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**Information Sheet for Candidates Preparing to Appear Before
LeGaL’s Screening Panel**

LeGaL’s Judicial Screening Panel (the “Panel”) evaluates all candidates who (i) submit a Uniform Judicial Questionnaire or similar application and (ii) appear before the Panel for an interview. During the interview, the Panel will assess the candidate’s qualifications for the bench and whether the candidate will obtain an “Approved” rating pursuant to paragraph 6 of the Panel’s rules. This assessment includes whether the candidate possesses the integrity, intellect, experience, and temperament required of judicial office. In addition, pursuant to the Panel’s rules, the Panel will assess whether the candidate, once on the bench, will “demonstrate a commitment to the equality of rights for all lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.” To determine this, the Panel will ask the candidate various questions, including, but not limited to, some of these most common inquiries:

1. How the candidate would educate him- or her-self concerning the current legal issues facing the LGBT community.
2. What steps the candidate would take to make his or her courtroom welcoming to LGBT attorneys and litigants.
3. How the candidate would ensure that non-judicial staff working in his or her courtroom would not use homophobic or transphobic language or engage in homophobic or transphobic actions.
4. Whether the candidate would address an attorney or litigant by their preferred name (even if that name does not match their legal name) or perceived gender (based upon outward physical appearance).
5. Whether the candidate would officiate same-sex weddings.
6. Whether the candidate, if placed in a matrimonial part, would hear a case involving the dissolution of a same-sex marriage.
7. Whether the candidate is a member of a civic, political, or religious organization that has taken a position against the LGBT community (including, but not limited to, criminalization or moral disapproval of sexual acts by LGBT people, ex-gay conversion therapy, segregation of LGBT people in schools or public facilities, same-sex marriage, adoption by LGBT people, gender reassignment surgery, etc.). If so, the Panel would be interested in whether the candidate supports the organization’s view, and, if not, what steps the candidate has taken to distance him- or her-self and/or bring about change within the organization.

Moreover, in order for the Panel to determine that a candidate is “Highly Approved,” the Panel must determine that, in addition to the qualifications for an “Approved” rating, the candidate has “*demonstrated a commitment* to the equality of rights for all lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people” (emphasis added). In making such a determination, the Panel considers all of a candidate’s experiences. A candidate need not identify as a member of the LGBT community to earn a “Highly Approved” rating. The following is a non-exclusive list of experiences that the candidate may describe to the Panel to evidence a demonstrated commitment to LGBT equality:

1. Speaking at (or otherwise participating in) LGBT events.
2. Donating time, effort, or other resources to LGBT organizations or causes.
3. Joining LGBT civic associations, including LGBT bar associations or LGBT bar association committees.
4. Lobbying or political action in support of LGBT rights.
5. For judges who have served since summer 2011, volunteering to officiate same-sex weddings in New York State.
6. Authoring opinion pieces or scholarly works that identify an issue or issues facing the LGBT community and call for progressive change.
7. Attending and/or facilitating seminars designed to educate the judiciary concerning issues facing the LGBT community.