

Judicial Officers: Authority and Responsibility

Senior Judges

Administrative Rule 5(B)

Contact: Heather Falks; email: heather.falks@courts.in.gov

The legislature authorized the creation of the Senior Judge program which allows Indiana courts to use the services of retired judges to supplement existing judicial resources. Ind. Code 33-23-3-1. A Senior Judge may act as a replacement when the regular judge is unavailable; as a complement when the regular judge is in trial, working on opinions, or fulfilling administrative duties; or as an assistant to oversee the processing of certain types of cases or court programs.

The Indiana Supreme Court promulgates rules to further define the certification and appointment process for Senior Judges. I.C. 33-24-3-7. In 2003 the Supreme Court promulgated Ind. Administrative Rule 5, setting out the parameters for the certification and use of Senior Judges.

Information regarding senior judge service can be found on the senior judge portal. The senior judge portal is located within INcite. The portal includes a list of certified Senior Judges, the number of Senior Judge days allocated to a Trial Court, and the number of Senior Judge days a Trial Court has used.

By an order issued August 10, 2016, the Court created the Senior Judge Committee. The Committee is charged with:

- submission of recommendations to the Court regarding the utilization of Senior Judges and the administration of the Senior Judge program.
- promotion of the effective utilization of Senior Judges by the trial and appellate courts
- promotion of increased participation of Senior Judges and
- identification and recommendation of expanded opportunities and uses for Senior Judges within the Indiana judiciary.