

Kristen Smith-Rodriguez

Name	Kristen Smith-Rodriguez
Judicial position sought	Circuit judge
Circuit Jurisdiction	18th Circuit, Group 17
Florida Bar number	85422
Date admitted to The Florida Bar	September 27, 2010
Years in legal profession	13.75
Jurisdiction(s) in which admitted to practice and date (s) admitted	Florida - 9/27/2010 Middle District of Florida - 9/8/2016
Are you a current or former judge?	No
Area(s) of Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civil
List the primary areas in which you specialize or have legal expertise and allocate a percentage of your practice to each area.	<p>As a private attorney, my practice areas were family law (90%), domestic violence (5%), administrative hearings (4%), and civil (1%).</p> <p>As a general magistrate presiding over cases, my docket is family law (90%) and mental health cases (Marchman Act and Baker Acts)(10%).</p>
Number of evidentiary hearings, trials and/or oral arguments in which you have participated as legal counsel:	201+
Number of jury trials in which you have participated:	0
Number of bench trials in which you have participated:	126
Number of arbitration hearings in which you have participated as legal counsel or hearing officer:	0-5
Number of administrative hearings in which you have participated as legal counsel or hearing officer:	0-5
Percentage of your time representing plaintiffs:	50
Percentage of your time representing defendants:	50

In 400 words or fewer, without discussing any issue that may come before you as a judge, explain why you would be a good judge. Consider what relevant skills and experience you gained from previous employment that you will bring to the bench.

I am currently serving as a general magistrate in the family and mental health division at the Viera Courthouse in the 18th Judicial Circuit. A general magistrate is an attorney hired by the State to preside over cases in order to alleviate the circuit judges' caseload. I have held this position for 5 years. I preside over family law matters, Baker Act cases, and Marchman Act cases.

It was important to me to have the practical experience of presiding over cases as a magistrate rather than seeking election to judge from the position of an attorney with no practical experience.

I now have the experience of managing a docket and I ensure the effective and efficient movement of cases through the court system. For the past five years I have consistently applied the law to ensure procedural fairness. I protect the opportunity to be heard, ensure due process, and I foster a respectful courtroom environment.

I serve on the City of Titusville Board of Adjustment and Appeals, where for the past 10 years, I have upheld the City Code and ensured that variances are just and appropriate under the established guidelines.

Since becoming a general magistrate, I have capitalized on several opportunities to gain more knowledge on the law and procedure to ensure that I am properly serving our citizens. I am a member of the Florida Chapter of Family and Conciliation Courts (FLAFCC) where I serve as co-chair on the educational program to help other magistrates, judges, and mental health professionals have access to cutting-edge research, legal resources, and mentorship.

I understand the difficulties litigants have when representing themselves and the difficulties for the court to move those cases through the system. Through the FLAFCC, I served on multiple task forces to find solutions to these problems and I was an contributor to the November/December 2021 Florida Bar Journal article, "Blueprint for a More Effective Family Court Intake Process and Beyond: Opening the Umbrella to Process Family Court Cases." In my service as a general magistrate, I have implemented procedures with my caseload to address the effective movement, which will easily transition into a circuit judge position.

Serving our citizens for the past five years as general magistrate with significantly similar responsibilities to that of a judge, has given me the experience and knowledge to serve as a circuit judge.

Are you or have you ever been Florida Bar Board Certified in any area(s) of practice?	No
UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE:	University of Central Florida
Degree received:	B.A. Political Science
Academic awards, honors, recognition, leadership roles:	Academic awards received; dates unknown
GRADUATE DEGREE	Florida Coastal School of Law
Degree received:	J.D.

The Florida Bar Judicial Voluntary Self Disclosure Statement

Academic awards, honors, recognition, leadership roles:	Family Law Certificate from Florida Coastal School of Law -2010 Book Award Family Mediation
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Number of hours devoted to public work while in law school:	380
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WORK EXPERIENCE Upload Resume	ksr_resume_april_2024.pdf 592.68 KB · PDF
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Please list activities, accomplishments, honors or leadership roles in pro bono, volunteer, public or military service:

Currently serving as a general magistrate for the 18th Judicial Circuit - presiding over family law cases, Marchman Act cases, and Mental Health cases.
Kiwanis Club of Titusville - President - 2020 to 2021 (community library initiative); Director 2014 to 2022; Advisor to Jackson Middle School - 2015 to 2017; Member 2013 to Present
Recognition of 5 years of devoted service on City of Titusville Board of Adjustment and Appeals - 2019
Brevard County Legal Aid Distinguished Pro Bono Service Award - 2018
Brevard County Legal Aid Outstanding Pro Bono Service Award - 2015
Brevard County Legal Aid Outstanding Pro Bono Service Award - 2014

Have you ever been found, either involuntarily or by consent, to have committed a violation of The Florida Bar Disciplinary Rules, the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration, or the Florida Code of Judicial Conduct for which the discipline imposed was one of the following: (a) public reprimand; (b) suspension; or (c) disbarment?	No
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Have you ever been convicted or pled no contest to a crime involving dishonesty or moral turpitude?	No
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Have you served in the military?	No
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