



PRESS RELEASE

**New York State
Unified Court System**

**Hon. Lawrence K. Marks
Chief Administrative Judge**

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Hon. Karen Peters Named Chair of NY's Commission on Justice for Children

New York – Chief Judge Janet DiFiore today announced the appointment of Hon. Karen K. Peters as Chair of New York's Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children, formed in 1988 to improve the life chances of justice-involved children and adolescents. A former Presiding Justice of New York's Appellate Division, Third Department, she will replace Hon. A. Gail Prudenti, Dean of Hofstra University's Maurice A. Deane School of Law and former Chief Administrative Judge of the New York State Courts who had served as the Commission's Chair since February 2016.

“Judge Peters is a trailblazer in New York's legal community whose broad experience, including as a former Family Court judge, demonstrated commitment to juvenile justice reform and charismatic leadership will be strong assets to the Commission in its mission to better the lives of our State's most vulnerable youngsters. I look forward to working with Judge Peters as we build on the Commission's achievements under Judge Prudenti and her predecessor, the late Hon. Judith S. Kaye,” said Chief Judge DiFiore.

Following her graduation from New York University School of Law, Judge Peters began her legal career in private practice, later serving as an assistant district attorney in Dutchess County. She was counsel to the State Division of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse from 1979 to 1983, then named Director of the State Assembly Government Operations Committee.

In 1983, she became the first woman elected to Ulster County's Family Court bench. Judge Peters went on to break the glass ceiling again, becoming the first female elected to the State Supreme Court bench in New York's 28-county Third Judicial Department in 1992 (she was re-elected in 2006); and the first woman to be named Presiding Justice of New York's Appellate Division, Third Department, in 2012. She retired as Presiding Justice in December 2017, upon reaching mandatory retirement age.

Among her professional and civic activities, Judge Peters was recently charged by the Chief Judge to lead a new commission that will examine the current state of mandated legal representation for parents in Family Court and determine how best to ensure the future delivery of quality, cost-effective parental representation. She also chairs the New York State Bar Association's Committee on Judicial Wellness, is a member of the New York State court system's Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics and has been a member of the Permanent Commission on Justice for Children since January 2015.

Judge Peters is the recipient of numerous honors, including the Howard A. Levine Award for Excellence in Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare, the Betty Weinberg Ellerin Mentoring Award, and the Center for Women in Government and Civil Society's Public Service Leadership Award.

In tribute to Judge Prudenti, Chief Judge DiFiore added, "I am extremely grateful to Judge Prudenti for her dedicated service as Chair of the Commission over the past two years, a role she maintained even upon assuming the rigorous demands as Dean of Hofstra University's law school."

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