



NEWS RELEASE

**New York State
Unified Court System**

**Hon. Joseph A. Zayas
Chief Administrative Judge**

**Contact:
Al Baker, Communications Director
Arlene Hackel
(212) 428-2500
publicinformation@nycourts.gov
www.nycourts.gov/press**

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New Supervising Judges Named in New York City

NEW YORK—Chief Administrative Judge Joseph A. Zayas and First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Norman St. George today announced the appointments of six Supervising Judges in New York City’s Criminal Court, Civil Court, and Housing Court: Hon. Edwin I. Novillo as Supervising Judge of Queens County Criminal Court; Hon. Taisha L. Chambers as Supervising Judge of Bronx County Civil Court; Hon. Carmen A. Pacheco as Supervising Judge of Kings County (Brooklyn) Civil Court; Hon. L. Austin D’Souza as Supervising Judge of New York County (Manhattan) Civil Court; Hon. Ira R. Greenberg as Supervising Judge of Queens County Civil; and Hon. Frances Ortiz as Supervising Judge of New York County Housing Court. The appointments were made with the approval of Chief Judge Rowan D. Wilson and in consultation with Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Adam Silvera and the respective Presiding Justices of the State Supreme Court’s Appellate Division, Hon. Dianne T. Renwick (First Department) and Hon. Hector D. LaSalle (Second Department).

Judge Novillo succeeds Hon. Joanne Watters; Judge Chambers replaces Hon. Matthew Parker-Raso; Judge Pacheco follows Supervising Judge Hon. Dweynie Paul; Judge D’Souza succeeds Hon. Shahabuddeen Ally; Judge Greenberg replaces Hon. Alan J. Schiff; and Judge Ortiz succeeds Hon. Norma Jennings. Justices Watters, Parker-Raso, Paul, and Schiff will continue to serve the justice needs of New Yorkers as members of the State’s Supreme Court bench. Justice Ally was recently named Administrative Judge of New York City Civil Court and Judge Jennings now serves on the Civil Court in Brooklyn.

“These six eminently qualified jurists have distinguished themselves as energetic, forward-thinking leaders, earning a reputation for their sound judgment, fairness, integrity, innovative spirit, and commitment to public service, community outreach, and civic engagement. They bring vast knowledge and experience to their respective roles, along with a penchant for team-building and collaboration,” said Chief Administrative Judge Zayas. “I welcome them to their new posts as we seek to employ problem-solving

strategies and new technology to optimize efficiency, broaden access to our courts, and ensure equal justice.”

“Today’s appointees are widely regarded for their legal acumen, work ethic, passion for justice and their holistic, collegial—and adaptive—management style. In addition to their deep and broad experience, they are recognized as problem solvers who tackle challenges head-on, resorting to out-of-the-box thinking whenever needed,” said First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge St. George. “I am fully confident in the leadership ability of each of these outstanding candidates to press forward as we continually strive to more efficiently and effectively serve New Yorkers’ ever-growing and changing justice needs.”

“It is both a profound privilege and a great honor to accept the appointment as Supervising Judge in the borough where I was raised. Queens, a borough renowned for its vibrant cultural diversity, has instilled in me a deep understanding of the vital importance of ensuring that justice is administered with fairness, integrity, and empathy. I am firmly committed to assuring that every individual, regardless of background, can experience a system of justice that treats them with dignity and respect. I am truly grateful for the trust and confidence that Chief Judge Wilson, Chief Administrative Judge Zayas, First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge St. George, Deputy Chief Administrative Judges Silvera, Richardson, and Murphy and Administrative Judge Amaker have placed in me. It is a privilege to work alongside such dedicated individuals whose unwavering commitment to progress and excellence inspires me daily. Together, I look forward to collaborating with all stakeholders to uphold and apply the principles of justice, equality, and fairness in service to our community,” said Justice Novillo.

“I am deeply grateful for the confidence placed in me and I am eager to join our illustrious administrative team and contribute to the continued success of our courts. I specifically want to thank Chief Judge Wilson, Chief Administrative Judge Zayas, First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge St. George, Deputy Chief Administrative Judges Silvera, Richardson and Murphy, and Administrative Judge Ally for allowing me to serve as the Supervising Judge of Bronx County Civil Court. Justice Matthew Parker-Raso has been an exemplary leader in his role as Supervising Judge, and it is an honor to succeed him. I am eager to collaborate with the judges, court attorneys, clerks, court officers, and other dedicated court personnel in Bronx Civil Court as we work together to uphold our shared mission of delivering exceptional service and ensuring justice is served fairly and efficiently,” said Judge Chambers.

“I am excited and honored to serve as Supervising Judge of Kings County Civil Court. I am thankful to Chief Judge Wilson, Chief Administrative Judge Zayas, First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge St. George, Deputy Chief Administrative Judges Richardson, Silvera, and Murphy and Administrative Judge Ally for acknowledging my unswerving dedication to the justice system and the Unified Court System’s mission ‘to deliver equal justice under the law and achieve the just, fair, and timely resolution of all matters before our courts’ when selecting me to join this collaborative leadership. In keeping with the philosophy of the administration, I look forward to a shared approach with judges, court personnel, and stakeholders to promote public confidence and trust in our legal system. I am thankful to my mother, Carmen J. Pacheco, and late father, Jose

F. Pacheco, for instilling in me the importance of values like honesty, courage, resilience, and consideration for others. I am also blessed to have a supportive, loving husband, Judge Patrick Hayes Torres,” said Judge Pacheco.

“I am delighted to lead an amazing team of judges and staff, whose work I deeply admire, in New York City Civil Court in Manhattan. Together we will work to meet the high standards that our court administrators set to best serve the people of our great city and state. I am gratified and humbled to have the confidence of our diverse leadership team, including Chief Judge Wilson, Chief Administrative Judge Zayas, First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge St. George, Deputy Chief Administrative Judges Richardson, Silvera, and Murphy, and Administrative Judge Ally. I am especially looking forward to working closely with Judge Ally to build on his successful management of New York County Civil Court. I thank Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Silvera and outgoing Kings County Supervising Judge Dweynie E. Paul for their mentorship and for showing what positive, exemplary leadership can achieve for New Yorkers,” said Judge D’Souza.

“I am honored and humbled by the trust that Chief Judge Wilson and Justices Zayas, St. George, Richardson, Murphy, Silvera, and Ally have placed in me with this appointment. I am excited about leading Queens Civil Court. Our dedicated judicial and non-judicial staff have created a collaborative environment and established high standards. I greatly value their work and support. Thank you to outgoing Supervising Judge Schiff for collaboratively leading us with a steady hand, support, and humor. I look forward to working with Judge Ally, our judges, and staff, and I am optimistic about our future as a problem-solving court,” said Judge Greenberg.

“I am truly grateful and honored to have the opportunity to serve as the Supervising Judge of the New York County Housing Court, a court that I have dedicated nearly three decades of my professional career to. I want to extend my thanks to Chief Judge Wilson, Chief Administrative Judge Zayas, First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge St. George, Deputy Chief Administrative Judges Richardson and Murphy, as well as special thanks to Judges Silvera, Ally and Stoller for their confidence in my abilities and their steadfast commitment to this court. Additionally, I want to congratulate Judge Norma Jennings, who will now serve on the Kings County, Civil Court. I am excited to work alongside all the dedicated court personnel, including judges, court attorneys, clerks, and court officers, as we strive together to uphold the mission of the Unified Court System: providing equitable and fair justice for everyone who appears before our court,” said Judge Ortiz.

Hon. Edwin I. Novillo has been serving in Queens County Supreme Court’s Criminal Term, where he hears an array of matters. His judicial career began with his interim appointment to New York City Civil Court in February 2018, making him the first person of Ecuadorian descent to be named to the judiciary by a New York City mayor. He was reappointed in January 2019, serving on the New York City Criminal Court and presiding over thousands of cases, and later designated an acting Supreme Court Justice. Prior to his becoming a judge, he was employed by The Legal Aid Society, serving as a staff attorney in its Kings County Criminal Defense Practice and later as a senior staff attorney in the Society’s Queens County Criminal Defense Practice. Justice

Novillo is a graduate of John Jay College of Criminal Justice and Touro College Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center, where he was recognized for his public service, earning two prestigious public interest fellowships. Among his professional activities, he serves on the board of the Latino Judges Association, is an advisory board member for the Latino Lawyers Association of Queens County, and mentors aspiring judges via the Franklin H. Williams Commission's Judicial Mentorship Program. Justice Novillo is the recipient of numerous citations and awards for his public service and community pursuits.

Prior to her appointment, Hon. Taisha L. Chambers presided over consumer debt, landlord-tenant, personal injury, and other matters in Bronx County Civil Court, to which she was elected in November 2022. Previously, she served former Judge Verna Saunders as a court attorney in Bronx County Civil Court, a principal court attorney in the Harlem Community Justice Center, and a principal law clerk in New York County Supreme Court's Civil Term. Before joining the court system, she was a staff trial attorney at the Children's Law Center in Brooklyn and the Bronx. She earned her undergraduate degree from Iona College and her J.D. from Pennsylvania State University Dickinson School of Law, where she was vice president of the Minority Law Student Association and a member of the Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial Team. She chairs the New York City Civil Court Case Streamlining Committee and is Bronx vice president of the Association of Civil Court Judges of the City of New York, in addition to her other activities and affiliations.

Elected to New York City Civil Court in November 2022 and assigned to the City's Criminal Court bench, Hon. Carmen A. Pacheco is the first person of Peruvian descent to serve on the New York State judiciary. Previously, she was a founding partner of Pacheco & Lugo, PLLC, the first Hispanic women-owned law firm in New York, established in 1992. She began her legal career as a litigation and corporate associate at Carter, Ledyard & Milburn LLP. She is a graduate of Brooklyn College and St. John's University School of Law, where she was a published member of the St. John's Law Review and a St. Thomas Moore Scholar. Judge Pacheco has devoted her legal and judicial career to equal justice initiatives and is co-chair of the New York State Women's Bar Association's Access to Justice Task Force and a New York State Women's Bar Association board member, along with her numerous other professional activities.

Devoting his entire career to public service, Hon. L. Austin D'Souza was elected to New York City Civil Court in November 2022 and has been sitting in Kings County, presiding over a wide range of civil matters. He chairs a consumer debt committee that brings together members of the bench and bar to resolve issues and help expedite cases. Additionally, he provides in-court training to new judges. Prior to taking the bench, he was a principal law clerk in the New York State Court of Claims and before that served as senior counsel in the New York City Law Department's Tort Division. He earned his B.A. from Stony Brook University and holds an M.A. from the London School of Economics and a J.D. from New York Law School. Along with his many other professional activities, Judge D' Souza sits on the New York County Lawyers Association's Board of Directors, co-chairs the courts' Office for Justice Initiatives' Anti-Asian Hate Working Group and is a member of the Franklin H. Williams Commission, spearheading the re-launch of its Special Masters Program, a bar-to-bench pipeline for attorneys from underrepresented communities.

Upon his appointment, Hon. Ira R. Greenberg had been sitting on the Queens County Civil Court bench, handling a variety of civil matters. Elected to the New York City Civil Court in 2018, he previously was Of Counsel at Leavitt & Kerson, Esqs, a general law practice where he also provided counsel on state and local government matters and co-authoring the firm's "Elder Law Basics." Prior to that, he served the office of then New York State Assembly Member Catherine Nolan in various capacities, including as chief of staff and legislative director. Judge Greenberg was born in the Bronx and grew up in Woodside Houses in Queens. He holds a B.A. from the University of Chicago, an M.P.A. from Baruch College, and a J.D. from Brooklyn Law School. He serves on the New York City Civil Court's Equal Justice in the Courts Committee and Alternate Dispute Resolution Committee and is a former MTA Board member and Sunnyside Chamber of Commerce chair, in addition to his many other professional affiliations and community activities.

Prior to her ascension to the bench, Hon. Frances Ortiz began her legal career in 1997 at Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A representing tenants in housing court. Thereafter, she began her path to a judicial career in 1999 as a pro se/Help Center court attorney in New York County's Housing Court and as a court attorney in Kings County Family Court, serving for nearly three decades in the Unified Court System. While at the Help Center, Judge Ortiz provided procedural and legal information to self-represented landlords and tenants in Housing Court. In Family Court, she conducted case conferences involving custody and visitation disputes, as well as handling cases related to domestic violence and child protective issues. As a court attorney in Housing Court's Resolution and Trial Parts, she performed case conferencing, legal research and decision drafting for Housing Court Judges.

In February 2017, Judge Ortiz was appointed to the Housing Parts of the New York City Civil Court, where she presided over tenant and landlord disputes. After spending two years in Kings County Housing Court, she returned to New York County. In August 2022, she began serving as the interim New York County Supervising Judge, filling in for then-Supervising Judge Hon. Norma Jennings, who was recently elected to Kings County Civil Court. Judge Ortiz graduated Magna Cum Laude from Fordham University and earned her law degree from New York Law School. She is an active member of several organizations, including the Puerto Rican Bar Association and the Latino Judges Association. She served as Vice President of the Association of Housing Court Judges for five years and previously sat on the New York City Bar Association's Housing Court Committee, Efficiency Working Group Committee, and Council on Judicial Administration Committee.

These six new appointments, which are effective immediately, follow the appointments of two new Supervising Judges in New York City Family Court and new assignments for two other Family Court Supervising Judges announced in early December. Judge Ben Darvil was named Supervising Judge of Richmond County and Judge Alicea Elloras-Ally was designated Supervising Judge of Queens County. Judge Alison Hamanjian, previously Supervising Judge of the Richmond County Family Court, was designated Supervising Judge of the Bronx; and Judge Gilbert Taylor, previously the Supervising

Judge of the Queens County Family Court, was named Supervising Judge of Kings County.



Hon. Carmen Pacheco



Hon. Edwin Novillo



Hon. Austin D'Souza



Hon. Ira Greenberg



Hon. Taisha Chambers



Hon. Frances Ortiz