



U.S. Department of Justice
Executive Office for Immigration Review
5107 Leesburg Pike
Falls Church, Virginia 22041

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Office of Policy
Phone: 703-305-0289
PAO.EOIR@usdoj.gov
www.justice.gov/eoir DOJ_EOIR

Aug. 27, 2026

EOIR Announces Regional Deputy Chief Immigration Judge, Administrative Law Judge, 35 Immigration Judges, and 3 Temporary Immigration Judges

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – The Executive Office for Immigration Review today announced the swearing in of a regional deputy chief immigration judge within the Office of the Chief Immigration Judge, an administrative law judge within the Office of the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer, 35 immigration judges, and 3 temporary immigration judges.

Acting Deputy Attorney General Trent McCotter delivered remarks and administered the oath of office during an investiture, which was held today at the Department of Justice's Great Hall in Washington, D.C.

"Your appointment is an investment in enforcing the immigration laws as Congress wrote them," said Acting Deputy Attorney General Trent McCotter. "Adjudicating these cases demands legal judgment, fairness, and independence. We are grateful you answered the call to serve in these critical positions as we restore integrity to our immigration system and the rule of law."

After a thorough application process, Attorney General Todd Blanche, while serving in an acting capacity, appointed Tracy Short to his new position as a regional deputy chief immigration judge, Joanne Elizabeth Johnson to her new position as an administrative law judge, James R. Abeshaus, Joseph A. Ahlemeyer, Joseph Q. Andelin, Ryan J. Byers, Mark Carter, Stephanie Cotton, Robert B. Daly, Veronique N. DeRouselle, Alison Fox, Brett R. Geiger, Niles Thomas Gerry, Bledar Gora, Marissa A. Hackert, James Hong, Andrew Hurd, Michael J. Hussey, Angela M. Kaul, Timothy P. Kelly Jr., Meghan K. Lackey, Adam H. Leonatti, Jeffrey T. McCluskey, Jan M. Merendino, Dixon M. Merkt, Grant M. Pattison, Brian J. Pearly, Angelica M. Powers, Shiv Sachdeva, Brian E. Salisbury, Michael C. Scharf Jr., Charles P. Schofield, Daniel K. Sherwood, Jorene Soto, Mark A. Tomicich, Eric Young, John J. Zachary to their new positions as immigration judges, and Matthew H. Davidhizar, Jason S. Frankenfield, and Daniel J. Mulhern to their new positions as temporary immigration judges.

These new adjudicators undergo a [robust training program](#). Please see each new judge's [biographical summary](#).

— EOIR —



U.S. Department of Justice
Executive Office for Immigration Review
5107 Leesburg Pike
Falls Church, Virginia 22041

NOTICE

Contact: Office of Policy
Phone: 703-305-0289
PAO.EOIR@usdoj.gov
www.justice.gov/eoir DOJ_EOIR

Aug. 27, 2026

EOIR Announces Regional Deputy Chief Immigration Judge, Administrative Law Judge, 35 Immigration Judges, and 3 Temporary Immigration Judges *Biographical Information*

Regional Deputy Chief Immigration Judge

Tracy Short, Regional Deputy Chief Immigration Judge – Central

Tracy Short was appointed as a regional deputy chief immigration judge in August 2026. Judge Short earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1990 from Texas Christian University and a Juris Doctor in 1995 from the Louisiana State University Law Center. From November 2022 to August 2026, he served as the assistant chief deputy attorney general for the Louisiana Department of Justice, in Baton Rouge. From June 2020 to July 2022, he served as the chief immigration judge, Executive Office for Immigration Review, Department of Justice, in Falls Church, Virginia. From January 2017 to June 2020, he served in senior roles within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), including as the principal legal advisor, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), in Washington, D.C. From September 2015 to January 2017, he served as counsel to the U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on the Judiciary, in Washington, D.C. From March 2003 to September 2015, he served in multiple positions at DHS/ICE, including deputy chief counsel, in Atlanta, and special assistant U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Texas and assistant chief counsel, in Dallas. From July 2001 to March 2003, he served as an assistant district counsel with the former U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service in Dallas. From January 2000 to July 2001, he served as a judicial law clerk for District Judge Robert B. Maloney, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas, in Dallas. Judge Short is a member of the Louisiana State Bar Association and the State Bar of Texas.

Administrative Law Judge

Joanne Elizabeth Johnson, Administrative Law Judge, Office of the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer

Joanne Elizabeth Johnson was appointed as an administrative law judge in August 2026. Judge Johnson earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1987 from Georgetown University and a Juris Doctor in 1992 from the Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law. From 2015 to 2026, she served as an attorney advisor with the Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice (DOJ), in Washington, D.C., including most recently as an acting deputy assistant attorney general. In 2023, she served on detail as

EOIR Announces Deputy Regional Chief Immigration Judge, Administrative Law Judge, 35 Immigration Judges, and 3 Temporary Immigration Judges
Page 2

a special assistant U.S. attorney with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia in Alexandria, Virginia. From 2008 to 2015, she served as an attorney advisor with the National Security Division, DOJ. From 2004 to 2008, she served as an appellate attorney with the Office of Immigration Litigation, DOJ. From 1999 to 2004, she served as a trial attorney with the Commercial Litigation Branch, DOJ. From 1997 to 1999, she was in private practice at Venable LLP in Baltimore. From 1992 to 1997, she served as an honors attorney in the IRS Chief Counsel's Office in Washington, D.C. Judge Johnson is a member of the District of Columbia Bar and the Maryland State Bar.

Immigration Judges

James R. Abeshaus, Immigration Judge, Houston – Greenspoint Park Immigration Court

James R. Abeshaus was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Abeshaus earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2000 from Indiana University Bloomington and a Juris Doctor in 2004 from Florida Coastal School of Law. From November 2025 to August 2026, he served as an assistant chief counsel with the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Houston. From January 2022 to November 2025, he was in private practice for Prestige LLC in Austin, Texas. From September 2017 to December 2021, he was a corporate counsel, Western Hemisphere Product Liability and Class Action, for Mercedes-Benz Cars in Stuttgart, Germany. From May 2016 to September 2017, he served as appellate counsel with the Soldiers Medical Evaluation Board at the U.S. Army Medical Command in Edinburg, Texas. From January 2011 to February 2015, he served as a U.S. foreign service officer in Paris in the Political Section, and as vice consul in Paris and Hyderabad, India. From September 2004 through September 2010, he served in the U.S. Army on active duty as a judge advocate in the following roles: brigade judge advocate for the 1st Recruiting Brigade at Fort Meade, Maryland; chief of military justice for the 21st Theater Sustainment Command in Mons, Belgium; and trial defense counsel for the trial defense service and legal assistance attorney for the 8th U.S. Army in Yongsan, South Korea. Judge Abeshaus is a member of the Florida Bar.

Joseph A. Ahlemeyer, Immigration Judge, Kansas City Immigration Court

Joseph A. Ahlemeyer was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Ahlemeyer earned a Bachelor of Science in 1998 from Nebraska Wesleyan University, a Juris Doctor in 2009 from Ohio Northern University Claude W. Pettit College of Law, and a Master of Laws in 2021 from The Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School in Charlottesville, Virginia. From April 2023 to August 2026, he served as an acquisition attorney at the Department of the Air Force, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska. Since June 2023, he has served as a judge advocate with the Nebraska Army National Guard in Lincoln. From October 2014 to June 2023, he served as a judge advocate with the U.S. Army in the following locations: Redstone Arsenal, Huntsville, Alabama; The Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School, Charlottesville Virginia; the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center and Presidio of Monterey, Monterey, California; and Fort Riley, Junction City, Kansas. From October 2010 to October 2014, he served as a military intelligence officer with the U.S.

EOIR Announces Deputy Regional Chief Immigration Judge, Administrative Law Judge, 35 Immigration Judges, and 3 Temporary Immigration Judges
Page 3

Army in the following locations: Fort Huachuca, Sierra Vista, Arizona, and Fort Bliss, El Paso, Texas. Judge Ahlemeyer is a member of the Nebraska State Bar.

Joseph Q. Andelin, Immigration Judge, Otero Immigration Court

Joseph Q. Andelin was appointed as an immigration judge in August 2026 after serving as a temporary immigration judge since February 2026. Judge Andelin earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2007 from Brigham Young University, a Juris Doctorate in 2010 from Indiana University Maurer School of Law, and a Master of Military Art and Science in 2023 from Air University. Since 2010 Judge Andelin has served in both active and reserve duty in the U.S. Air Force Judge Advocate General's Corps in various roles including special victims' counsel, chief of military justice, ethics advisor, and chief of cyber operations law. Prior to his service in the U.S. Air Force, he served from 2008 to 2010 as a logistics officer in the Indiana Army National Guard, and from 2001 to 2008, as a field artillery cannon crewmember and military intelligence officer in the Utah Army National Guard. He holds the rank of lieutenant colonel. Judge Andelin is a member of the Utah State Bar.

Ryan J. Byers, Immigration Judge, Concord Immigration Court

Ryan J. Byers was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Byers earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2019 from Gonzaga University, summa cum laude, and a Juris Doctor in 2022 from Liberty University School of Law. From September 2025 to August 2026, he served as counsel with the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Seattle. From February 2024 to September 2025, he served as an assistant state attorney in the Escambia County State Attorney's Office in Pensacola, Florida. From April 2023 to January 2024, he worked as an associate attorney for Goldstein Law Group PA in Plantation, Florida. From August 2022 to March 2023, he served as an assistant state attorney in the Escambia County State Attorney's Office in Pensacola, Florida. Judge Byers is a member of the Florida Bar.

Mark Carter, Immigration Judge, New Orleans Immigration Court

Mark Carter was appointed as an immigration judge in August 2026 after serving as a temporary immigration judge since February 2026. Judge Carter earned a Bachelor's in 1996 from William Carey College and a Juris Doctor in 2001 from the University of Mississippi. From 2014 to 2026, he served as a prosecutor in Hancock County, Mississippi. From 2002 to 2025, he served as a judge advocate in the U.S. Army and in the Mississippi Army National Guard at various locations including Camp Shelby, Iraq, Kuwait, and Kosovo. He continues to serve in the Army National Guard, where he holds the rank of colonel. Judge Carter is a member of the Mississippi Bar.

Stephanie Cotton, Immigration Judge, LaSalle Immigration Court

Stephanie Cotton was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Cotton earned an Associate of Science in 1998 from Prince Institute of Professional Studies in Court Reporting, a Bachelor of Science in 2002 from Faulkner University, and a Juris Doctor in 2006 from Thomas Goode Jones School of Law. From June 2023 to August 2026, she served as a legal counsel and hearing officer in the Legal Division, Department of Finance, for the State of Alabama in Montgomery.

EOIR Announces Deputy Regional Chief Immigration Judge, Administrative Law Judge, 35 Immigration Judges, and 3 Temporary Immigration Judges
Page 4

From 2007 to 2023, she was a sole practitioner in Andalusia, Alabama, doing business as South Alabama Law beginning in April 2011, and also served as a county attorney for Covington County, Alabama, and as a municipal judge for the Town of River Falls, Alabama. Judge Cotton is a member of the Alabama State Bar.

Robert B. Daly, Immigration Judge, Florence Immigration Court

Robert B. Daly was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Daly earned a Bachelor of Science in 2009 from Western International University and a Juris Doctor in 2013 from the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law, Arizona State University. From April 2025 to August 2026, he was a sole practitioner at Abogado Rob PLLC in Queen Creek, Arizona. From December 2015 to April 2025, he served as an assistant chief counsel with the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Adelanto, California, and Eloy and Florence, Arizona. From November 2013 to December 2015, he served as a deputy public defender with the Navajo County Public Defender's Office in Holbrook, Arizona. Judge Daly is a member of the State Bar of Arizona.

Veronique N. DeRouselle, Immigration Judge, Houston – Greenspoint Park Immigration Court

Veronique N. DeRouselle was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge DeRouselle earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1996 from the University of California, Riverside, and a Juris Doctor in 2000 from the College of William & Mary Marshall-Wythe School of Law. From September 2025 to August 2026, she served as an attorney with the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in Houston. From August 2024 to September 2025, she served as an attorney with the Office of Counsel, Naval Sea Systems Command, in Washington, D.C. From July 2023 to August 2024, she served as an attorney with the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, Department of the Air Force, at Eglin Air Force Base, in Florida. From August 2020 to July 2023, she served as an attorney with OPLA, ICE, DHS, in Houston. From June 2001 to November 2020, she served in the U.S. Air Force Judge Advocate General's Corps as chief of claims division, chief of civil law, chief of military justice, chief of contracts division, area defense counsel, medical law attorney, deputy staff judge advocate, and chief of the Medical Law Field Support Center in the following locations: Langley Air Force Base, Virginia; Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas; Arlington, Virginia; Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas; Joint Base Andrews, Maryland; and Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas. Judge DeRouselle is a member of the State Bar of Texas.

Alison Fox, Immigration Judge, Laredo Immigration Court

Alison Fox was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Fox earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2001 from the University of Texas at Austin and a Juris Doctor in 2006 from St. Mary's University School of Law. From February 2021 to August 2026, she served as a research attorney to the Honorable Jesse F. McClure III at the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals in Austin. From November 2018 to February 2021, she served as director of the Conviction Integrity Unit and Ethical Disclosure Unit at the Bexar County Criminal District Attorney's Office in San

EOIR Announces Deputy Regional Chief Immigration Judge, Administrative Law Judge, 35 Immigration Judges, and 3 Temporary Immigration Judges
Page 5

Antonio. From September 2013 to October 2018, she served as a staff attorney in the writs of habeas corpus section at the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals in Austin, Texas. From December 2009 to September 2013, she served as a sole appellate practitioner and special prosecutor in the Law Office of Alison A. Fox in Boerne, Texas. From May 2007 to December 2009, she served as an assistant criminal district attorney in the Appellate Division of the Bexar County Criminal District Attorney's Office in San Antonio. From November 2006 to May 2007, she served as an assistant criminal district attorney in the Trial Division of the Bexar County Criminal District Attorney's Office in San Antonio. Judge Fox is a member of the State Bar of Texas.

Brett R. Geiger, Immigration Judge, New York – Federal Plaza Immigration Court

Brett R. Geiger was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Geiger earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2004 from the University of Illinois Chicago and a Juris Doctor in 2007 from the Northern Illinois University College of Law. From January of 2020 to August of 2026, he served as an assistant U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Florida in Miami. From January of 2009 to January of 2020, he was a partner in private practice at Malmquist, Geiger, & Durkee LLC in Morris, Illinois. Judge Geiger is a member of the Illinois State Bar.

Niles Thomas Gerry, Immigration Judge, New York – Federal Plaza Immigration Court

Niles Thomas Gerry was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Gerry earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2001 from Colgate University and a Juris Doctor in 2005 from the Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University. From June 2015 to August 2026, he served as counsel and assistant chief counsel with the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Newburgh, New York. From May 2012 to June 2015, he was an associate attorney at the law firm of Daniels, Porco and Lusardi LLP in Pawling, New York. From July 2010 to May 2012, he was a partner at the law firm of Buckley & Gerry LLP in Yorktown Heights, New York. From September 2006 to July 2010, he was an assistant district attorney with the Orange County District Attorney's Office in Goshen, New York. Judge Gerry is a member of the New York State Bar.

Bledar Gora, Immigration Judge, Adelanto Immigration Court

Bledar Gora was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Gora earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2000 from Azusa Pacific University and a Juris Doctorate in 2010 from Southern New England School of Law (now the University of Massachusetts School of Law at Dartmouth). From May 2019 to August 2026, he was a counsel with the Office of the Legal Principal Advisor, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Adelanto, California. From May 2017 to May 2019, he served as an immigration associate attorney at Indigo Law in Surfside Beach, South Carolina. From December 2010 to April 2017, he practiced immigration and family law as sole practitioner in New Bedford, Massachusetts. Judge Gora is a member of the Connecticut Bar and the Massachusetts Bar.

EOIR Announces Deputy Regional Chief Immigration Judge, Administrative Law Judge, 35 Immigration Judges, and 3 Temporary Immigration Judges
Page 6

Marissa A. Hackert, Immigration Judge, El Paso Immigration Court

Marissa A. Hackert was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Hackert earned a Bachelor of Arts in May 2010 from the University of Texas at El Paso and a Juris Doctor, cum laude, in May 2013 from Texas Southern University - Thurgood Marshall School of Law. From July 2020 to August 2026, she served as an assistant chief counsel with the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, El Paso, Texas. From March 2018 to July 2020, she served as an assistant district attorney for the 34th Judicial District Attorney's Office in El Paso, Texas. From November 2013 through March 2018, she was a debtor attorney in private practice at Tanzy & Borrego Law Offices in El Paso, Texas. Judge Hackert is a member of the State Bar of Texas.

James Hong, Immigration Judge, Santa Ana Immigration Court

James Hong was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Hong earned a Bachelor of Science in 2004 from the University of California, Irvine, a Juris Doctor in 2007 from Trinity Law School, and a Master of Laws in 2011 from Fowler (Chapman) School of Law. From August 2011 to August 2026, he was a deputy district attorney at the Orange County District Attorney's office in Santa Ana, California. From January 2010 to August 2011, he served as a sole practitioner at Esquire Law Center in Irvine, California. From June 2008 to January 2010, he served as a consumer bankruptcy attorney at Doan Law Firm in Laguna Hills, California. Judge Hong is a member of the State Bar of California.

Andrew Hurd, Immigration Judge, Denver Immigration Court

Andrew Hurd was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Hurd earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2001 from the University of Texas at Austin and a Juris Doctor in 2006 from St. Mary's University School of Law. From August 2021 to August 2026, he was senior counsel for Nutrien in Loveland, Colorado. From October 2018 to August 2021, he was counsel for Mastercard in O'Fallon, Missouri. From August 2016 to October 2018, he was a senior fellow at Mindcrest, now DWF Group's legal operations division, in Pune, India. From October 2014 to August 2016, he was an associate with Miller & Law PC in Littleton, Colorado. From November 2006 to October 2014, he was a criminal defense attorney in private practice in San Antonio. Judge Hurd is a member of the Colorado Bar.

Michael J. Hussey, Immigration Judge, Hyattsville Immigration Court

Michael J. Hussey was appointed as an immigration judge in August 2026 after serving as a temporary immigration judge since October 2025. Judge Hussey earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2001 from the University of Cincinnati, a Juris Doctor in 2005 from the University of Dayton School of Law, and a Master of Laws in 2016 from George Washington University Law School. Judge Hussey was commissioned in the U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General's Corps in 2005 where he served in various roles including defense counsel, staff judge advocate, and environmental counsel until his appointment. Judge Hussey is a member of the Ohio State Bar.

EOIR Announces Deputy Regional Chief Immigration Judge, Administrative Law Judge, 35 Immigration Judges, and 3 Temporary Immigration Judges
Page 7

Angela M. Kaul, Immigration Judge, Denver Immigration Court

Angela M. Kaul was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Kaul earned a Bachelor of Arts, magna cum laude, in 1998 from St. Edward's University, a Master of Public Administration in 2004 from Arizona State University, a Juris Doctor in 2007 from DePaul University College of Law, and a Master of Professional Studies in 2022 from the University of Maryland. From August 2023 to August 2026, she served as an attorney advisor of administrative law and ethics with the Office of General Counsel, National Security Agency, in Fort Meade, Maryland. From February to July 2023, she was an ethics attorney advisor with the Office of the Solicitor, Department of the Interior, in Reston, Virginia. From May 2013 to February 2023, she was an attorney advisor with the Navy Disability Evaluation Systems Counsel Program in Washington, D.C. From 2009 to 2011, she was a staff attorney at Benos, Sukhatme and Associates in Chicago, and from 2007 to 2009, she was an investment contract attorney at Celeritas Markets LLP, also in Chicago. Judge Kaul is a member of the Colorado Bar, the District of Columbia Bar, and the Illinois State Bar, and holds the rank of lieutenant colonel in the Colorado National Guard.

Timothy P. Kelly Jr., Immigration Judge, Philadelphia Immigration Court

Timothy P. Kelly Jr. was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Kelly earned a Bachelor of Science in 1996 from Eastern New Mexico University and a Juris Doctor in 2001 from Saint John's University School of Law. From November 2025 to August 2026, he served as counsel with the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Philadelphia. From February 2017 to November 2025, he served as an assistant prosecutor with the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office in Toms River, New Jersey. Judge Kelly is a member of the New Jersey State Bar and the State Bar of New York.

Meghan K. Lackey, Immigration Judge, Sterling Immigration Court

Meghan K. Lackey was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Lackey earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2010 from the University of Virginia's College at Wise and a Juris Doctor in 2014 from Liberty University School of Law. From September 2025 to August 2026, she served as an assistant attorney general, III with the Office of the Attorney General of Virginia. From November 2018 to September 2025, she served as a chief deputy commonwealth attorney, and from November 2014 to November 2018, as an assistant commonwealth's attorney, for the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney in Wythe County, Virginia. Judge Lackey is a member of the Virginia State Bar.

Adam H. Leonatti, Immigration Judge, Chelmsford Immigration Court

Adam H. Leonatti was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Leonatti earned a Bachelor of Science in 1994 from Kent State University and a Juris Doctor in 1997 from Ohio State University College of Law. From January 2022 to August 2026, he was with the U.S. Air Force at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, serving in the following roles: chief of labor law (December 2024-August 2026); deputy chief of labor law (August 2023-December 2024); and attorney advisor (January 2022-August 2023). During that period, from December 2023

EOIR Announces Deputy Regional Chief Immigration Judge, Administrative Law Judge, 35 Immigration Judges, and 3 Temporary Immigration Judges
Page 8

to March 2024, he served as brigade judge advocate at the 371st Sustainment Brigade, Ohio Army National Guard, while deployed to Kuwait. From June 2014 to January 2022, he served as deputy chief legal counsel with the Ohio National Guard in Columbus. From April 2014 to June 2014, he served as a judge advocate with the Ohio Army National Guard in Columbus. From April 2013 to April 2014, he served as trial counsel at the 371st Sustainment Brigade in Kuwait. From January 2005 to April 2013, he was a partner at the law firm of Thompson, Meier & Dersom in Columbus, Ohio, after serving as an associate from December 1998 to December 2004. From November 1997 to December 1998, he was in private practice in Columbus and Nelsonville, Ohio. Judge Leonatti is a member of the Ohio State Bar.

Jeffrey T. McCluskey, Immigration Judge, Orlando Immigration Court

Jeffrey T. McCluskey was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge McCluskey earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1990 from the University of Alabama and a Juris Doctor in 1993 from the University of Mississippi School of Law. From January 1997 to January 2023, he served as an assistant district attorney in the Madison County Alabama District Attorney's Office. From September 1994 to January 1997, he served as an assistant district attorney in the Cullman County Alabama District Attorney's Office. Judge McCluskey is a member of the Alabama State Bar.

Jan M. Merendino, Immigration Judge, Houston – Greenspoint Park Immigration Court

Jan M. Merendino was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Merendino earned a Bachelor of Science in 1995 from the University of Houston, Clear Lake, and a Doctor of Jurisprudence, summa cum laude, in 2002 from South Texas College of Law. From August 2025 to August 2026, she served as a state district judge for the 75th Judicial District Court in Texas. From November 2002 to August 2025, she served as the lead litigation and appellate counsel in private practice. From January 2002 to May 2002, she served as a Langdell scholar with South Texas College of Law. From May 2001 to August 2001, she served as summer tax associate of Gardere, Wynn, Sewell LLP. From August 2000 to May 2001, she served as a research assistant and an editor member of the Law Review Editorial Board at South Texas College of Law. From October 1997 to August 2000, she served as a tax manager with Clear Channel Communications/SFX Entertainment/PACE Entertainment. Judge Merendino is a member of the State Bar of Texas.

Dixon M. Merkt, Immigration Judge, Dallas Immigration Court

Dixon M. Merkt was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Merkt earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2000 from Wesleyan University, a Juris Doctor in 2005 from the University of Miami School of Law, and a Master of Strategic Studies in 2026 from the U.S. Army War College. From August 2025 to July 2026, he was mobilized on active duty as a member of the U.S. Army Reserve, serving as a command judge advocate at Fort Hood, Texas. From August 2020 to September 2025, he served as an assistant regional counsel for the U.S. General Services Administration in Fort Worth, Texas. From February 2014 to August 2020, he served as an assistant city attorney for the City of Dallas in Texas. From July 2008 to December 2013, he served on active duty in the U.S. Army with positions including defense

EOIR Announces Deputy Regional Chief Immigration Judge, Administrative Law Judge, 35 Immigration Judges, and 3 Temporary Immigration Judges
Page 9

counsel at Fort Campbell, Kentucky; contract and fiscal law attorney for U.S. Forces-Afghanistan; and trial counsel at Fort Gordon, Georgia. From August 2005 to June 2008, he was an associate at Diserio Martin O'Connor & Castiglioni LLP in Stamford, Connecticut. He also currently serves in the U.S. Army Reserve and holds the rank of lieutenant colonel. Judge Merkt is a member of the Connecticut Bar and the State Bar of Texas.

Grant M. Pattison, Immigration Judge, Salt Lake City Immigration Court

Grant M. Pattison was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Pattison earned a Bachelor of Science in 2016, and a Juris Doctor in 2019, both from Florida State University. From 2019 to 2026, he served as a judge advocate in the U.S. Air Force. Previously, he served on staff in the Florida House of Representatives, clerked for the Honorable Gary P. Flower, 4th Judicial Circuit of Florida, and investigated fraud at the Florida Department of Financial Services. Judge Pattison is a member of the Florida Bar.

Brian J. Pearly, Immigration Judge, Chelmsford Immigration Court

Brian J. Pearly was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Pearly earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1998 from the University of Massachusetts Amherst and a Juris Doctor in 2001 from the New England School of Law. From March 2024 to August 2026, he served as an assistant attorney general in the Criminal Bureau, Gaming Enforcement Division, Office of the Attorney General, in Boston. From February 2016 to March 2024, he served as an assistant district attorney at the Worcester County District Attorney's Office, in Worcester, Massachusetts, including from March 2020 to March 2024 in the Gang Unit. From October 2011 to February 2016, he served as first assistant city solicitor for the City of Westfield, Massachusetts. Judge Pearly is a member of the Massachusetts Bar.

Angelica M. Powers, Immigration Judge, Memphis Immigration Court

Angelica M. Powers was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Powers earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1998 from the University of Texas at Austin and a Juris Doctor in 2001 from St. Mary's University School of Law in San Antonio. From January 2019 to August 2026, she served as division chief at the Bexar County District Attorney's Office, Family Violence Division, in San Antonio. From September 2017 to December 2018, she served as a regional attorney at the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Litigation Division, in San Antonio. From January 2017 to September 2017, she served as an assistant city attorney at the City Attorney's Office, Prosecution Division, in San Antonio. From January 2002 to January 2017, Judge Powers served as assistant district attorney for the Bexar County District Attorney's Office in San Antonio. Judge Powers is a member of the State Bar of Texas.

Shiv Sachdeva, Immigration Judge, Atlanta – W. Peachtree Street Immigration Court

Shiv Sachdeva was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Sachdeva earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in 2002 from the University of Georgia and a Juris Doctor in 2006 from the University of Georgia School of Law. From March 2026 to May 2026, he was a legal consultant at the Law

EOIR Announces Deputy Regional Chief Immigration Judge, Administrative Law Judge, 35 Immigration Judges, and 3 Temporary Immigration Judges
Page 10

Offices of Blake A. Poole LLC in Gainesville, Georgia. From July 2008 to February 2026, he served as a senior assistant district attorney with the Northeastern Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office in Gainesville, Georgia. From December 2006 to June 2008, he served as an assistant district attorney with the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office in Columbus, Georgia. Judge Sachdeva is a member of the State Bar of Georgia.

Brian E. Salisbury, Immigration Judge, Cleveland Immigration Court

Brian E. Salisbury was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Salisbury earned a Bachelor of Science in 2005 from Utah Valley University and a Juris Doctor in 2008 from Albany Law School. From May 2016 to August 2026, he was a general attorney with the Litigation and Advisory Division, Office of Chief Counsel, Internal Revenue Service U.S. Department of the Treasury, at Philadelphia. From April 2014 to May 2016, he served as a correctional officer with the Federal Bureau of Prisons, Department of Justice, at the Federal Correctional Institute in Fort Worth, Texas. From November 2008 to November 2013, he served as a soldier in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Corps at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Judge Salisbury is a member of the New York State Bar.

Michael C. Scharf Jr., Immigration Judge, Stewart Immigration Court

Michael C. Scharf Jr. was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Scharf earned an Associate of Applied Science in 1998 from Macomb Community College, a Bachelor of Business Administration in 2004 from Rochester Christian University, and a Juris Doctorate in 2014 from Western Michigan University Cooley Law School. From October 2025 to August 2026, he served as counsel with the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Jacksonville, Florida. From May 2015 to October 2025, he was an attorney at Scharf Law Group PLLC, in Mount Clemens, Michigan. From July 1998 to July 2023, he served as a law enforcement officer with the Macomb County Sheriff's Office, in Mount Clemens, Michigan. Judge Scharf is a member of the Florida Bar and the State Bar of Michigan.

Charles P. Schofield, Immigration Judge, Chelmsford Immigration Court

Charles P. Schofield was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August of 2026. Judge Schofield earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2013 from the University of Massachusetts and a Juris Doctor in 2018 from the University of Massachusetts School of Law. From September of 2018 to August of 2026, he served as an assistant district attorney with the Bristol County District Attorney's Office in Fall River, Massachusetts. Judge Schofield is a member of the Massachusetts Bar.

Daniel K. Sherwood, Immigration Judge, Dallas Immigration Court

Daniel K. Sherwood was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Sherwood earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1980 from the University of Massachusetts at Boston and a Juris Doctor, magna cum laude, in 1983 from the New England School of Law (now New England Law). From 2022 to August 2026, he served as counsel with the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in Dallas, and as an

EOIR Announces Deputy Regional Chief Immigration Judge, Administrative Law Judge, 35 Immigration Judges, and 3 Temporary Immigration Judges
Page 11

immigration services officer with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, DHS, in Dallas. From 1986 until his retirement from private practice in 2019, he operated a sole law practice, Daniel K. Sherwood PC, in Woburn, Massachusetts. Judge Sherwood is a member of the Massachusetts Bar.

Jorene Soto, Immigration Judge, Annandale Immigration Court

Jorene Soto was appointed as an immigration judge in August 2026 after serving as a temporary immigration judge since February 2026. Judge Soto earned a Bachelor of Arts, magna cum laude, in 1997 from Stetson University, a combination Juris Doctor/Master of Arts in Latin American Studies, with honors, in 2000 from the University of Florida, and a Master of Laws in 2007, with honors, with certificates in Refugees and Humanitarian Emergencies and International Human Rights Law from Georgetown University Law Center. From May 2020 to January 2026, she served as an operational law attorney for the U.S. Air Force Reserves at the Pentagon. From May 2018 to May 2020, she was the staff judge advocate for the 130th Airlift Wing, West Virginia Air National Guard, Charleston, West Virginia. From September 2001 to September 2002, she was a judicial law clerk at the Florence, Phoenix, Tucson, and Las Vegas immigration courts entering on duty through the Attorney General's Honors Program, then served as an attorney advisor at the Board of Immigration Appeals, Executive Office for Immigration Review, Department of Justice, in Falls Church, Virginia, through 2019. Judge Soto is a member of the West Virginia State Bar.

Mark A. Tomicich, Immigration Judge, Richmond Immigration Adjudication Center

Mark A. Tomicich was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Tomicich earned a Bachelor of Science in 1986 from Montana State University Billings and a Juris Doctor in 1989 from the University of New Hampshire Franklin Pierce School of Law. From March 2024 to July 2026, he was the principal at Beartooth Aviation Law LLC, a Montana law firm. From September 1989 to February 2024, he was with the Office of Chief Counsel, Federal Aviation Administration, in Washington, D.C., retiring as a senior attorney. Judge Tomicich is a member of the State Bar of Montana.

Eric Young, Immigration Judge, Boston Immigration Court

Eric Young was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Young earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2006 from the University of North Florida, a Juris Doctor in 2011 from Regent University School of Law, and a Master of Laws in Taxation in 2013 from the University of Miami School of Law. From September 2016 to August 2026, he was with the Office of Chief Counsel, Internal Revenue Service, as an associate area counsel, in Jacksonville, Florida (May 2024-August 2026) and a senior attorney in Cincinnati (September 2016-May 2024). Before joining the IRS[¹], he served in the U.S. Marine Corps and the Florida Air National Guard, retiring with the rank of master sergeant after more than 20 years of military service, including deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. Judge Young is a member of the Florida Bar and the Kentucky Bar Association.

EOIR Announces Deputy Regional Chief Immigration Judge, Administrative Law Judge, 35 Immigration Judges, and 3 Temporary Immigration Judges
Page 12

John J. Zachary, Immigration Judge, Oakdale Immigration Court

John J. Zachary was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Zachary earned a Bachelor of Science, summa cum laude, in 1993 from Louisiana Tech University and a Doctor of Jurisprudence in 1996 from the University of Texas School of Law. From April 2016 to August 2026, he served as an assistant chief counsel with the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Oakdale, Louisiana. From September 2013 to April 2016, he was in private practice. From May 2005 to September 2013, he served as in-house tribal counsel for the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana in Elton, Louisiana. From August 1996 until May 2005, he was in private practice. Judge Zachary is a member of the Louisiana State Bar.

Temporary Immigration Judges

Matthew H. Davidhizar, Temporary Immigration Judge, Tacoma Immigration Court

Matthew H. Davidhizar was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Davidhizar earned a Bachelor of Laws in 2002 from Universidad de las Americas-Puebla and a Juris Doctorate in 2006 from the University of Washington. Since 2018, he has served as a state prosecutor and in the Marine Corps Reserve, and prior to this, from 2010 to 2018, he served in the Marine Corps. From 2007 to 2010 he served as in-house counsel and a corporate law firm associate. Judge Davidhizar is a member of the Washington State Bar.

Jason S. Frankenfield, Temporary Immigration Judge, Elizabeth Immigration Court

Jason S. Frankenfield was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Frankenfield earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1999 from Baylor University, a Juris Doctor in 2002 from Villanova University School of Law, a Master of Laws in 2015 from the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School, and a Master of Strategic Studies in 2020 from the U.S. Army War College. From August 2020 to July 2026, he served as an Army staff judge advocate in the following locations: Gillem Enclave, Forest Park, Georgia (August 2024-July 2026); U.S. Army Garrison Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany (February 2022-July 2024) and U.S. Army Garrison Fort Hunter Liggett, California, (August 2020-February 2022). From 2011 to 2020, he served as a deputy staff judge advocate at Fort Meade, Maryland (2017-2020), operational law attorney, U.S. Army Garrison Italy (2015-2017), and deputy staff judge advocate, Fort Shafter, Hawaii (2011-2014). From 2003 to 2011, he served in various active and reserve roles in the Army Judge Advocate General's Corps, to include serving as a trial attorney, operational law attorney, special assistant U.S. attorney, chief of military justice, and brigade judge advocate, serving at Harrisburg and Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania; Camp Shelby, Mississippi; Ramadi, Iraq; and Fort Dix, New Jersey. From 2008 to 2009, he served as an associate attorney at White and Williams LLP in Philadelphia. From 2003 to 2005, he served as an assistant district attorney in Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania. Judge Frankenfield has served for more than 30 years as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army and currently holds the rank of colonel. Judge Frankenfield is a member of the Pennsylvania Bar.

EOIR Announces Deputy Regional Chief Immigration Judge, Administrative Law Judge, 35 Immigration Judges, and 3 Temporary Immigration Judges
Page 13

Daniel J. Mulhern, Temporary Immigration Judge, Elizabeth Immigration Court

Daniel J. Mulhern was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in August 2026. Judge Mulhern earned a Bachelor of Science in 2009 from the U.S. Naval Academy and a Juris Doctor in 2013 from Widener University School of Law. From February 2026 to August 2026, he was the chief of Maritime and International Law for the U.S. Northern Command, Joint Task Force Southern Border, Department of War. From September 2024 to January 2026, he was an associate attorney for Elliott Greenleaf PC in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. From September 2020 to September 2024, he served as an assistant district attorney for the Luzerne County District Attorney's Office in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. From October 2016 to September 2020, he served as an attorney for the Office of the Judge Advocate General, Department of the Navy, in Washington D.C. From October 2013 to October 2016, he served as an attorney for Rogan Law in Scranton, Pennsylvania. He holds the rank of commander in the U.S. Navy. Judge Mulhern is a member of the Pennsylvania Bar.

— EOIR —