

ALLEGHENY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

JUDICIAL CANDIDATE PLEDGE

I, Matthew V. Rudzki, a candidate for judicial office, have familiarized myself with the Code of Judicial Conduct and the Code of Civility, as promulgated by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. I have directed special attention to Canon 4 of the Code of Judicial Conduct, including Rules 4.1, 4.2 and 4.4. I agree to conduct my judicial campaign consistent therewith and further consistent with *Republican Party v. White*, 536 U.S. 765 (2002). I further pledge that all campaign advertising will be done fairly, accurately, truthfully, and will maintain the dignity appropriate to the judicial office which I am seeking.



Signature of Candidate

12/11/24

Date

ALLEGHENY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AUTHORIZATION

As a candidate or potential candidate for Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas the Pennsylvania Appellate or Federal Courts, I hereby acknowledge and authorize the procedures of the Allegheny County Bar Association Judiciary Committee, including the following:

1. If I become a candidate, the Allegheny County Bar Association Judiciary Committee will make available to the public the Questionnaire, and my responses, except for the questions and responses which are acknowledged to be confidential, which information shall remain available only to the Committee.
2. My responses are provided without breaching client confidentiality as embodied in Rule 1.6 of the Rules of Professional Conduct.
3. If I become a candidate, the rating assigned to me by the Committee will be publicly announced. Ratings remain valid for 2 years but are subject to reevaluation upon request.
4. Should I receive a Not Recommended rating the Committee will endeavor to notify me prior to a public announcement. If I withdraw from the race, the rating will not be announced, and the questionnaires will not be published.
5. I hereby authorize the Pennsylvania Judicial Conduct Board, the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Board of Law Examiners to transmit my entire file and record, including confidential information contained therein, to the Allegheny County Bar Association Judiciary Committee. I hereby specifically waive any confidentiality rights I may have in those records.
6. I hereby authorize the Judicial Conduct Board, the Disciplinary Board, and the Board of Law Examiners, or the equivalent, in any jurisdiction where I have practiced, been admitted to practice or have applied to either take a bar examination or for admission to the bar to transmit my entire file and record, including confidential information contained therein, to the Allegheny County Bar Association Judiciary Committee. I hereby specifically waive any confidentiality rights I may have in those records.
7. The Allegheny County Bar Association Judiciary Committee may change, during the course of my campaign for office, the original rating assigned to me for cause.

Matthew V. Rudzki

Type or print name



Signature

12/11/24

Date

ACBA JUDICIARY COMMITTEE QUESTIONNAIRE
FOR APPLICANTS CURRENTLY ON THE BENCH

I am seeking a rating for the following court:

- Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas
- Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court
- Pennsylvania Superior Court
- Pennsylvania Supreme Court

1. State your full name and list any other name by which you have ever been known.

Matthew Vincent Rudzki

2. Date and place of birth.

June 2, 1986; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

3. Are you a naturalized citizen? If so, give date and place of naturalization.

N/A

4. Family status:

a) Are you married? If so, state the date of marriage and your spouse's full name, including maiden name, if applicable;

Yes; September 5, 2015; Bridget Marie Recznik

b) Have you been divorced? If so, state the date, the number of the case and the court.

No

5. Have you served in the military? If so,

a) Give dates, branch of service, rank of rate and present status;

N/A

b) Have you ever been rejected or released from the armed services for reasons other than honorable? If so, give details.

N/A

6. List each college and law school you attended, including dates of attendance, any scholastic honors and the degrees awarded. If you left any institution without receiving a degree, state the reason for leaving.

Washington & Jefferson College, August 2004 – May 2008
Bachelor of Arts, 2008, *cum laude*, History & German
Phi Alpha Theta, History Honorary Society
Delta Phi Alpha, German Honorary Society

The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University, August 2009 – June 2013
Juris Doctor, 2013
Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court, 2011-2012
Research Assistant to Dr. Kirk W. Junker, Esq. (Pittsburgh & Cologne, Germany), May 2010 – May 2013
Dr. Wilhem Westhaus Endowment, endowment awarded to law students at the University of Cologne (Germany), 2010

7. List all jurisdictions in which you have applied to take a bar examination, have applied for admission or have been admitted to practice. Include dates of admissions and if not admitted, give application dates and explain the outcome.

- The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, admitted October 22, 2013
- The United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania, admitted December 16, 2013

8. List your professional mailing address and telephone number. Please also list any personal and professional social media usernames and/or handles and any websites you maintain or to which you know that your profile is shared.

District Court 05-2-04
1205 Main Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15215
412-784-8555

LinkedIn: Matthew V. Rudzki
Facebook: Matthew Rudzki (personal); Judge Matt Rudzki for Common Pleas; District Judge Matt Rudzki
Instagram: matthewrudzki; judgerudzki
BlueSky: @matthewrudzki.bsky.social; judgerudzki.bsky.social
YouTube: @friendsofmatthewv.rudzki7221
https://scjap.org/find_a_judge/matthew-rudzki/
www.judgerudzki.com
www.judgerudzkiforcommonpleas.com

9. Describe chronologically your law practice and experience after your graduation from law school and until you became a member of the judiciary, including:

a) Whether you served as clerk to a judge and, if so, the name of the judge, the court and the dates of the period you were a clerk;

N/A

b) Whether you practiced alone and, if so, the addresses and the dates;

N/A

c) The dates, names and addresses of law firms or offices, companies or governmental agencies with which you have been connected and the nature of your connection with each; and,

October 2013 – March 2020
Giuffre Law Office; Associate
221 Commercial Ave., Ste. 200
Aspinwall, PA 15215

March 2020 – December 2021 (Giuffre Law Office merged with JGCG in March 2020)
Jones, Gregg, Creehan & Gerace, LLP; Associate
20 Stanwix St., Ste. 1100
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

d) Any other relevant particulars.

N/A

10. Regarding your practice:

a) What was the general character of your practice, dividing it into periods with dates if its character changed over the years?

General practice with a focus on school and municipal law, estate planning and estate administration, and real estate.

- b) During your time in practice, describe your typical clients and mention the areas in which you concentrated your practice.

Government agencies as well as private clients. Researched, prepared, and drafted memoranda, pleadings, contracts, and estate planning & administration documents. Counseled government agencies regarding the Right-to-Know Law, the Sunshine Act, local agency law, employment law, delinquent tax collection, and real estate tax assessment appeals. Appeared at preliminary hearings, pretrial conferences, status conferences, arbitration hearings, administrative hearings, motions court, and Sheriff's Sales.

11. For the last ten years or portions thereof during which you have held judicial office, indicate,

- a) The nature of typical matters which came before you;

Preside over civil and landlord-tenant matters up to \$12,000.00; review and issue warrants, set bond, and hold preliminary hearings in criminal proceedings; adjudicate non-traffic and traffic summary trials; review and hear emergency protection from abuse (PFA) petitions; and officiate weddings.

- b) The percentage of your time devoted to:

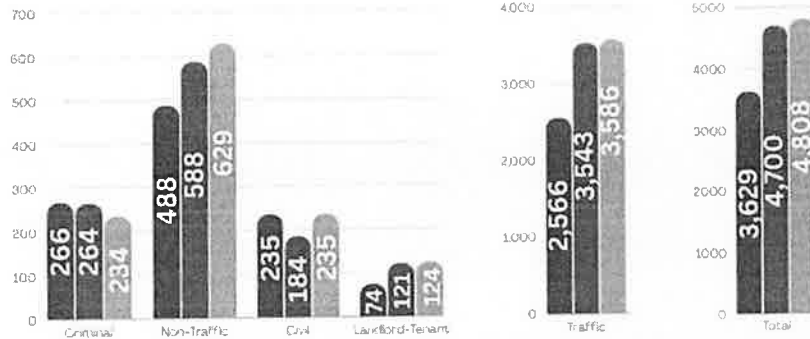
1. Civil: Please see charts below
2. Criminal: Please see charts below
3. Family: N/A with the exception of emergency PFAs
4. Orphans' Court: N/A

*Please note that the year 2021 is included in the below charts for reference. My commission as magisterial district judge began on January 3, 2022.

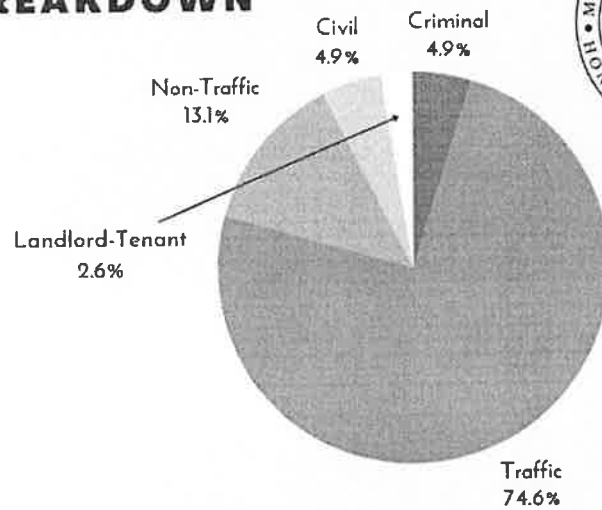


District Court 05-2-04 2021/2022/2023 CASE FILING COMPARISON

- 2021: Number of cases filed.
- 2022: Number of cases filed.
- 2023: Number of cases filed.



District Court 05-2-04 2023 CASELOAD BREAKDOWN



c) The percentage of your time devoted to:

1. Jury: N/A
2. Non-jury: All proceedings before magisterial district judges are bench trials.
3. Appellate argument: N/A
4. Other: N/A

d) Five of the more significant opinions you have rendered and citations thereto if the cases were reported or dockets if the cases were not reported.

Magisterial district courts are not courts of record and as such we do not produce opinions.

12. If a substantial period of your practice was before administrative boards, commissions or agencies during the ten years before you became a member of the judiciary, identify the boards, commissions or agencies before which you have practiced and estimate percentages of practice time devoted thereto.

Pennsylvania Unemployment Compensation Referee Hearing (<1%)
Allegheny County Board of Property Assessment Appeals and Review (30%)
Allegheny County Board of Viewers (10%)
Allegheny County Office of the Sheriff, Real Estate Division (10%)

13. If a substantial portion of your practice was before Appellate courts during the ten years before you became a member of the judiciary, identify the Appellate Courts before which you have practiced and estimate percentages of practice time devoted thereto.

N/A

14. For every judicial office you hold or have held, give details of your position, including the court involved with a description of your jurisdiction; whether elected or appointed; periods of services; and, identify any limitations upon your position including if any, when you were the subject of a Motion or Petition for Recusal.

- Magisterial District Judge for the Fifth Judicial District of Pennsylvania, District Court 05-2-04, representing the Boroughs of Aspinwall, Blawnox, Fox Chapel, and Sharpsburg, and the Townships of Indiana and O'Hara, with general jurisdiction at Pittsburgh Municipal Court;
- elected November 2021;

- commission commenced on January 3, 2022 and ends on January 3, 2028;
- No parties before me have requested recusal. However, I recuse myself from all cases in which my former law partner, Paul J. Giuffre, Esq., enters his appearance in my court. I have also voluntarily recused in a limited number of situations when a party before the court is a personal friend or relative, or a party has suggested they do not believe they can get a fair hearing before me yet fell short of requesting recusal.

15. Have you ever held public office other than judicial office? If so, give details, including the office, whether elected or appointed, and the length of your service, giving details.

- Borough of Sharpsburg, member of Council, appointed April 2011 to fill an unexpired term through December 2011;
- Borough of Sharpsburg, member of Council, elected November 2011 to a four-year term;
- Borough of Sharpsburg, member of Council, elected November 2015 to a four-year term;
- Borough of Sharpsburg, mayor, elected November 2019 to a four-year term.

16. Have you ever been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial or other public office? If so, give details, including dates.

No.

17. Have you ever been engaged in any occupation, business or profession other than the practice of law or the holding of judicial or other public office? If so, give details, including dates.

No.

18. Are you now an officer or director or otherwise engaged in the management of any business enterprise?

- a) If so, give details, including the name of your enterprise, the nature of the business, the title or other description of your position, the nature of your duties and the term of your service.

I am a member of a limited liability company, Vincenzo Holdings, LLC. The LLC was created March 28, 2014 for the acquisition of real estate, but never used.

- b) Is it your intention to resign such positions and withdraw from any participation in the management of any such enterprises if you are elected and confirmed? If not, give reasons.

Yes.

19. Are you under any ongoing federal, state or local investigation or indictment for possible violation of a criminal statute? If so, give details.

No.

20. Have you ever been charged or convicted of any violation of a local, state or federal law, any misdemeanor or felony, court martialled, been granted immunity from prosecution, been held in contempt of court or been the subject of a final protection from abuse order? If so, give details. Do not include summary traffic offenses.

No.

21. Has a tax lien or other collection procedure been instituted against you by federal, state or local authorities? If so, give details.

No.

22. Prior to taking the bench, were you ever sued by a client? If so, give details.

No.

23. Have you ever been a party to or otherwise involved in any other legal proceedings? If so, give the particulars. Do not list proceedings in which you were merely a guardian *ad litem* or stakeholder. Include all legal proceedings in which you were a party in interest, a material witness, were named as co-conspirator or a co-respondent and any grand jury investigation in which you figured as a subject or in which you appeared as a witness.

Yes. I was the plaintiff in a personal injury matter before the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas at Docket No. GD-96-018229.

24. Have you ever been disciplined or cited for a breach of ethics or unprofessional conduct by, or been the subject of a complaint to, any court, administrative agency, bar association, disciplinary committee, court of judicial discipline or other professional group? If so, give the details.

I have never been disciplined nor cited. One complaint was filed against me before the Disciplinary Board and dismissed, and one complaint was filed against me before the Judicial Conduct Board and dismissed.

25. Currently or within the past five (5) years have you suffered from any medical or other condition which could affect or impair your judgment, reliability or ability to perform the essential functions of the judicial position you are seeking? If so, describe.

No.

26. Do any circumstances exist that would affect your ability to perform the function of the position you seek or fulfill the term of office? If so, please explain.

No.

27. Furnish one (1) writing sample that reflects your analysis of a legal problem or issue.

Please see attached.

28. List all bar associations and professional societies of which you are a member and give the titles and dates of any offices which you have held in such groups. Please also identify any leadership role you have held in such groups.

- Allegheny County Bar Association, no offices held, 2013 – present.
- Duquesne Kline Law Alumni Association, 2013 – present; member of the Board of Governors, June 2023 – present.
- Special Court Judges Association of Pennsylvania, member of the Rules Committee, July 2023 – present.

29. List your experiences in teaching and lecturing, including law school, continuing legal education and to non-legal audiences.

Following graduation from Washington & Jefferson College and prior to attending Duquesne Kline School of Law, I taught English for one academic year (2008-2009) at two high schools in Vöcklabruck, Austria, on an Austrian-American Educational Commission Teaching Fellowship, administered by the Fulbright Commission.

While on the bench, I have partnered on numerous occasions with Pennsylvanians for Modern Courts to do presentations to the general public regarding the Pennsylvania courts, how the Landlord-Tenant Act functions in practice, and regarding Fines & Fees and the Clean Slate Act.

In January 2024, I presented at the Public Defender Association of Pennsylvania's intensive bootcamp for new to practice public defenders from across the Commonwealth. The topic of my presentation was "How Magisterial District Judges Make Bail Decisions at Preliminary Arraignment and Preliminary Hearings".

At the 2024 ACBA Bench-Bar Conference, I was a panelist with the Criminal Litigation Section CLE entitled “Confronting Racial Inequities in the Criminal Legal System and Practice Reforms”.

30. List all organizations other than bar associations, professional associations or societies of which you are or have been a member, including civic, charitable, religious, educational, social and fraternal organizations.
- Allegheny River Towns Enterprise Zone (ARTEZ), Board Member & Treasurer
 - Blawnox Volunteer Fire Company, Social Member
 - Congress of Neighboring Communities (CONNECT), Board Member
 - The District Association of the Fox Chapel Area, Board Member
 - Saint Juan Diego Parish Pastoral Council, Board Member
 - Sharpsburg Historical Commission, Board Member
 - Sharpsburg Neighborhood Association, Board Member
 - Sharpsburg Veterans of Foreign Wars GUYASUTA Post 709, Social Member
 - Sharpsburg Volunteer Fire Department, Social Member
 - Pittsburgh Teutonia Männerchor, Social Member
31. List any honors, prizes, awards or other forms of recognition which you have received (including any indication of academic distinction in college or law school) other than those mentioned in answers to the foregoing questions.
- Duquesne University Mind, Heart, and Spirit Award (2013)
 - Governor’s Award for Local Government Excellence (2018)
 - HUMANE Action Pittsburgh Legislator of the Year Award (2018)
 - Super Lawyers Pennsylvania Rising Star Award (2018/2019/2020/2021)
 - Washington & Jefferson College Athletic Hall of Fame (2019)
 - Fox Chapel Area Athletic Hall of Fame (2022)
 - Washington & Jefferson College Outstanding Young Alumni Award (2023)

32. State any other information which may reflect positively or adversely on you or which you believe should be disclosed.

A simple Google search of my name will reveal in January/February 2022, I was the subject of a multi-week news story in which I used non-monetary conditions on a Defendant. The Defendant subsequently re-offended the following day, was arrested, and had his bond denied by another district judge. During the course of the original media story, a police officer doxxed (i.e. revealed the street name where my family and I reside) me on Facebook with suggestive language regarding the public protecting themselves by acquiring guns and visiting my home.

In light of this incident and the general nature of criminal justice reform, my use of monetary bond is both championed and questioned. While I am not wholly opposed to monetary bond—and use it in limited circumstances (detainers or other holds)—it must be used according to the Constitutions of the United States and our Commonwealth, as well as the Pennsylvania Rules of Criminal Procedure. Specifically, the Rules of Criminal Procedure require the bail authority to consider the financial ability of the defendant and that the monetary condition be reasonable. Thus, if a defendant has no income, is unhoused, or otherwise indigent, the use of monetary bond may not be appropriate.

Since taking the bench and pursuant to records compiled and published by the Abolitionist Law Center, between June 2022 and June 2023, I used \$1,320 over 104 arraignments at Pittsburgh Municipal Court. This is the least amount of monetary bond—by factors of ten—used by any district judge over that time frame.

Conversely, although I do not use monetary bond to detain defendants pre-trial, I recognize that there are situations requiring a defendant to be detained pre-trial. As a result, after determining that no condition of combination of conditions can guarantee the safety of the public when the proof is evident or presumption great, I hold defendants without bond in approximately 7% of cases, one of the highest rates amongst my colleagues.

I am proud to have introduced innovative initiatives such as night court for juvenile cases, making me one of only two judges in the County at the time to provide this option. Furthermore, I collaborate with Animal Friends to bring trained therapy dogs to court for every night court session and occasionally during criminal court sessions, making me the sole judge in the County with such a program. My court waiting room is adorned with abstract art featuring positive and reaffirming messages, aiming to reduce the stress of court appearances.

Further, to better serve the community, I regularly organize workshops on expungement, fine and fee management, harm reduction, landlord-tenant issues, and license plate replacement. Additionally, I provide opportunities for local youth groups to visit his court and hosts summer interns.

Finally, I adhere to the maxim and motto of Duquesne Kline Law “Salus Populi Suprema Lex” (“The Welfare of the People is the Highest Law”) and have artwork hanging in my courtroom with a rendering of Lady Justice and the maxim on it.

33. Why do you wish to become a Justice or Judge in a different jurisdiction? What strengths do you feel you possess that would particularly well qualify you for such a position in a different jurisdiction?

My time in public service extends back to 2011. I take great pride in having served my community as a member of Council, as mayor, and as district judge. Having served in every branch of government, I know the process of drafting our laws, enforcing our laws, and applying our laws. I am likely uniquely qualified having served in all three branches and to bring this perspective to the role.

Further, as a district judge, we handle incredibly heavy dockets with matters requiring quick decisions. Moreover, the matters before our courts align with three of the four divisions in the Court of Common Pleas: civil, criminal, and family (juvenile cases, emergency protection from abuse hearings). On a near-daily basis, we are holding dozens of summary trials and preliminary hearings, ruling on objections and making evidentiary decisions, crafting solutions to matters to the benefit of all parties involved, and issuing judgments or verdicts.

One of the most important, if not the most important qualities of a great jurist, is judicial temperament. I believe that my time as an elected official and especially on the bench has helped me to hone a presence that is assertive and firm yet compassionate and understanding. Judges are cloaked not only in a robe but with immense power, and in the words of the late Chief Justice Max Baer: "All you try to do is the right thing...and how can it be a bad job if all you try to do is the right thing all day every day?"

As a supplement to my invaluable experience on the bench, I was a general practitioner for the entirety of my legal career, practicing within every division of our Court of Common Pleas, albeit with the bulk of my work in the civil division. Prior to passing the bar, however, I interned for two summers with the Allegheny County Office of the District Attorney and gained vital insight into the criminal division.

34. What do you consider a significant achievement in your life outside your profession?

My time spent serving the Borough of Sharpsburg as a Councilman and later as mayor provided me with some of my favorite memories, valuable lessons, and greatest successes.

Sharpsburg is the classic western Pennsylvania river town. For many years, however, the moniker "river town" carried a negative connotation: run down, vacant properties, empty storefronts, no growth, and high crime rates. Sharpsburg fit the bill.

I had a vision for what Sharpsburg could become and in 2011 started that journey. Initially the steps were small, but gradually our momentum began to build. For the first time in 50 years, Sharpsburg passed a comprehensive plan that would steer our progress. We codified our ordinances and modernized our zoning and planning. We expanded and renovated a library that won architectural awards.

After completing the tasks to make sure our foundation was strong, I began drafting legislation to make Sharpsburg more inclusive and sustainable while honoring our heritage. I introduced and Council unanimously passed legislation to recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day, to create the Sharpsburg Environmental Advisory Council and Sharpsburg Historical Commission, to extend animal protection laws, and to prevent bullying in our community.

During my time as mayor, I supported and signed into law a Human Rights Ordinance which extended protections to our LGBTQIA+ community. After the murder of George Floyd, I worked with our police to completely overhaul our policies, increase our training, outfit each officer with a body camera, and became the only mayor in Allegheny County to express interest to opt into the County's proposed Police Review Board parameters. Working with others, I helped spearhead the first Etna-Sharpsburg Earth Day Challenge and Etna-Sharpsburg National Night Out, lead Sharpsburg through a series of floods and the pandemic, organize harm-reduction events, and collaborated with other millennial mayors to advocate for social justice reform.

Through all of this, our business district began to thrive with a bustling art scene, new restaurants, a coffee shop, and breweries. Residential property values that had plummeted began to climb and align with County-wide trends. Crime rates fell and young families injected new life into the community.

Sharpsburg's revitalization, guided by a sustainable process with the engagement of our stakeholders and residents, is one of the greatest achievements I have had the pleasure to play a role in and a legacy that makes me most proud.

35. Please identify specific efforts you have made, or been involved with, to support equality and inclusion in the legal profession, including but not limited to the judiciary.

Serving on the Duquesne Kline Law Alumni Association Board of Governors, the Alumni Association President's focus for the academic year is to focus on and promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. While I do not serve on the subcommittee, I am fully supportive of the initiative, committed to the process, and recognize the inherent value that in embracing diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging, we can realize our full potential.

Since taking the bench in 2022, as referenced above, I also have hosted summer interns every summer. Four of five of my interns have been women, one of which is a woman of color, and my intern slated for the summer of 2025 is also a woman of color.

As a member of the judiciary and the ACBA Criminal Litigation Section, I took a particular interest in the near 250-page document issued by the Rand Corporation for the University of Pittsburgh Institute for Politics entitled "Creating a Path Forward to Reduce Racial Disparities in the Criminal Justice System in Allegheny County". The study highlighted what many of us already knew: in Allegheny County, the criminal justice system disproportionately impacts the Black community.

Adjacent to equality and inclusion within the legal profession, we must also address how our profession impacts the lives of the residents of our County and beyond in order to adequately address

the needs of the many. In that vein, as mentioned above, I was honored to serve and address the vital issue at the 2024 ACBA Bench-Bar Conference as a panelist on the Criminal Litigation Section CLE entitled “Confronting Racial Inequities in the Criminal Legal System and Practice Reforms”.

The undersigned certifies that the statements made in this questionnaire are true, complete and correct to the best of his/her knowledge and belief and are made in good faith.

Matthew V. Rudzki

Type or print name

Matthew V. Rudzki

Signature

12/11/24

Date

4883-7966-2852, v.I