

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2016 REGULAR SESSION

ENROLLED

House Bill 4725

BY DELEGATES LANE, HANSHAW, MCCUSKEY,
FLEISCHAUER, AZINGER, SHAFFER, SOBONYA, DEEM,
FLUHARTY, SKINNER AND MANCHIN

[Passed March 12, 2016; in effect ninety days from
passage.]

1 AN ACT to amend and reenact §3-10-3 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, all
2 relating to providing the procedures for the filling of vacancies in the offices of justices of
3 the Supreme Court of Appeals, circuit judge, family court judge or magistrate and making
4 certain clarifications concerning procedures to be followed when an unexpired term is for
5 a period of more than two years.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

That §3-10-3 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931 as amended, be amended and reenacted,
all to read as follows:

ARTICLE 10. FILLING VACANCIES.

**§3-10-3. Vacancies in offices of state officials, United States Senators, Justices judges,
and magistrates.**

1 (a) Any vacancy occurring in the offices of Secretary of State, Auditor, Treasurer, Attorney
2 General, Commissioner of Agriculture, or in any office created or made elective to be filled by the
3 voters of the entire state, is filled by the Governor of the state by appointment and subsequent
4 election to fill the remainder of the term, if required by section one of this article.

5 (b) Any vacancy occurring in the offices of Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals, judge
6 of a circuit court or judge of a family court is filled by the Governor of the state by appointment
7 and, if the unexpired term be for a period of more than two years, by a subsequent election to fill
8 the remainder of the term, as required by subsection (d) of this section. If an election is required
9 under subsection (d) of this section, the Governor, circuit court or the chief judge thereof in
10 vacation, is responsible for the proper proclamation by order and notice required by section one
11 of this article.

12 (c) Any vacancy in the office of magistrate is appointed according to the provisions of
13 section six, article one, chapter fifty of this code, and, if the unexpired term be for a period of more
14 than two years, by a subsequent election to fill the remainder of the term, as required by
15 subsection (d) of this section.

16 (d) (1) When the vacancy in the office of Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals, judge
17 of the circuit court, judge of a family court or magistrate occurs after the eighty-fourth day before
18 a general election, and the affected term of office ends on the thirty-first day of December following
19 the succeeding general election two years later, the person appointed to fill the vacancy shall
20 continue in office until the completion of the term.

21 (2) When the vacancy occurs before the close of the candidate filing period for the primary
22 election, and, if the unexpired term be for a period of greater than two years, the vacancy shall be
23 filled by election in the nonpartisan judicial election held concurrently with the primary election,
24 and the appointment shall continue until a successor is elected and certified.

25 (3) When the vacancy occurs after the close of candidate filing for the primary election
26 and not later than eighty-four days before the general election, and, if the unexpired term be for
27 a period of greater than two years, the vacancy shall be filled by election in a nonpartisan judicial
28 election held concurrently with the general election, and the appointment shall continue until a
29 successor is elected and certified.

30 (e) When an election to fill a vacancy is required to be held at the general election
31 according to the provisions of subsection (d) of this section, a special candidate filing period shall
32 be established. Candidates seeking election to any unexpired term for Justice of the Supreme
33 Court of Appeals, judge of a circuit court, judge of the family court or magistrate shall file a
34 certificate of announcement and pay the filing fee no earlier than the first Monday in August and
35 no later than seventy-seven days before the general election.