

## Question of the Month: judicial education

### Did you receive formal judicial education before you heard your first case?

Responses		
Yes	32.12%	238
No	67.88%	503
		262
<b>Answered</b>		<b>741</b>
<b>Skipped</b>		<b>0</b>

1	Education is mandatory and required testing before we can take office, if we do not pass testing further education is presented and additional testing. In my case I was the previous Clerk of Court so was familiar with the court procedure. Being a non lawyer Judge training was very important and continuing education is imperative, continued discussion among judges is also important and learning never stops.
2	After thought I would say the correct answer is yes, but I did do a few simple hearings that I had done many times as a practicing attorney before the orientation. I practiced in the court room before becoming a judge, I can't imagine what it might be like for someone that didn't have a trial practice.
3	We were given some basic training by judges on our own bench before handling a docket, but formal state wide training was conducted a couple of months after we had been sitting. This was actually very beneficial because we knew enough to know what we needed to concentrate on in the formalized training
4	I was just given a one hour overview by the Presiding Judge.
5	Mandatory attendance by state law to attend 2-1 week long training sessions a year along with a written test every 4 years.
6	Not before, but a few months after I heard my first cases. It would have been better if I had had it before I heard my first cases, but it was not critical.
7	Participated in the NJC's two week session on non-atty judges
8	So important. Lawyers are rarely naturally good judges. We need more support for NJC.

I met with the Judge I would be replacing a few times over the couple of months between my election and when I took office. That, combined with learning from how the judges I had practiced in front of as a lawyer gave me a fantastic starting point to begin hearing cases.

We had a very basic two day course. Fortunately, I had experience in private practice and our states attorneys office to help prepare me. I am not sure how prepared, if at all, some judges are. Funding issues should not force the judiciary to be an “on the job training” position.

One week at Judicial College

Relied on 20 plus years of practice in numerous courts and observed a municipal judge on two occasions. Earn while you learn.

Education for a week about two weeks after I took the bench

My agency used to send the new hearing officials to Reno but stopped when I was hired in 2011.

There is no formal training provided for appellate judges in my state prior to taking the bench. When I asked about attending the school for trial judges, the chief judge discouraged me. As a new judge, I think additional insights into the judging process—even though not directly on point—would have been very helpful. With so few appellate judges taking the bench at any given time, it simply isn’t practical to conduct a new judges school for us.

THROWN RIGHT INTO THE CRIMINAL FIRST APPEARANCE DOCKET. Judges thought I could handle it as I was a criminal defense attorney for years. It was a lot different on the other side of the bar!

Started immediately after 29 years of trial and general practice. No mentorship or training, only a benchbook.

I had been a defense attorney for one year and an assistant district attorney for six years so I was very familiar with the criminal justice system. I was appointed to be a judge by our Governor and sworn in about two weeks later. Within one hour I was holding misdemeanor criminal court. My first defendant plea guilty to prostitution. I was at a lost as to what sentence I should give and how to word it. I leaned over to my courtroom clerk and whispered "What do I do now?" She leaned back to me and said "Any damned thing you want!" I quickly realized she was correct but I still did not know what I should do. It was four months before I got to go to "New Judges' School." That was 29 years ago and thanks to the National Judicial College and others I am better trained!

But attended about 8 months later.

Approximately 4 weeks.

Magistrate from N.M.

The training was essential to starting off on the right foot. I received ethics training along with more technical courses, as well as docket management.

Technically I was on the bench for two weeks before attending Missouri's Week long orientation for new Judges.

Unsure what is meant by "formal". I received 2 weeks of on-site training through a training program at our court. I was able to sit with different judges on different dockets and proceedings. I was also given a resource book. But it wasn't until about 2 months later that I went to our state's judicial college for a week.

Taking the Bench webinar

VERY LITTLE. I HAD THE 1ST 40 HOURS OF 80 REQUIRED BY TEXAS WHEN YOU FIRST BECOME A JP. A FEW WEEKS LATER I HAD A MAJORLY PUBLICIZED TRIAL REGARDING PUPPY MILLS.

I attended two weeks of in-house training as well as the 10 day administrative law course taught at NJC.

I merely reviewed the recordings of many types of hearings.

I will say yes, as training was provided at each level as I progressed in my career from municipal court to magistrate court to county trial court. I was fortunate to be able to enroll in formal training for each class of court and the training took place within a few weeks of the start of my terms.

I am not sure if New Judges Orientation is formal training. It's an overview of what we will deal with, but not hands on practice which I think is very important (mock trials to get the hang of it at least).

My agency conducted a two-week intensive boot camp followed by the fair hearing course at the NJC.

I am a tribal judge in Arizona and had no formal legal courses when appointed. I was immediately sent to New Judges Orientation for a week of intense training in January, then a second week in April. I was informed that the class I was in was the first time tribal judges were present. There were two judges from different tribal communities and myself and another from the same community. The training was exactly what I needed to start me off and to this day, I repeat what I consider one of the most valuable lessons I heard at closing to baby judges; "write your order so that the man on the street can read it, understand what the hearing was about, and why you ruled the way you did." I have been a judge for fourteen years and continue to learn from every judge I meet.

Had 23 years private practice before going on bench. Didn't know as much as I thought I did, but enough to muddle through. The two-week course was very helpful. Been on bench now 17+ years and every NJC course - been to many - has been beneficial.

had a very active trial practice, before taking the bench.

If not before first case, within a week or two thereafter.

It was essential. Being a lawyer is nothing like being a judge, with an entirely different skill set required. Transitioning from an advocate to a neutral takes a lot of thought, preparation and understanding that a new judge, without experience judging, only gets through judicial training.

This is something that we are struggling with in the State of Washington. We do a week long Judicial College in January of each year, but find that many Judges have already been on the bench 6 - 12 months. We are looking at ways in which we can bridge this gap.

In Ohio, about 4 weeks after my election in 1998, I attended a 2-1/2 day training for new judges. They sorted us by jurisdiction. We returned approximately 3 months later, after 8-10 weeks on the bench, for an additional 2-1/2 day training. I know Ohio has continued a similar program, but I do not know the details.

But it was only one week. More training would've been helpful!

I began hearing cases six months before receiving formal judicial education.

No, but, I did attend Minnesota's "New Judge School" about a month later; it was good then, but it has gotten much better and more complete since then, from what I hear from our new judges. About three months after getting sworn in, all new judges in Oklahoma were invited to attend a judicial orientation program.

Two week Course

one week with the office of court administration (NYS). mandatory taking the bench school for non attorney judges.

I was first appointed and there was not time

I was a prosecutor for years.

I am an administrative judge with the federal EEOC. I heard cases for eight years before I had any training. And when I did have training, it wasn't at all helpful: case briefs from someone in Washington who had never heard a case.

They are now assigning mentor judges to newly appointed judges and I wish they had had something like that for me. There are all kinds of new issues when one becomes a judge and it can be confusing without someone to give you direction.

enjoyed Judge School but learned more in the high volume traffic courts overlooking the Chicago a River! #backintheday

Hard knocks and an M.J.S. balance the scales.

50 On my first day I was presented a search warrant. As a defense attorney I had reviewed and  
51 challenged them. A very different experience signing one. I almost forgot to swear the officer!  
52 At the FI Judicial college and again in Reno. I was ready.  
I shadowed a senior Judge.

53 We did receive general orientation on District Court's procedures, and new employee training;  
we were provided with local bench books but did not receive training on the judicial bench skills.  
54 Informal mentoring was available and used freely.  
I attended a DV course for judges after being elected and before taking the bench. Soon after  
taking the bench, I attended a new Judge training.

55 All military judges must attend and graduate from the Military Judge  
Course at the Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School, a three-week  
intensive training course for new military judges. The Military Judge  
Course includes not only instruction on substantive criminal law and  
procedure, but practical exercises designed to simulate actual trial practice.  
The capstone exercise for the course is a mock trial over which the student  
must successfully preside, graded by a senior, experienced sitting military  
judge.

56 Although we do receive formal training before taking office and hearing our first case, the best  
57 training is actually presiding over the cases. And learning from experienced judges.  
Indiana has an amazing judicial education that they provide for us.

My first day on the bench was an Order of Protection docket. Even though I had been in courtrooms almost every working day for 25 years as a prosecuting attorney, I was still uneasy. The day did not start smoothly because I almost face planted walking up the two short steps to the bench. No one told me you need to gather your robe in your hand when you go up or down steps. I was sitting above everyone and while that felt odd, I was happy I had all my teeth and my nose was not bleeding from a fall. I went to swear in the first witness and had her raise her hand. I had no idea what to say. The silence was deafening. Time stopped. I panicked. My mind raced, "You idiot! You have seen thousands of witnesses get sworn in. What did the judges say. . . what . . . WHAT?! Then it came to me. "You have seen every Perry Mason episode ever made at least ten times and they said, Do you swear . . ." Hallelujah! Raymond Burr saved me!

58 This really is an accurate depiction of my first day on the bench. When I know someone that is  
59 newly appointed or elected to the bench, I always tell them to remember to gather their robe.  
Ohio has mandatory judicial education.

60 We had a one week course for all newly elected and newly appointed judges for all state judges  
61 regardless of what court they would sit in. We also had a one week course given to each judge  
62 in the particular type of court to which we were assigned.

63 However, my agency sends all new ALJs to "Fair Hearing" at NJC, so I only had proceedings  
64 w/o that training for my first 6 months

65 My training was to sit with a judge from four counties for 1 week each. After that I was on my  
own,

I don't have a law degree. I represented my previous agency by participating in informal and formal hearings. When I was promoted to my current job, the executive director looked at my temperament, experience, and skills in how I conducted myself in the previous job. She believed I could learn the job in conducting hearings. I've been at this job for over a dozen years.

It should be mandatory and would help many.

That was in Fla. in 1976.

I was allowed by our Supreme Court to enroll in the (then) 3 week General Jurisdiction course that commenced within 2 months of being sworn in as a new judge. It was a lifesaver. My general practice experience for the previous 10 years helped me, but was no substitute for the classroom work at NJC. This year begins my 28th year on the bench, having sat in our largest city and in rural courts, having heard every type of case tried in our court system. I am still learning.

Most new judicial officers begin their careers at the beginning of a new year. Judicial College is scheduled the last week of January. This enables judicial officers to get "a feel" for the job, and to learn "what they didn't know they didn't know". This way, they can ask meaningful and intelligent questions which enable them to learn more productively. Also, no one wants to attend a super intense judicial education program over the Christmas holidays.

Was appointed to replace retiring judge and took over his case load for one month before obtaining formal training. Did do over a month of informal training.

I was trained sitting on the Bench by a seasoned judge; then got my formal training through the National Judicial College.

By the time I attended the General Jurisdiction course at the National Judicial College in Reno, I had probably presided over at least 10 felony jury trials. I do not think that the lack of formal education before I heard my first case negatively affected my performance. That said, the GJ course at NJC was a very valuable experience and did improve my performance overall. But I think it was more valuable to me after having been on the bench for at least six months rather than attending without ever having been on the bench.

I was handed a book that contained our local court and administrative orders and a my docket files that I was allowed to read the day before I was sworn in. I did not receive ANY training. Over a year after taking the bench I was offered/allowed to attend a national training and several months following that training that training was offered by the court.

My training was OJT with intermittent opportunities at the Judicial College funded by the tribal court on which I served.



I began my judicial career as a judge of the Oklahoma Workers' Compensation Court, a court of record. Prior to taking the bench, I spent 3 days in conference with experienced judges and newly appointed judges of that court. I also observed court sessions for one week prior to hearing my own docket. When I became a district court judge, I organized a two day session for newly elected judges in our court. Also, once a year, the Oklahoma Judicial Conference sponsors a day of instruction for all new judges. Judges handling juvenile matters have several learning opportunities each year. None of our training sessions are mandatory, however. We could do better in training new judges, but we don't have the resources to expand our programs.

In my state, very brief, but very detailed training precedes a judge taking the bench. I learned from my predecessor, as I was his "alternate" prior to election three and a half years later. I am strongly opposed to requiring a law degree at least at the lower levels because, simply, the skill sets required to be a judge are not the same as that of an attorney.

Illinois does provide "New Judge Training" annually, but I had been on the bench 9 months before the next training was held.

But within 2 months of taking office I did attend the course at NJC.

Am assuming formal judicial education means attending the NJC General Jurisdiction Course.

Our week long program began the first full week of the year. I had one day without formal education.

I watched a lot of proceedings before taking the bench the first time but I did not get training until 4 months after I began.

I was appointed in April. I attended the "new judges college" the following January. I asked a lot of questions of the other judges in my circuit (all in other counties) the first few months.

Looking back, I do not know how I managed to do enough to keep from being reversed on appeal!!

but very soon after

no formal judicial education until months after my first day

83 The Texas Center for the Judiciary provides continuing judicial education to judges in Texas and always has a one week conference for new judges which takes place in December prior to the first day of a new term. I was able to attend such a conference only after I took the bench because I was appointed to a newly created court and took the bench on September 1.

35+ years in private practice trying civil cases helped to some degree.

84 2 week general jurisdiction course at NJC my first year on bench was very helpful

85 Yes. Through our state judicial education branch.

86 the Indiana Supreme Court provides training for all new judicial officers in Indiana after the election and then again in January after new judges take the bench.

87 No but did approximately 6 months in. The experience on the bench prior to attending the National Judicial College General Jurisdiction Course was helpful. I knew much more about what I needed to learn. I also had 30 years experience as a trial lawyer which helped even more.

88 I had practiced in my urban Municipal Court for about 6 years when the Senior Judge asked I sit as an acting Judge. Until the date of my first case, I observed all the different case types as often as possible. That, coupled with my experience before Judges in other State, local and Federal Courts, plus having an exceptional Federal jurist as a trial practice instructor in law school was the only judicial related education I had before being sworn in as a full time Magistrate over 20 years ago. While formal judicial education keeps me up on the law and the rules, my five years as an acting Municipal Court Judge, and other courtroom experiences formed me as a jurist.

89 No, My first formal judicial education was at N.J.C's four-week General Jurisdiction course in 1976. I believe I got more from the course after being on the bench about 6 months, than I would have without any bench time. The course gave me not just knowledge, but judicial confidence, both of which I needed.

90 Ha, on my first day as a judge I was given a five-day motor vehicle homicide jury trial in a case  
91 where I was not even furnished the case file until that morning.

92 I practiced general civil and criminal law for 30 years first.

93 My first day, I presided over a three-day dissolution case.

94 The State Kentucky has a judicial education requirement and tries to have a college for groups  
95 of new judges

96 I attended a week long New Judge's College within my first month on the bench. The New  
97 Judge's College is held in January of every year so if you are appointed to the bench after  
98 January, you have to wait until the next January to attend. The program was very helpful.

99 Indiana provides new judges with training before they take the bench then provides substantial  
100 additional training after they have been on the bench a couple of months and realize how much  
101 they don't know. The training is well thought out and well presented.

102 We serve as non lawyer judges hearing traffic, certain criminal cases, approve warrants, handle  
103 fugitive cases, arraign, set bail on all cases, civil issues up to \$15,000, as well as other issues.  
104 Some judges handle truancy case there was limited training there. Do I feel the training  
105 prepared me yes and no. It gave me a basic understanding of what I needed to do, however all  
106 of the little nice to know things no.

107 Weeks of it!

108 BUT-Missouri has one of the finest Judicial Education programs in the country. Before I took the  
109 bench, I received about 5 volumes of a practice tips, captioned the "Missouri Bench Book".  
110 Missouri requires all new state judges to attend a "New Judge Orientation" program that lasts 6  
111 days. (It starts on a Sunday afternoon and is 8 to 5 the rest of the week). Thereafter, judges  
112 annually attend a 4 day judicial education "update", called the "Missouri Judicial College".

I attended Albany Law School for the Basic Judicial Education Program, taught by law school personnel and experienced judges or attorneys from the state office. Did not have to pass a test, I don't think.

Since then, we have to attend 6 mandatory hours of yearly training and pass an end of class test.

Then we must accumulate 6 additional hours of elective credit. I usually finish the year with 24-30 total credit hours, lots of times thanks to the programs through the National Judicial College campus based courses and/or webinars. Much appreciated.

Orientation for new judges is very valuable.

When I was first appointed to be an ALJ, I had my JD but the state did not sponsor judicial education. My agency lobbied the Legislature for funding and they funded classes at the NJC for all ALJs and Hearing Officers after that.

The Alabama Administrative Office of Courts has a Judicial College which provides a several days long course on judicial training for new judges which takes place between the election in November and taking the oath in January. My local court system also encourages (and expects) new judges to attend the appropriate NJC course within the first year, providing most if not all of the funding through scholarships, grants and direct payments from approved local funds.

Pennsylvania has a weeklong "new judges" school for a newly elected judges. However, if someone is appointed due to a vacancy, they have to wait until the next new Judge school for formal training

Attended NJC training 6 months after hearing my first case.

I voluntarily spent a week with Judge who I was succeeding & Court administration to acclimate myself to changing "role" - I had made numerous appearances in that & other courts plus numerous trials

There is a formal judicial education program, but judges attend it after a few months on the job.

No, in our state, new judges who are also lawyers can hear cases immediately - but still must complete the 2 weeks of mandatory training for judges at a later time.

Ohio has a "New Judge" orientation between election and taking office and again about 3-4 months into your term.

Attended Louisiana's Mandatory Judicial Training and the NJC's General Jurisdiction courses several months after taking the bench.

Initially served on a specially appointed basis for a short time. Later was generally appointed and served for about two months before attending state new judges classes.

no judicial education but I had been a trial lawyer for 20 years before my first case.

I practiced law for 23 years with experience in a variety of cases and before a host of other judges, federal and state. I also served in two state quasi-judicial capacities prior to taking the bench. Shortly after my appointment I attended 2 weeks at the NJC. With all that, Im still uncertain at times after 3 years of experience.

Although there was no formal training I felt it was needed and sought some myself; which is how I found you.

I spent 20 years in the Justice Court before becoming a judge. I attended many classes on civil, traffic and criminal and administrative matters throughout that 20 years. I had a clear understanding of the court system before sitting as a Judge.

But I did attend the NJC's core course for trial judges within a few weeks.

Yes, the initial training I received before my first case as a judge was extremely helpful, as was all of the training I received from the NJC thereafter.

I did not in 1974 but when I returned in 2012 in a different court our State had a "new Judge" school that was three days in duration. It would have been a help in 1974. In 1975 I attended a School in Colorado on Search and seizure and a bit later attended courses at the NJC. Both were a big help.

In Washington, judges are required to attend judicial college within the first 12 months of being appointed/elected to the bench. Judicial college is held in at the end of January. Elected terms begin January 1. Thus, depending on the timing, most new judges are on the bench before attending judicial college.

Our court system provides it in-house on a biannual basis to new judges after their appointment. Because of the downturn in the economy, our courts, like others, had budgets slashed for training, plus most new judges could not take time away for what used to be a three week course in Reno. The new ten day course is better but that's still a long time to be away from one's calendar, and it's difficult to get other judicial coverage for that period of time. Our court system does a good job coordinating continuing judicial education for us in-state and there are some funds to attend out-of-state training.

Showed up on Monday morning with a case file sitting on my desk, and a jury panel on the way down. Fortunately, that was only a one day misdemeanor. My second trial was a three month civil case I took over after the original trial judge became disabled. Thank God for my experience as a trial lawyer (and the assistance of very experienced courtroom staff).

I shadowed and learned from a seasoned colleague for a week before beginning, but do not consider that to be "formal judicial education." That said, I probably learned more from that colleague than I would have from "formal judicial education."

I received formal training after I began hearing cases

I was appointed mid-year and therefore served for 7 months before I attending any formal judicial training. As a former prosecutor, I was relatively prepared, but having a mentor nearby to answer questions about local practices would have been helpful.

My training was expected to be my prior legal practice

I am a tribal court judge. I would have liked to attend the NJC state court judges 10-day training. The NJC tribal court judge training for new judges was pretty limited. That was 5 years ago.

Had five yours on municipal bench prior to taking this bench. There was municipal court training but did not prepare for service on current court.

No training at all - just given a robe and thrown on the bench! That was 21 years ago. We now have a much better judicial education program and in my district we assign mentor judges to help the new appointees.

Maryland does a fantastic job of sending new judges to a week long Orientation and training program. affectionately called "Baby Judge School".

129 I did receive training shortly after taking the bench as required by our State Supreme Court.  
130 I had a month's notice before I took the bench. I used whatever free time I had to observe the  
judge I was replacing and study.

131 I had been a trial lawyer for 30 years before I heard my first case on the bench. There was  
nothing in the realm of evidence that was new to me. There was nothing in the realm of the  
type of case that was new to me.

132 Military judges go through a rigorous month long course before hearing cases.

133 I didn't attend the NJC until after I had been on the bench for at least 6 months. I think it  
helped me more by having some experience on the bench before I attended than it would have  
had I went right to the college before I started.

134 It was very informal and provided by another Administrative Law Judge. A more formal training  
component would have been very helpful, especially if it was done by very experienced judges.  
135 But I should have

I received formal juridical training before I heard my first case because I was a hearing officer  
for 10 years prior to my appointment. I, however, received no formal judicial training prior to  
being hired as a hearing officer.

136 Sworn in at 8:30 am, first hearing was at 9:00 am. I had 9 cases that day, Domestic Violence,  
137 custody, and Kinship Guardianship!

138 Law school graduate and one week intensive legal training thru state Court administration  
Appointed to the bench in 1995. Made very basic mistakes. Didn't go through NJC courses  
until 1996.

139 Experiencing the difference between ignorance and knowledge is the reason that I praise NJC  
every chance that I get.

140 In Georgia, we now have a very good New Judges Orientation seminar through our ICJE. This  
is an excellent program and we follow up with a Mentor assignment.

I was able to attend a 3 day course for "new judges" the month before I was sworn in. It was very helpful. The timing worked for me -- but I understand that because the course is offered only once or twice a year, it might not be available prior to each person taking the bench. My state has started doing so in most cases, though it was a cost cutting step by appointing to office later.

In new Mexico we have a new judge school .....I was a policeman for 20 years and that gave me some background

Yes. It wasn't very good. But yes.

I received training a couple weeks later and it wasn't very useful. They wanted to tell us the law and I wanted to know procedure.

Montana Law requires that Judges in the Courts of Limited Jurisdiction receive mandatory training twice per year and be tested every 4 years in order to sit on the bench. We have some of the best judges in the nation. Every time some dipstick suggests that non-lawyers are not able to be good judges I point out that not one of those lawyers is ever tested again after passing the bar. They would cry like little girls if they had to take the training and tests that our judges do.

I did not attend the course at Natl Judicial College until I had been on the bench for a while. I had been in private practice with lots of litigation experience for 30 years before I got on the bench.

I replaced a retiring judge thirty days after I was appointed. I was advised by other judges to wait to attend the judicial college, so that I would have a better idea of my "judicial shortcomings" when I got to school.

The answer is "no," but I went to a week-long new judge orientation session within the same month I took the bench.

I was sworn in in February 1988 and attended the three-week general jurisdiction course at the National Judicial College in the spring of 1988. All those along three weeks course was very valuable. I have attended several other courses at the National Judicial College including several courses in evidence, problem-solving courts and most recently the leadership course. Each of them has enhanced my knowledge base and I believe improved my performance on the bench.



My initial training was a series of self-study lessons and exams, before I began on-the-job training. On my second day of on-the-job training, I heard my first case!

But I did receive formal training about one year later. Texas then became one of the leaders in judicial education. All judges, elected or appointed, attorney or non-attorney, must complete a certain amount of continuing judicial training every year. The training has also been extended to court staff, associate judges, prosecutors, and defense attorneys.

Because I inherited the probate docket, a legal field in which I had no experience, it certainly would have been nice to have gotten some formal judicial education.

Our State provides judicial education as soon as possible after appointment, prior to investiture. It is State based orientation and education which is court specific. The State then sends Judicial Officers to NJC, but that was 4 months after taking the bench and assuming an active trial docket.

I followed the pattern set by judges I had appeared before as a lawyer.

Not a bit. Not even a mentoring program. Just straight into the fire. Glad I was a litigator before coming on the bench.

I had over thirty years of experience as a prosecuting attorney before I heard my first case. The lack of formal judicial education was no big deal.

Attended a one-week course put on by the state judicial department shortly thereafter.

No but through 15 years of practice I believe I was well prepared when I was called upon to hear 2 bench trials my 1st day.

At NJC and locally at state level

While some judicial orientation is wise prior to taking the bench for the first day, it is not until you have been on the bench for a little while that you realize how little you know and what you need to learn.

I had 30 years of experience but it is not a good practice to put judges on the trial bench without training/education before they start adjudicating cases. This aspirational goal is likely not possible to attain.

I begged to go to at least "New Judge Orientation" but was told it was considered preferable to attend after a new judge had been on the bench for at least a couple of months.

I was a practicing prosecuting lawyer at the time of my being hired.

#### WEEK LONG TRAINING JUST PRIOR TO TAKING THE BENCH--IDAHO JUDGE

Informal training came in observing and working with skilled attorneys that served as judges. I tried to pattern my court room after those judges whose practices I admired and not those whose practices I did not care for or were lacking in understanding or respect for the law or those standing before the bench.

I wish I had.

I am an administrative hearing officer and there was no formal training. It was on the job training with another hearing officer as a mentor.

I had sat as special for other trial judges, and had served as Special Associate Justice and Special Chief Justice for our Supreme Court, but had not had any formal training.

Did get to Reno within about six months.

I attended one State conference 6 weeks prior to appointment

Attended 2-day orientation 6 months after taking the bench

Taking the bench classes over several weekends. Felt sorry for the lay judges, too much information over too short a period, from the basics of legal research for non lawyers to zoning,

.

No I did not, which I found very surprising! This was in Kansas.

It was in 1999, and I had a little handbook and no idea.

I was appointed to a vacancy. our state will not give judges formal training until they are elected.

I did not receive any "formal" judicial education before I heard my first case -- but I was transitioned in with thought and care. I was assigned to a docket consisting of a high volume of less complicated legal matters -- e.g., traffic court, small claims, evictions, contested protective orders. I was provided a manual with legal authority pertaining to those types of matters, as well as tips on handling the different types of cases (I guess that could be considered "formal" judicial education). I had an opportunity to job shadow a colleague handle the docket for a day. Within my first year, I attended to trainings offered to all new judges in the state. I consider myself very lucky that I was not just thrown into the deep-waters of the most complicated judicial matters and left to sink or swim.

Our immediate training consisted of shadowing various judges in different courtrooms in our circuit for two weeks and being exposed to different types of civil and criminal cases. We also received a three-ring binder with tips and legal points on common issues. All new judges are also required to attend a mandatory week long training session put on once a year by the supreme court's administrative office.

I wish I could have received even more judicial training prior to taking the bench.  
I received formal judicial education after sitting for about 6 months.

I was required to take a bench demeanor / bias course, and online courses relevant to the subject matter of my docket. I then spent a great deal of time observing others in their courtrooms who had the same or similar assignments, before taking the bench for the first time. Add in a lot of OJT, and I was ready!

I was fortunate to have practiced in the county and court in which I was first appointed. I found the judicial resources such as the Juvenile Court Bench Book and my statewide colleagues incredibly helpful.

A two week College for New Judges.

But it would have been nice to have.

California's judicial education assures that new judicial officers receive education to assist with the transitioning from attorney to judge.

The first case I heard was as a pro tem judge in municipal court. My training was informal, by the regular municipal court judge. When I was elected to Superior Court, I received a week of "orientation" and training information, but then I was on the bench hearing cases for months before I went to the mandatory state judicial college and later that year, voluntarily, to the 3 week general jurisdiction class at the National Judicial College.

I was a Hearing Officer for approximately seven months before a class was available for me to attend at NJC. The two week Fair Hearing class was very helpful.

I was elected to a municipal court and had no experience. Noone was doing their job properly as often happens when the previous Judge is not up to par. I found Judicial education extremely helpful and many lay people believe Judge's have to have education as to their job. I shadowed other judges for about 5 days and took the bench.

My first few years on the bench were all on-the-job training, although I was familiar with my court from having practiced before it as an attorney for many years. Eventually, I obtained a scholarship to NJC, which enhanced my on-the-job training tremendously.

I was appointed circuit judge in Alabama about 6 months before I attended the general jurisdiction course at the National Judicial College.

Baby judges' school required in Michigan.

Due to funding constraints, I did not receive formal judicial training, other than judicial conferences with case law updates, until I was on the bench for 5 years.

Yes. New York required all new judges to take a course called "Taking the Bench" it was invaluable for me and my co-judge.

Tennessee's Judicial College (aka baby Judge school) was great, even for a guy who had tried a couple hundred jury trials as a lawyer.

Waited three months for formal judicial education.

I was appointed to fill a mid-term vacancy. Formal classes for new judges were not available until after the next judicial election cycle. So, the state judicial institute sent me several boxes of bench books and other information which I fondly referred to as "judge in a box".

199

I received several days of orientation with a mentor judge. Currently, our judges receive 2 weeks of mentoring. In addition, we have a robust one week judicial college.

200

We have a statewide judicial college in late Jan. (to accommodate election cycle). I was fortunate to only have 3 weeks before formal judicial education; those who join the bench after Jan. have to wait for the next college, which could be up to 11 months w/o formal education.

201

They're looking at some on-line materials for people who have to wait for judicial college.

State New Judge Orientation and General Jurisdiction Course at the NJC

202

No, had a jury trial-first day on the job. My training was trial by fire-that was 27 years ago so I know the training is better now. It couldn't have been any worse, could it?

203

I didn't even receive any formal or informal orientation when I took the bench 3 years ago. I asked a peer judge if I could shadow him (on my own time) the week before I took the bench and he graciously obliged. My district has now implemented a mentor program for new judges and provides them a couple weeks of shadowing with experienced judges after they've started.

204

four day workshop presented by the Mississippi Judicial College

205

I received extensive training from my fellow judges-including moots.

I had essentially no "judicial training" before hearing cases. I was law trained and did receive a J.D.

I had practiced extensively before the Court in which I now serve. I had also served as a law clerk for multiple years with multiple judges. This helped me a great deal. I had also had opportunity to attend NJC with the judges for whom I clerked.

I attended special court JX approximately 8 months after taking the bench. I think if I had gone much sooner than that, I would not have been ready for the course. It took about 6 months to starting knowing what I did not know. I have facilitated for the course as well and those that attend too early seem to get less out of it - particularly since the class has to be fairly broad and general and new judges do not know their own JX's peculiarities.

We also have a very experienced, intelligent and supportive state limited jurisdiction association. Membership in which is voluntary, so most members are either looking to learn or willing to help or both. So I was (and still am) able to tap into that support system. Having a support system of experienced judges to talk issues through is more valuable than most education.

I was initially elected as a Town Justice (local court) in 2011 and received no formal judicial education before assuming the bench. I was appointed as a state judge in June 2017 and received formal judicial education for new judges sitting in courts of record (superior courts) in January 2018. Formal judicial education in advance of assuming the bench is very helpful for general orientation purposes, but the reality is that you learn the ins and outs of being a judge once you are on the job. You also bring the body of experience that you have amassed in legal practice to bear.

only an orientation

The opportunity I had to shadow other judges for a few days along, work with an assigned mentor and my 20+ years of courtroom practice adequately prepared me. The formal training that occurred a few months later was more beneficial after having had a few months live experience.

I shadowed another judge for 1 week before assuming my duties.

I became a municipal court judge in 1988. There was no judicial education for this class of courts at that time.

As a new ALJ, I heard cases from September until June without formal education.

I was on the bench four months before any judicial education. I attended the general jurisdiction training at the NJC after four months. It was a big help. Our court has now instituted a one day training for new judges that occurs shortly after a judge is sworn in.

I had New Judge Orientation, and assignment specific training, plus a judicial mentor. after 6 months on the job, I attended what was then the one month NJC General Jurisdiction Course in Reno

However, I did attend a week-long judicial college within one month of being elected to the bench. I also served as a pro tem judge for number of years before that, and never had any formal training in order to do so.

I had a short period (two days) of informal training from the judge I was replacing.

Formal education began one week after I was sworn in so I had heard several matters before receiving the training.

I presided over a jury trial my first week.

Virginia has a very good Pre-Bench training program. Although, it could not have prepared me for all of the challenges I would face, it was an appropriate and useful training.

Although I did not attend any judicial education prior to presiding over my first trial/case in December 1990, I attended a one week judicial orientation training class in January 1991, about six weeks later. The judicial orientation training was and remains mandatory for bench officers in California and was an extremely informative class..

We received education about mostly ethical areas of judicial work. More procedural support would have been helpful at that early stage.

Prior to my appointment, I had practiced criminal law for 17 years in the District Attorney General's office, serving as Deputy for 4 years. I was a certified Criminal Trial Specialist by the National Board of Trial Advocacy. I had tried 100 of cases to a jury. Though FORMAL training was later at the college, I had a great amount of informal education.

The new judges' orientation program took place several months after my appointment to the bench

Since my appointment, Georgia has added 20 hours CJE for new judges although service starts before training.

It is still baptism by fire! You never really know the ropes until you figure it out over a period of years.

There was no new judge orientation or training in Kansas in 1980 when I first took the bench. Since then, we now have a "new judges training" for three days every other January.

Thankfully, within the year of my taking office I attended the general jurisdiction course and NJC. It was a Godsend.

The State of Idaho does a great job of training new judges, but it may not be before the first day of work.

Our new judge college, two sessions, happened within the first 90 days of taking office.

I took the bench in March and I didn't get formal training until the following January. I was fortunate to have many other judges on the bench who I was able to watch and turn to with questions. However, many other judges in less populated areas do not have that option available.

But I should have! It was not available at the court where I began as a Hearing Officer. No funds.

Unless you count the 38 years I tried cases before I went on the bench.

Our state does provide training once a year for new judges and sends all judges to NJC after a year in the job.

No. A little conversation and a few scripts and off we go. Formal training doesn't start till weeks or months later depending on scheduling of classes and judicial college.



234 My first judicial job was as an ALJ for the Social Security Administration. They actually have an  
excellent 4-week training program that all new judges attend before hearing their first case.  
235 My answer assumes that a specially-tailored, 30-day orientation by the state judiciary  
constitutes formal judicial education. If the question assumes that formal education is limited to  
courses offered to a number of judges or courses provided by the NJC, for example, then my  
answer may change.

237 I took the bench in a circuit with 7 other circuit judges, so I was in their offices a lot!

I got my JD and was public defender and advisor on Congressional legislation to my Indian  
Nation council for 25 years. I also practiced general law in state courts, e.g. traffic, probate,  
family, I became a judge 40 years after law school. I was elected for a 6 year term and have  
two years remaining. I've learned that law practice is very different than judging but I've  
appreciated the challenges. I believe that more formal education should be required of new  
238 judges.

As Magisterial District Judges in Pennsylvania, we were required to certify with the  
Commonwealth by taking a month long certification class. This for non-bar members. Bar  
239 members are required to take a one week intro class to the MDJ's.

The court system in my jurisdiction (Virginia) puts on a two week course, done in one week  
increments, for incoming new judges. This was done after our state legislature forced a cut in  
240 our budget so that we no longer receive travel funding for judicial education from the state.

It was impossible to do so based upon the calendar. I did receive it however as soon as  
schedule permitted (within 3 months of taking the bench. Therefore, I believe actually trying a  
241 jury trial case should be a prerequisite to holding the position.

I asked for training, and my boss assured me I would get training. I did, but not before he  
242 started assigning me hearings.

Pennsylvania holds a New Judges' School once every two years. Since I was appointed to fill a  
vacancy I ended up serving 13.5 months on the bench before I attended the next available New  
243 judges' School.

244 Brief overview. But no formal judicial studies until after taking the bench.

245 the timing was fortuitous in terms of my date of being appointed, a short delay until I was sworn  
in, and the intervening occurrence of our annual Judicial College in Washington state.  
246 My first formal training was in April of 1983 at NJC, the two week course for judges of limited  
jurisdiction. I was appointed as a judge in January 1983.

I was a hearing officer hired to adjudicate matters under a contract between a state agency and  
a law school. We had a robust six week training program. We were taught the substantive law  
and also how to adjudicate cases, including course work (conduct of hearings, decision writing,  
evaluating evidence, dealing with difficult attorneys/parties, hearings with interpreters, ADA  
accommodations in hearings, etc...). We also conducted mock hearings that were recorded  
and played back and critiqued (gently) with comments from peers and instructors. It was an  
247 excellent program that had me well prepared for that contract and made my ultimate transition  
to ALJ seamless.

I had years of litigation experience before courts and administrative agencies before taking the  
bench. Although I would have liked to have formal judicial education before hearing my first  
case, the agency's backlog prevented it. More than 2/3rds of the ALJs in my agency have never  
tried a case. In my practice before becoming an ALJ, I attributed the utter lack of litigation  
experience to many inexplicable rulings. Everyone needs formal judicial education, but  
providing it to judges with no litigation experience is essential to due process.

248 Anonymous

Worse yet, all my litigated cases as prosecutor and defense counsel had been in bench trials.  
249 As fate would have it, my first trial as judge was a jury trial.  
The education was helpful to deal with theoretical issues. There is nothing like actual nuts and  
250 bolts experience that educates.  
Other than- here's your robe- here's your courtroom, now go preside over your first felony jury  
251 trial....(on my second day).

My most valuable preparation for becoming a judge was having served as a law clerk for a very well-respected and experienced judge. I was able to learn at his elbow, so to speak, and it also equipped me to know how to utilize law clerks.

Back in 1984, as an Air Force lawyer, at the US Army Judge Advocate ("JAG" School, in Charlottesville, VA. They provided detailed and lengthy training which served me well both as a military judge then an ALJ who conducts litigated hearings.

Judges appointed mid-term often miss timely opportunities for instruction and assistance. Very basic.

Short course given in Washington DC called : "baby judges" school. helpful.

No I received informal training from a judge assigned to new lawyer training and on-the-job training as I did my work. Because I am an appellate judge and was previously an appellate lawyer, the transition was smoother than if I had gone to the trial bench where more training is definitely needed and required in my state.

I took the bench on the criminal docket, presiding over arraignments, sentencings, and PV dispositions, as well as victim waiver requests. No training was provided in advance, and I had no criminal trial experience. Before my first jury trial, I did receive judicial training.

I began as a parttime magistrate hearing domestic violence cases, and I did attend a seminar on the domestic violence laws of my state prior to my first day on the bench. But, I received absolutely no training on "how to be a judge" until much, much later. Parttime judges are completely overlooked but hear most of the first appearance matters and early domestic matters and housing matters in my jurisdiction.

That's a big fat NO!

Our court had a senior judge train new judges.

In Arizona we make every effort to provide New Judge Orientation to Judges before they take the bench.