justice for all, Rachelle has spent years examining the way bias has shown up in our courtrooms and daily practice. She has taken an active role at SCPDA in confronting these inequities and developing policies and solutions to promote fairness, inclusion, and respect for all participants.

For the past few years, I have had the opportunity to observe Rachelle in her supervisory role at SCPDA. During that time, she has demonstrated her talent as a leader who fosters personal growth and professional skill development in others. Rachelle has earned the trust and respect of everyone she has trained, mentored, or collaborated with at SCPDA. She is universally recognized as a person of honor and integrity. Her years of experience, sound temperament, sincere compassion, and unwavering professionalism throughout her career make her an excellent judicial candidate. Without reservation, I recommend Rachelle Francis for the position of Snohomish County District Court judge.

Sincerely,

Eric Johnsen, MSW
Social Work Unit Supervisor
Snohomish County Public Defender Association
2722 Colby Ave, Ste 200
Everett, WA 98201
Ph: (425) 339-6300 ext 507



To: Snohomish County Council

I write in recommendation of Rachelle Francis for the Snohomish County District Court – Cascade Division. Rachelle is a life-long public servant of Snohomish County residents. With her extensive civil and criminal litigation experience, she has advocated for some of our most vulnerable neighbors.

I have known Rachelle since 2007. She was then an experienced colleague in the District Court unit who appeared to be perennial in trial while effortlessly managing her caseload. She rotated to the Involuntary Commitment Unit and currently supervises a unit of attorneys and staff. Rachelle's experience as a supervisor, trainer, mentor, and administrator will serve her well as District Court Judge.

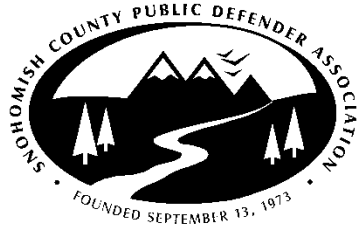
Rachelle is a perfect fit for District Court. She has extensive experience litigating in District Court. She distinguished herself both for her commitment to her clients, taking over 70 cases to trial, while maintaining collegial relationships with opposing counsel and the bench. Her wide experience will assist the Court in administering trials and pretrial proceedings. Her lengthy tenure working with new lawyers in a public defense office puts her in a prime position to mentor and assist new and younger lawyers. Rachelle's experiences in the ITA unit make her a perfect fit for District Court as it continues to evaluate and expand its therapeutic courts.

Rachelle's greatest strength comes from her lessons learned working with civilly committed persons. Rachelle is one of the most patient and engaged listeners amongst lawyers. She understands how to communicate with non-lawyers, and particularly those who have challenges understanding complex legal rulings. Rachelle has distinguished herself for her willingness to engage system partners to seek reforms to improve efficiency and access to justice. During COVID, Rachelle was active locally and statewide in making sure changes to court rules and processes still permitted access to records and to clients. She understands the health care system in a way few lawyers do – that knowledge will deeply enrich the Court's ability to respond to a growing mental health crisis locally and statewide.

I cannot think of a better candidate for the District Court position than Rachelle Francis. I have never contemplated a Snohomish County Public Defense community without Rachelle's calm advocacy and steady leadership, but our loss would be the gain for Snohomish County residents. I unreservedly support Rachelle Francis for the new position in Cascade District.

Best,

Jason Schwarz | Director
Snohomish County Office of Public Defense
Everett, WA 98201-4046



Snohomish County Public Defender Association

2722 Colby Avenue, Suite 200 • Everett, WA 98201-3527 • www.snocopda.org

Phone: 425-339-6300 • 1-800-961-6609 • Fax: 425-339-6363

April 19, 2023

Members of the Snohomish County Council
Robert J Drewel Building, 8th Floor
3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S 609
Everett, WA 98201

RE: Appointment of Rachele Francis to Snohomish County District Court Judicial Position

Snohomish County Council,

I am writing this letter to recommend that Rachele Francis be appointed to be a Judge in Snohomish County District Court. I am the Assistant Director at Snohomish County Public Defender Association (SCPDA) where I have been employed for 26 years and have known Ms. Francis for approximately 22 years. Throughout her 22 years I have had several opportunities to work with her as her direct supervisor. Her work advocating for marginalized populations and people in crisis and her commitment to access to justice for all is inspiring. I cannot imagine a better addition to the Snohomish County District Court Bench.

I met Ms. Francis when she joined the Snohomish County Public Defender Association in 2001. Her skill as a trial attorney coupled with her compassion was very apparent and she quickly became someone people went to for trusted advice about trial strategy or how to engage with different clients and stakeholders in the system. In trial her credibility was never in question due to her thorough research of the law and knowledge of the facts of her cases. She was equally trusted by clients who felt heard and that their goals were understood by her and communicated in a respectful, thoughtful manner.

She has an ability to communicate and meet people where they are that is unique and allows her to see solutions and break through barriers that many find impossible to overcome. I have seen this skill displayed with clients, judges, prosecutors and colleagues. Specifically, she had success as the supervisor of a talented attorney that has conflict with every other supervisor. Ms. Francis was able to hold this attorney accountable while also highlighting their skills and

experience which created a positive outcome for the unit and the attorney and therefore our clients.

She is a person who seeks out challenges and does not shy away from difficult situations and work. As an example, Ms. Francis agreed to become the supervisor of our Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) unit during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time the unit had very little structure or oversight and it was difficult to attract attorneys to the unit. Under her leadership she implemented systems and support including weekly virtual unit meetings, staffing and back up at each hospital, sharing information within the unit and to the greater organization. The unit, which is now 10 attorneys that cover ITA, Contempt of Court and Mental Health Court are now a cohesive unit and a sought-after rotation due to her vision, organization and patience. She also provides training to the entire office and has broadened our knowledge of mental health issues and trauma informed communication.

The District Court Bench of Snohomish County would be strengthened by the addition of Rachelle Francis and the skill, knowledge and compassion that she brings to her work.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JMcIntyre', with a stylized, cursive script.

Jennifer McIntyre
Snohomish County Public Defender Association
Assistant Director
2722 Colby Avenue, Suite 200
Everett, WA 98201-3527
Ph: (425) 339-6311
Email: jmcintyre@snocopda.org

March 14, 2023

Members of the Snohomish County Council
Robert J. Drewel Building
Eighth Floor
3000 Rockefeller Ave. M/S 609
Everett, WA 98201

Dear Councilmembers,

I have practiced law since 1999 and am a proud Public Defender at the Snohomish County Public Defender Association (SCPDA). I also serve on the Kenmore City Council (located in King County). I enthusiastically recommend Rachelle Francis for the position of Snohomish County District Court Judge. Rachelle is my supervisor at SCPDA, where I met her; her calm temperament combined with her legal prowess immediately impressed me. In my experience, this combination makes our best judges. Rachelle's manner conveys and commands respect. Her record is formidable, with a long commitment to vigorous public defense, representing people of all backgrounds, and people facing every sort of challenge, including substance abuse issues and behavioral health issues. Rachelle will bring to the bench a deep understanding of those she judges.

I am also greatly impressed by Rachelle's deep community roots, including working in Snohomish County agriculture. This is proof she truly relates to the community she serves and further proof of her ability to work hard for that community.

Rachelle is the perfect candidate for District Court. Please appoint her to this position.

Sincerely,


Joseph H. Marshall
6210 NE 198th Street
Kenmore, WA 98028

March 15, 2023

Members of the Snohomish County Council
Robert J Drewel Building
Eighth Floor
3000 Rockefeller Ave. M/S 609
Everett, WA 98201

Re: Rachelle Francis-Candidate for Snohomish County District Court Judge-Cascade Division

Dear Councilmembers,

I am a retired Snohomish County District Court Judge who sat in Evergreen District Court for 44 years, during which time I had the opportunity to observe many attorneys come through my courtroom. I've known Rachelle Francis for over 20 years and I believe she will be a great addition to the District Court bench.

Rachelle stands out in my mind after so many years for a number of reasons. To begin, she successfully tried many jury trials in my Court, and found strong credibility with jurors. She made solid arguments with juries and with the bench and had a strong grasp of criminal law. She clearly cared about her clients and treated them with dignity and compassion.

In addition to her advocacy, Rachelle formed positive working relationships with her colleagues. During the time that Rachelle practiced in my Court, there were a number of different prosecutors with different styles and personalities. Rachelle navigated the adversarial process with respect and civility, and prosecutors responded in kind.

Likewise, Rachelle had a healthy respect for the bench even when arguing passionately for clients, and unlike "the look" I've received from many other exasperated attorneys when receiving unwanted rulings, she always accepted the outcome with polite acknowledgment and then pivoted to figure out what the next step was for her client.

Given the rural area surrounding Evergreen District Court and Monroe, there are a lot dark and desolate roads. From the bench, I often commented to attorneys and litigants that there seemed to be an area where DUI charges were particularly dense. I coined this area "The Golden Triangle". Rachelle constructed a poster of The Golden Triangle and used it as a prop in trials. That poster hung in my office until I retired this year.

I would wholeheartedly recommend the Council appoint Rachelle Francis to the new Cascade District Court position. Her legal skill and commitment to justice, as well as her temperament and respect for her colleagues and the bench make her an excellent candidate.

Sincerely,

/s/Judge Steven Clough (ret)

Snohomish County District Court-Evergreen Division

Linda W.Y. Coburn
Washington State Court of Appeals
One Union Square
600 University Street
Seattle, WA 98101
206-464-7423

March 11, 2023

Snohomish County Council
Robert J. Drewel Building
Eighth Floor
30000 Rockeveller Ave., M/S 609
Everett, WA 98201

RE: Appointment of Snohomish County District Court Judge, Cascade Division Pos. 2

Dear Members of the Snohomish County Council:

I am a long-time resident of Snohomish County and dedicated my entire legal career to serving the residents of this county. When I learned that Rachelle Francis was seeking the appointment to be the first judge to fill the new judicial seat in the Cascade Division of Snohomish County District Court, I could not be more thrilled.

I have known Rachelle since I started my legal career. She was one of the veteran attorneys I looked up to when I was first assigned to the Everett Division of Snohomish County District Court. We both worked for the Snohomish County Public Defenders. Rachelle provided amazing guidance to me as a new attorney. I personally saw her in action in and outside the courtroom. She was a role model in every way. She was always prepared and represented her clients well. She was kind and compassionate. While she was a zealous advocate, she was always professional. She was well respected by her clients, her peers, opposing counsel and the court. She showed me the wisdom in plea negotiations and the art of trial skills.

Since those early years, Rachelle has expanded her expertise, particularly in the world of those battling mental health under the Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA). Not only has she represented some of the most vulnerable in our community with empathy and understanding, but she has also contributed significantly as a collaborator with stakeholders to find ways to better serve our community. The County's obligations to ensure those held under the ITA received due process did not pause when it seemed the world shut down in response to COVID. Rachelle worked with prosecutors, crisis responders, behavioral health agencies and judges. She helped write policies for the ITA courts which were adopted by the Washington Supreme Court for statewide use during the COVID-19 pandemic. She collaborated with Snohomish County Prosecutors to develop a viable platform for remote hearings. Rachelle is currently the ITA supervisor for the Snohomish County Public Defenders Association.

Rachelle has dedicated her entire legal career to this county, which is not surprising given her local roots growing up on Camano Island and raising her family in Stanwood. After 22 years as an amazing attorney, she is more than ready to take the leap to serve her community as the first judge to hold this new position in Cascade Division. She is more than well versed on every type of case that comes through district court. But she also brings the in-depth knowledge of how the civil world of ITA and the criminal world in courts of limited jurisdiction intersect. In my years as a trial judge, some of the most difficult cases that came before me were defendants who were charged with a crime who undisputedly suffered from a mental health crisis, including serious diagnosis that required medical intervention. The on-going difficulties judges face in trying to get defendants transferred to Western State Hospital is nothing going away any time soon. Rachelle is probably better equipped than even current judges in navigating these challenging waters.

In all the years I have known Rachelle, I have never heard a single negative criticism of her from clients, peers, supervisors, opposing counsel or judges. Everyone benefits from the opportunity to have her involved in whatever the case or challenge of the day brings.

I give my utmost highest recommendation for Rachelle. Snohomish County is so fortunate that she is willing and able to bring her talents to the bench. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Linda W.Y. Coburn', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Linda W.Y. Coburn, Judge

March 14, 2023

Members of the Snohomish County Council
Robert J. Drewel Building
Eighth Floor
3000 Rockefeller Ave. M/S 609
Everett, WA 98201

Dear Councilmembers,

I have practiced law since 1999 and am a proud Public Defender at the Snohomish County Public Defender Association (SCPDA). I also serve on the Kenmore City Council (located in King County). I enthusiastically recommend Rachelle Francis for the position of Snohomish County District Court Judge. Rachelle is my supervisor at SCPDA, where I met her; her calm temperament combined with her legal prowess immediately impressed me. In my experience, this combination makes our best judges. Rachelle's manner conveys and commands respect. Her record is formidable, with a long commitment to vigorous public defense, representing people of all backgrounds, and people facing every sort of challenge, including substance abuse issues and behavioral health issues. Rachelle will bring to the bench a deep understanding of those she judges.

I am also greatly impressed by Rachelle's deep community roots, including working in Snohomish County agriculture. This is proof she truly relates to the community she serves and further proof of her ability to work hard for that community.

Rachelle is the perfect candidate for District Court. Please appoint her to this position.

Sincerely,


Joseph H. Marshall
6210 NE 198th Street
Kenmore, WA 98028



**King County
District Court
East Division - Redmond Courthouse**

8601 160th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, Washington 98052
Telephone: (206) 688-0418
Fax: (206) 296-0592

April 18, 2023

Snohomish County City Council
Robert J. Drewel Building, Eighth floor
3000 Rockefeller Avenue, M/S 609
Everett, Washington 98201

Re: Rachelle Francis - Appointment to Snohomish County District Court- Cascade Division

Dear Snohomish County Councilmembers,

I am writing this letter in enthusiastic support of Rachelle Francis for the position of Judge. I have had the privilege of knowing Rachelle for the past 20 years and in that time, I have come to know her as a person of exceptional character, intelligence, and integrity.

We began our legal careers in Snohomish County, she as a public defender and myself as a prosecutor. We were on opposite sides of cases, and she was always extremely professional, prepared, collegial and an excellent trial attorney. She has the rare ability to balance legal technicalities with real-world pragmatism and an acute sense of fairness, making her a perfect fit for the role of Judge.

In addition, Rachelle's unique background and extensive knowledge of the Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) also make her an invaluable asset for the position of Judge. Her experience and expertise in this area have allowed her to gain a deep understanding of the struggles that people with mental illness face, and how the legal system can help them get the treatment and support they need. As an attorney specializing in mental health law, Rachelle has worked tirelessly to ensure that the rights and interests of those with mental illness are protected.

Rachelle's temperament, compassion, and sound judgment make her an ideal candidate for the position of Judge. She has the ability to listen patiently to all sides of an argument, carefully consider the evidence presented, and make fair and impartial decisions that are firmly grounded in the law.

I am confident that Rachelle would make a valuable contribution to the judiciary. She possesses the necessary legal knowledge, experience, and personal qualities to excel as a Snohomish County District Court Judge. She would make an outstanding contribution to the judiciary and the legal profession, and I would welcome her as a colleague.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michelle Gehlsen", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Michelle Gehlsen
Judge, King County District Court

JUDGE ANTHONY E. HOWARD

3000 Rockefeller Ave, M/S 508, Everett, WA 98201 * JudgeAnthonyHoward@gmail.com * (425) 388-3580

To: Snohomish County Council

**Re: Rachelle Francis
Applicant for District Court Judge, Cascade Division**

Dear Councilmembers,

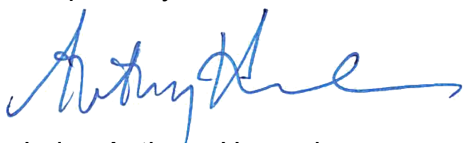
I encourage you to appoint Rachelle Francis to the bench in Snohomish County District Court, Cascade Division. She has precisely the experience, personal attributes and dedication to public service that will improve our court. Her legal career is defined by her dedication to serving others, particularly those in our community who experience poverty, trauma, substance use disorders and mental illness.

When I began my career at the Snohomish County Public Defender Association, I had the opportunity to work alongside Ms. Francis representing indigent defendants charged with misdemeanor crimes in District Court. She was always a hard-working and thoughtful attorney, but what I found most compelling was the quiet and effective way that she zealously represented her clients – always with the utmost professionalism, humility, and skill. She was winning trial after trial. Yet, unlike other attorneys in our office, she sought no recognition from anyone. Her reward was knowing that her work was vital to achieve justice for the most disadvantaged people living in Snohomish County. She and I have worked in this legal community for more than twenty years, and I have never heard anything but glowing praise about Rachelle’s work – from prosecutors, her colleagues, and judges.

Ms. Francis’s experience in criminal law is critical to her qualifications for this position, but her most consequential impact will likely come from her deep understanding of the Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) and how that civil process intersects with criminal law – specifically, the impacts on our jail population. Washington criminal and civil statutes fail to adequately address the common situation where a seriously mentally ill incarcerated defendant should be transitioned from a jail, which unquestionably exacerbates symptoms of mental illness, to a more appropriate therapeutic setting. Ms. Francis is uniquely positioned to help us innovate and find a more humane, safe and effective connection between the law and untreated mental illness.

My admiration for Rachelle extends beyond her work as an attorney. She and her husband, Mike, are raising four remarkable children in Stanwood. Like my wife and me, they are always running from one sporting event to another. The Francis family is, quite simply, lovely. I have enjoyed getting to know them as we watch our boys play baseball and become fine young men. When I became aware of the possibility of a new judicial position in the Cascade Division, I immediately contacted Rachelle. Her deep roots in the North Snohomish County area, combined with her impeccable credentials and humble demeanor, make her the perfect person to decide important issues from the bench. I strongly encourage you to appoint Rachelle Francis.

Respectfully,



Judge Anthony Howard
Snohomish County District Court, Everett Division

March 15, 2023

Members of the Snohomish County Council
Robert J Drewel Building
Eighth Floor
3000 Rockefeller Ave. M/S 609
Everett, WA 98201

Re: Rachelle Francis – Candidate for Snohomish County District Court Judge - Cascade

Dear Councilmembers,

I am currently the Presiding Judge in Everett Municipal Court and have known Rachelle Francis for over 20 years. We were colleagues at Snohomish County Public Defender Association before I joined the bench in 2018. Based on Rachelle's commitment to access to justice, and the unique combination of experiences she brings, I think she would be a great addition to the Snohomish County District Court Bench.

I first worked with Rachelle when we both handled misdemeanor defense in Cascade District Court. Caseloads were significantly larger back then, and Rachelle managed hers efficiently while honing her jury trial skills. She embraced jury trial litigation as an important and effective way to advocate for those charged with crimes in District Court and was frequently in trial. This practice clearly developed her understanding of criminal statutes, procedures, and the Rules of Evidence.

Rachelle took on a new type of advocacy challenge fourteen years ago when she began representing individuals who are detained under the Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA). Here, she continued to develop litigation skills, but also strengthened her ability to communicate well with clients-particularly those with mental health challenges. Given the diverse and often marginalized population that the ITA court includes, Rachelle has had to adapt to various situations where patience and an ability to listen actively are paramount. She has helped clients navigate difficult situations with empathy and compassion.

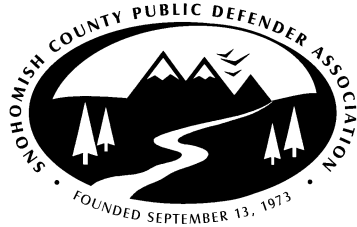
Administratively, Rachelle has played an active leadership role in the ITA unit as it has grown over the years in response to the addition of multiple Behavioral Health facilities. She has trained and mentored new attorneys and crafted procedures and policies for this growing unit. She has been a source of advice and information to the Public Defender's office on this area of law that is becoming increasingly important. As mental health challenges become an increasing factor in our criminal legal system, I believe Rachelle's experience and insights will be an important contribution to the work of the Snohomish County District Court

Rachelle is an extremely well-qualified candidate for the Cascade District Court position, and I urge her appointment.

Sincerely,

Judge Any Kaestner

Everett Municipal Court



Snohomish County Public Defender Association

2722 Colby Avenue, Suite 200 • Everett, WA 98201-3527 • www.snocopda.org

Phone: 425-339-6300 • 1-800-961-6609 • Fax: 425-339-6363

March 27, 2023

Snohomish County Council

RE: Appointment of Rachele Francis to Snohomish County District Court Judicial Position

To the Snohomish County Council,

I am writing this letter of recommendation on behalf of Rachele Francis. I am the Executive Director at the Snohomish County Public Defender Association (SCPDA). I met and came to know Ms. Francis during her employment at SCPDA starting in 2001. I had the privilege to promote Ms. Francis to be the supervisor of the Involuntary Commitment Unit. She is one of the most experienced legal experts working at the intersections of civil law, criminal law, and mental health. It is my pleasure to recommend that you appoint Rachele Francis to be a Judge in Snohomish County District Court.

Rachele has the courtroom and client experience, the technical skills, and the professionalism to perform the duties of a judicial officer. Rachele is recognized for her commitment to the dignity of individuals brought before and working in court systems. She is well respected in Snohomish County. She has experience in Snohomish County Superior and District Courts as well as civil Involuntary Commitment hearings. Rachele has worked through several legislative and local reforms as well as the COVID pandemic. She has demonstrated her abilities to understand current systems and processes while also adapting to evolving legal standards and workplace safety issues.

Rachele is one of most kind and thoughtful people I know. We have worked through several challenging issues over the years. Rachele is reliable, steady, and demonstrated persistence. These qualities are highly desirable in a judicial candidate.

I do not have any reservations to recommend Rachele Francis for a judicial appointment.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Kyle

Kathleen Kyle
Snohomish County Public Defender Association Executive Director

April 1, 2023

Snohomish County Council
Robert J. Drewel Building
Eighth floor
3000 Rockefeller Ave. M/S 609
Everett, WA 98201

Dear Members,

I am writing this letter to support Rachelle Francis for the appointment of District Court Judge, Cascade Division. I have been a friend and colleague of Ms. Francis for over 20 years. I know her to be a dedicated attorney with vast legal expertise. Over the past 22 years, she has held many positions in our office and is currently in a leadership role as a Supervisor of the Involuntary Civil Commitment Unit.

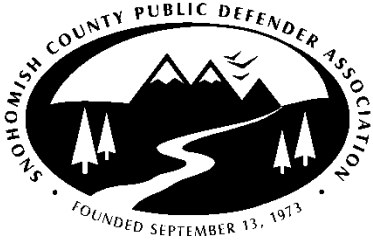
Early in my career, I had the opportunity to work closely with Rachelle on criminal cases in District Court. I am not an attorney, I work as an Investigator, as such, I work with many attorneys. Due to my position, I also can closely observe attorneys work ethic. We have demanding caseloads, and tensions can run high at times in the adversarial legal system. But what has always impressed me about Rachelle, even in the early stages of her career, is her natural ability to take a calm, measured, thoughtful approach to the most chaotic situations. I have never seen her lose patience with a difficult client, I have never observed her treat anyone with disrespect, however, Rachelle can clearly articulate her position in a direct manner without being confrontational. She is a professional in every sense of the word. Because of her legal experience, strong work ethic, professional approach and innate judicial manner, I believe Rachelle would make an extraordinary addition to District Court.

On a personal note, last summer I reached out to Rachelle when a family member was hospitalized for a mental health crisis. It was completely out of the blue and I was at a loss on what to do. Rachelle gave me invaluable guidance, for which, I will always be grateful. Rachelle has thorough knowledge of legal limitations and medical challenges family members face in these types of situations and she showed great compassion.

In closing, I want to thank you for taking the time to read this letter and strongly endorse Rachelle Francis for District Court Judge, Cascade Division.

Sincerely,

Katherine McCall
214 Wall Street
Camano Island WA 98282



Snohomish County Public Defender Association

2722 Colby Avenue, Suite 200 • Everett, WA 98201-3527

Phone: 425-339-6300 • Fax: 425-339-6363 • www.snocopda.org

Snohomish County Council
Robert J. Drewel Building
Eighth Floor
3000 Rockefeller Ave. M/S 609
Everett, WA 98201

April 9, 2023

RE: Letter in Support of Rachelle Francis for Cascade District Court Judge

Dear Members of the Snohomish County Council,

I am writing this letter in support of Rachelle Francis's application for Judicial appointment to the Cascade District Court bench. I have served as a public defender alongside Rachelle for the past 20 years. Public defenders are the vanguard of the Sixth Amendment, ensuring that when a person appears before a tribunal with the power to take her or his life or liberty, that person is treated fairly under the law.

Rachelle has devoted her legal career to representing our community's most vulnerable. For the past 22 years Rachelle has provided exceptional representation both to litigants going through the criminal legal system, and for the past 14 of those years, advocating on behalf of clients experiencing behavioral health issues facing civil commitment. With Rachelle's unique experience as a public defender in both the criminal and civil legal systems, I have every confidence that as a member of the bench, she will be a sharp advocate ensuring access to justice for citizens and a fair tribunal for litigants.

Throughout her time as a public defender, Rachelle has earned the respect of her peers and the bench. She has a lengthy history of working collaboratively with colleagues, prosecutors, the bench, and other community stakeholders. She has a well-deserved reputation for hard work, integrity, compassion, and leadership.

Rachelle is intelligent, courageous, kind, and even-tempered, qualities every judicial officer should possess. I cannot speak highly enough about this accomplished lawyer. She has been an incredible asset to the Snohomish County Public Defender. I enthusiastically endorse Rachelle Francis for appointment to the bench. There is no more qualified attorney.

Sincerely,

Laura Martin, WSBA #32897

Members of the Snohomish County Council
Robert J. Drewel Building Eighth Floor
3000 Rockefeller Ave m/s 609
Everett , WA 98201

March 31, 2023

Re: District Court Judicial Position

To Members of the Council,

I am writing to share my earnest recommendation that you appoint Rachelle Francis to fill the newly created Judicial position in Snohomish County District Court. As you will undoubtedly hear from anyone who has worked in any capacity with Ms. Francis, she is smart, thoroughly prepared and interacts with counsel, clients and colleagues in a calm and composed way, no matter the situation at hand. Her demeanor is consistently reasonable and she will make a wonderful Judge if appointed. Aside from her vast experience litigating cases, she is a true mentor within the Public Defender's office, sharing time and expertise to help train and support future litigators. Her focused work with mentally ill clients would be a serious advantage on the bench as she has a thorough understanding of the trauma and behavioral health issues and illnesses that so many court participants struggle with. I heartily endorse Ms. Francis, a beloved and respected colleague at the Public Defender's office for more than twenty years.

Most Sincerely,



Natalie Tarantino
Attorney at Law

Members of the Snohomish County Council
Robert J. Drewel Building, Eighth floor

March 31, 2023

Dear Snohomish County Council Members,

Rachelle Francis has had a lengthy career as a public defender at the Snohomish County Public Defender Association (SCPDA) and has served in numerous roles that I believe will be an asset to the Snohomish County Judiciary.

I have had the pleasure of working with Rachelle Francis as a member of SCPDA's management team for the last several years. In that time, I have had the experience of seeing Rachelle's leadership skills in action. She has been a remarkable supervisor to her unit. She is approachable, warm and genuinely listens. She is there for colleagues for even the smallest issue, because if it is important to them, she makes it important to her. She is not dismissive and will earnestly try to solve an issue or work with that colleague to find a resolution. She treats everyone with respect and makes them feel heard. I believe these leadership skills are essential to a judicial role. A judge should be attentive and open-minded, and make everyone entering the courtroom feel like they are going to be in front of someone who will give them a fair chance.

For many people, entering a courtroom can be one of the most stressful experiences of their lives and it is essential for the person wearing the robe to be empathetic. Rachelle has had the unique role of being on the frontlines of the ever-evolving intersectionality of the behavioral health and criminal legal system. This area is one of the most challenging aspects of the legal field, and Rachelle has been immersed in it for over a decade. This gives her the distinctive advantage of really understanding how mental issues manifest in everyday situations and the various ways it impacts a client's life. She has seen firsthand how substance use issues and impacts of trauma and the stigmatization of behavioral health issues intersect in the courtroom.

Finally, I believe Rachelle would make an excellent member of the judiciary because she is a skilled collaborator. I have seen Rachelle's thoughtfulness whenever we have had discussions debating internal policy issues. She carefully considers the information presented and has a thoughtful approach in her responses. She is not a reactive person. I believe this will translate especially well into a potential judicial position. It is essential for a judge to pay attention to everyone in the courtroom, and provide a stable and consistent presence for the people that appear before them.

I wholeheartedly endorse Rachelle Francis as a candidate for the Snohomish County Judiciary and if you need any additional information from me, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Warmly,

Sara

Sara Ayoubi
Attorney Administrator
Snohomish County Public Defender Association
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425.339.6300 x201

April 10, 2023

Members of the Snohomish County Council
Robert J. Drewel Building
Eighth Floor
3000 Rockefeller Ave, M/S 609

Re: Rachele Francis, Snohomish County District Court, Cascade Division candidate

Members of the Snohomish County Council,

As a member of the Washington State Bar Association working with the Snohomish County Public Defender Association (SCPDA), I endorse Rachele Francis for the newly created judgeship in Snohomish County District Court, Cascade Division.

I have known Ms. Francis over five years and believe that she would be an ideal judge.

Ms. Francis would be a tremendous asset to the judicial bench and to the citizenry of Snohomish County.

Ms. Francis has repeatedly demonstrated compassion towards her colleagues, clients, and adverse parties.

As a supervisor, Ms. Francis has demonstrated patience and an eagerness to help in the development of everyone she encounters.

Her time as an attorney-supervisor of the Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) and Contempt units of the SCPDA has provided her an expertise in recognizing and understanding many factors contributing to recidivism including trauma, behavioral health, and substance abuse. Her time in the ITA and contempt units has also allowed her to become knowledgeable in the civil rules of practice and the standards required to administer the judicial duties pertaining to civil issues a District Court judge will face, e.g., temporary restraining orders. All of which coupled with her experience in criminal defense gives her a unique understanding of the legal system—both in a criminal and civil context.

Ms. Francis has demonstrated patience and candor coupled with empathy and understanding. I believe that these characteristics will contribute to a judicial demeanor that would enhance the District Court bench and the perception of the judiciary among the public.

Sincerely,



Srikanth K. Naidu

Snohomish County Council
Robert J. Drewel Building
Eighth Floor
3000 Rockefeller Avenue, M/S 609
Everett, WA 98201

April 7, 2023

Re: Recommendation of Rachelle Francis for appointment to Snohomish County District Court - Cascade

Dear Members of the Snohomish County Council,

I am writing in support of Rachelle Francis for appointment to the Snohomish County District Court bench. I have known Rachelle for over twenty (20) years and worked with her from a variety of view points.

I first met Rachelle when she was a new attorney at the public defender's office and I was working in a support staff role in the office. I was able to observe Rachelle work tirelessly to advocate for her clients and a commitment to providing access to justice for everyone.

I later came to have the privilege of having Rachelle as a colleague and fellow attorney to work with. Her knowledge of the law was a real asset to her colleagues and she had earned a reputation as a skilled litigator.

I came to know Rachelle best though when I took the position as the prosecutor handling the civil commitment matters for Snohomish County. For almost a decade, I worked as opposing counsel to Rachelle Francis and can tell you that she was always knowledgeable of the law and the rules of evidence. Rachelle's compassion for the people she served, individuals that were in crisis, was always palpable. The Involuntary Treatment Act cases are an interesting blend of the law, behavioral health and social work. These cases require not only knowledge of the law but of mental health diagnoses, symptoms of mental health, substance abuse, and trauma. Rachelle excelled in all of these areas and how to help her clients connect with services within the system.

As the Lead and supervisor of the Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) Unit for the public defender's office, Rachelle was able to work collaboratively with myself in the prosecutor's office and the other actors within the court and behavioral health systems to keep our court system running efficiently, while still addressing patient rights. In 2019, our court system required a complete overhaul when the prior administrative parties stepped down. Rachelle was able to work well with the prosecutor's office, clerk's office, and the court to create protocols and procedures to administratively run the ITA calendars moving forward. Rachelle was able to again work diligently and collaboratively when the pandemic required our court system to quickly become a remote working system in March of 2020. We were

given roughly three working days to work with the hospitals to conduct our calendars and hearings via remote video conference.

I strongly believe that Rachelle Francis has the breadth of legal knowledge and experience, the temperament, and compassion to be a wonderful District Court Judge. I strongly recommend her to you for appointment.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for any further information. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

William C. Steffener

Deno Millikan Law Firm, PLLC
3411 Colby Avenue
Everett, WA 98201
(425) 418-3598

The application for appointment for Rachelle Francis has been withheld from the online materials.

Pursuant to RCW 42.56 a copy of this document may be requested through a [public records request](#).