

Chapter 1 - Qualifications of United States Magistrate Judges

Sec. 1.01. Minimum Qualifications

To be qualified for appointment or reappointment as a United States magistrate judge, a person must:

1. Be, and have been for at least five years, a member in good standing of the bar of the highest court of a State, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Territory of Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or the Virgin Islands of the United States.

2. Have been engaged in the active practice of law for a period of at least five years. The court may consider as substitute experience for the active practice of law the following, including any combination thereof:

1. Judge of a state court of record or other state judicial officer.

2. United States magistrate judge, bankruptcy judge, or other federal judicial officer.

3. Attorney for federal or state agencies.

4. Law clerk to any judge or judicial officer (limited to two years).

5. Other legal experience which is suitable as a substitute in the opinion of the majority of the court.

3. Be competent to perform the duties of the office, of good moral character, emotionally stable and mature, committed to equal justice under the law, in good health, patient, courteous, and capable of deliberation and decisiveness when required to act on his or her own reason and judgment.

4. Not be related by blood or marriage to a judge of the appointing court or courts, within the degrees specified in 28 U.S.C. § 458, at the time of the initial appointment.

5. In the case of an initial appointment, not be seventy years of age or older. [Ed. note: See 28 U.S.C. § 631(d) regarding continuation and reappointment of magistrate judges upon attaining age seventy.]

Sec. 1.02. Additional Qualifications

A district court may establish additional qualification standards appropriate for a particular magistrate judge position, taking into account the specific responsibilities anticipated for that position. In no event, however, may the additional qualification standards be inconsistent with the court's policy as an equal opportunity employer.