



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 Administrative Judge Named in Queens County

NEW YORK—Chief Administrative Judge Joseph A. Zayas and First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Norman St. George today announced the appointment of Hon. Michelle A. Johnson as Administrative Judge for Queens County Supreme Court’s Criminal Term. She is filling a vacancy created by Justice Donna-Marie Golia’s elevation to the Appellate Division, Second Department bench. The appointment was made with the approval of Chief Judge Rowan D. Wilson and in consultation with Presiding Justice Hector D. LaSalle of the Appellate Division, Second Department.

“Justice Johnson is a distinguished member of New York’s bench, known for her steadfast commitment to justice and fair and measured decision-making approach. She is equally admired for her strong administrative abilities, as demonstrated in her recent capacity as the Court’s interim Administrative Judge. Her intimate knowledge of court operations, coupled with her outstanding leadership skills, will aid her in her new role and be assets to the Queens County Supreme Court’s Criminal Term and those it serves. I look forward to our working together in navigating operational and other challenges in the court system’s ongoing efforts to increase access to the courts and improve the delivery of justice,” said Chief Administrative Judge Zayas.

“Justice Michelle Johnson is a superb choice to assume the vital role of Administrative Judge in one of the nation’s busiest criminal courts. She possesses both the scope and depth of expertise and experience, along with the many other fine attributes, required of this highly challenging position. I am eager to work with her in her new administrative capacity and look ahead to the operational and other enhancements to come under her dynamic leadership,” said First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge St. George.

“Words cannot truly express the depth of my gratitude for the trust that Chief Administrative Judge Zayas and First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge St. George have placed in me to ensure that the most diverse borough in the United States remains the gold standard for the administration of justice. I recognize that I have big shoes to fill and am both honored and humbled to serve the Office of Court Administration and the residents of Queens County in this new role,” said Justice Johnson.

Justice Johnson began her judicial career upon her appointment as an interim New York City Civil Court judge in September 2011. She was reappointed to Civil Court in January 2012 and appointed to New York City Criminal Court the following year. She was designated an acting Supreme Court Justice in 2016 and named Supervising Judge of Criminal Court in Queens County, serving in that capacity until her election in 2021 to the State Supreme Court in Queens County. Over the course of her judicial tenure, she has presided over thousands of cases from arraignment, through discovery, pre-trial hearings and trial, and written over 100 decisions on various legal issues, many of which have been published. Prior to her ascension to the bench, she owned and managed a litigation-based law practice specializing in criminal defense, family law, and real estate transactions throughout New York City and Long Island. Previously, she managed a staff of attorneys and investigators in her role as Supervisory General Attorney for the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights. Before that, she served as an assistant district attorney in the Kings County District Attorney’s Office, initially in the Homicide Bureau, and later as head of the Office’s Felony Trial Bureau and as Executive Assistant District Attorney in the School Crimes Bureau.

Added Judges Zayas and St. George, “We are immensely grateful to Justice Golia for her deft management as Administrative Judge over the past two years, during which she shepherded initiatives to improve operations and step up the Court’s outreach efforts in more efficiently and effectively serving the residents of Queens County. New Yorkers are fortunate to continue to benefit from her expertise on the State’s appellate bench.”

Justice Johnson’s appointment is effective immediately.

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