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# NOTICE

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Feb. 5, 2026

## **EOIR Announces 6 Immigration Judges and 27 Temporary Immigration Judges**

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) announced today the investiture of 6 immigration judges and 27 temporary immigration judges who joined immigration courts in Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New York, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and Washington.

Director Daren K. Margolin delivered remarks and Chief Immigration Judge Teresa L. Riley administered the oath of office during the investiture, which was held today at the Department of Justice's Great Hall in Washington, D.C.

After a thorough application process, Attorney General Pamela Bondi appointed Luciana Dubuc, Carey Holliday, Stephen F. Keane, Jennifer L. Mazza, Linda L. Chavez, and Stuart J. Zander to their new positions as immigration judges, and Dillon J. Ambrose, Joseph Q. Andelin, Mark Carter, Jon Paul Calandruccio, John T. Driscoll, Michael C. Engel, Daniel J. Gallegos, Thomas Johnson, Benjamin S. Kuipers, Ferdinand Lugo Ortiz, Lionel Martin, Nicole Mouakar, Lucky Narain, Nancy Nevarez-Myrick, Drew T. Nishiyama, Leah A. OBrien, Jack D. Patten III, Gurney F. Pearsall III, Kyle Pearson, Catherine G. Phillips, Yeshaya Poyurs, Jeremy Sibert, Jorene Soto, Kevin D. Stroberg, Jennifer C. Whitko, Benjamin D. Williams, and Xinzhe Zhang to their new positions as temporary immigration judges.

These new immigration judges, who have undergone a robust training program, are joining an immigration judge corps that is committed to upholding the rule of law.

Biographical information for the newly appointed immigration judges and temporary immigration judges follows:

### **Luciana Dubuc, Immigration Judge, Chelmsford Immigration Court**

Luciana Dubuc was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Dubuc earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2011 from Central Connecticut State University and a Juris Doctor in 2015 from the University of Massachusetts School of Law. From October 2025 to January 2026, she served as a deputy chief counsel with the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Department of Homeland Security (DHS),

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in Boston. From December 2016 to October 2025, she served as an assistant chief counsel with OPLA, ICE, DHS, in Boston (2021-2025), New York (2019-2021), and Harlingen, Texas (2016-2019). From February 2016 to December 2016, she served as a private immigration attorney at the law office of Mills & Bor in Providence, Rhode Island. Judge Dubuc is a member of the Massachusetts Bar.

#### **Carey Holliday, Immigration Judge, Baton Rouge Immigration Court**

Carey Holliday was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Holliday earned a Bachelor of Arts in history in 1974 from Louisiana State University and a Juris Doctorate in 1977 from Louisiana State University, Paul M. Hebert Law Center. From 2016 to January 2026, he practiced immigration law in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. From 2009 to 2015, he served as a workers' compensation judge in Louisiana. From 2006 to 2009, he served as an immigration judge at the Miami Immigration Court. Prior to that, he served for 16 years as a Louisiana state assistant attorney general and was the general counsel for the Louisiana Department of Insurance. Judge Holliday is a member of the Louisiana State Bar.

#### **Stephen F. Keane, Immigration Judge, Concord Immigration Court**

Stephen F. Keane was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Keane earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1994 from the University of Arizona, a Juris Doctor in 2002 from William and Mary Law School, and a Master of Laws in 2006 from the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General Legal Center and School. From April 2025 to January 2026, he served as the director of security and emergency services and assistant chief of staff for Marine Corps Installations West. From January 2025 to April 2025, he served as a national security attorney for the U.S. Army. From November 2022 to January 2025, he served as a supervisory veterans law judge at the Board of Veterans' Appeals. From 1994 to 2022, he served on active duty with the U.S. Marine Corps, first as an infantry officer and later as a judge advocate. In 2022, he retired as the chief circuit judge for the Western Judicial Circuit Navy-Marine Corps Court Trial Judiciary. Judge Keane is a member of the Virginia State Bar.

#### **Jennifer L. Mazza, Immigration Judge, Pearsall Immigration Court**

Jennifer L. Mazza was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Mazza earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2014 from the California State University at Bakersfield and a Juris Doctor in 2016 from Arizona Summit Law School. From October 2023 to January 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, in San Antonio, Texas. From July 2017 to October 2023, she served as an assistant district attorney with the state of Texas. Additionally, in 2021, she joined the U.S. Air Force Reserve, where she continues to work as a judge advocate. Judge Mazza is a member of the State Bar of Texas.

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#### **Linda L. Chavez, Immigration Judge, Pearsall Immigration Court**

Linda L. Chavez was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Chavez earned a Bachelor of Science in 2005 from St. John's University and a Juris Doctor in 2008 from New York Law School. From 2019 to January 2026, she served as assistant chief counsel with the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in the following locations: Pearsall, Texas (2025-2026); San Antonio, Texas (2022-2025); and Harlingen, Texas (2019-2022). From 2009 to 2018, she served in the U.S. Army Active Duty Judge Advocate General's Corps. She continues to serve in the U.S. Army Reserve and holds the rank of lieutenant colonel. Judge Chavez is a member of the State Bar of California and New Jersey State Bar.

#### **Stuart J. Zander, Immigration Judge, Imperial Immigration Court**

Stuart J. Zander was appointed as an immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Zander earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2002 from the University of Wisconsin – Madison and a Juris Doctorate in 2009 from Thomas Jefferson School of Law. From February 2018 to January 2026, he served as an assistant U.S. attorney with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona. From October 2015 to February 2018, he served as an assistant U.S. attorney with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Puerto Rico. From May 2014 to October 2015, he served as a special assistant U.S. attorney with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Missouri. From July 2013 to May 2014, he served as a special assistant U.S. attorney with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Illinois. From July 2011 to July 2013, he was a solo practitioner in San Diego. In 2026, he was awarded the Criminal Division AAG Award for the Advancement of Public Safety, and, in 2023, he was named the district's top prosecutor from Homeland Security Investigations, Department of Homeland Security. Judge Zander is a member of the State Bar of California and New York State Bar.

#### **Dillon J. Ambrose, Temporary Immigration Judge, Chicago Immigration Court**

Dillon J. Ambrose was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Ambrose earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1998 from Marquette University and a Juris Doctor in 2002 from Marquette University Law School. From 2024 to January 2026, he served as a trial counsel for the U.S. Trustee Program, Department of Justice. From 2011 to 2024, he served as a civil litigator at a law firm in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. From 2010 to 2011, he clerked for a federal district court judge in the District of Columbia. From 2002 to 2010, he served as an active-duty judge advocate with the U.S. Navy's Judge Advocate General's Corps and thereafter continues to serve in U.S. Navy Reserve, with positions including defense counsel, prosecutor, appellate defense counsel, appellate government counsel, and staff judge advocate. He holds the rank of captain. Judge Ambrose is a member of the State Bar of Wisconsin.

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#### **Joseph Q. Andelin, Temporary Immigration Judge, Salt Lake City Immigration Court**

Joseph Q. Andelin was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in 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.

#### **Mark Carter, Temporary Immigration Judge, New Orleans Immigration Court**

Mark Carter was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in 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.

#### **Jon Paul Calandruccio, Temporary Immigration Judge, New Orleans Immigration Court**

Jon Paul Calandruccio was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Calandruccio earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2002 from Oglethorpe University and a Juris Doctorate in 2008 from Thomas M. Cooley Law School. In 2024, he served as an acquisitions attorney at Eglin Air Force Base. From 2021 to 2024, he served as the deputy counsel for Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan. Since 2009, Judge Calandruccio has served as a judge advocate in the U.S. Air Force at various locations including Afghanistan, the Philippines, the United Kingdom, Italy, and, most recently as the legal advisor for the 435 Air Ground Operations Wing in Germany. He holds the rank of lieutenant colonel. Judge Calandruccio is a member of the Connecticut Bar and New York State Bar.

#### **John T. Driscoll, Temporary Immigration Judge, Los Angeles – West Los Angeles Immigration Court**

John T. Driscoll was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Driscoll earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1995 from the University of California, San Diego, and a Juris Doctor in 1999 from Loyola Law School. From 2000 to January 2026, he practiced municipal law in various capacities as a deputy city attorney with the Office of the Los Angeles City Attorney, and since 2011 he has served as a deputy city attorney with the General Counsel at the Port of Los Angeles. Judge Driscoll has also served in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's

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Corps since 2007 to include assignments in California, Texas, and Louisiana. Judge Driscoll holds the rank of lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve, and his awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal. Judge Driscoll is a member of the State Bar of California.

#### **Michael C. Engel, Temporary Immigration Judge, Hyattsville Immigration Court**

Michael C. Engel was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Engel earned a Bachelor of Science in 1992 from Missouri State University, a Master of Business Administration in 2017 from the University of Maryland Global Campus, and a Juris Doctor in 1999 from Columbus School of Law, Catholic University of America. From 2002 to January 2026, he served at the Federal Communications Commission, and in the U.S. Army Reserve Judge Advocate General's Corps. He holds the rank of colonel. Judge Engel is a member of the New York State Bar and the District of Columbia Bar.

#### **Daniel J. Gallegos, Temporary Immigration Judge, El Paso Immigration Court**

Daniel J. Gallegos was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Gallegos earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in 2000 from the University of Notre Dame, a Master of Science in 2001 from the University of New Mexico, a Juris Doctor in 2005 from Notre Dame Law School, and a Master of Laws in 2025 from the Georgetown University Law Center. From February 2021 to January 2026, he was an attorney in private practice in Albuquerque, New Mexico. From January 2019 to December 2020, he served as a district court judge on the Second Judicial District Court in Albuquerque. From January to December 2018, he served as a judge on the New Mexico Court of Appeals. From 2013 to 2018, he was a staff attorney at the New Mexico Court of Appeals. From 2010 to 2012, he served as an assistant district attorney in New Mexico. From 2010 to present, he served as a military attorney in the U.S. Navy Reserve Judge Advocate General's Corps, with assignments at U.S. Strategic Command, U.S. Special Operations Command, U.S. Sixth Fleet, SEAL Team 17, and U.S. Third Fleet. He deployed in 2014 to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in 2022 to U.S. European Command, and from 2023 to 2025 to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. From 2005 to 2010, he served on active duty as a military attorney in the U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General's Corps, with assignments in Jacksonville, Florida, on board USS NIMITZ (CVN 68), and a deployment to Iraq. Judge Gallegos holds the rank of commander. He is a member of the State Bar of New Mexico.

#### **Thomas Johnson, Temporary Immigration Judge, Houston – S. Gessner Road Immigration Court**

Thomas Johnson was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Johnson earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1992 from the University of Colorado, Boulder, a Master of Liberal Arts in Extension Studies in history in 1998 from Harvard University, and a Juris Doctor in 2000 from Tulane Law School. From June 2023 to January 2026, he was a team leader in the 174th Legal Operations Detachment of the U.S. Army Reserve. From November 2020 to May 2023, he was the brigade judge advocate for the 55th Sustainment Brigade. From October 2019 to June

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2020, he was the chief of administrative law for the Army Reserve Innovation Command. From June 2014 to September of 2019, he served as a chief of legal assistance and a chief of administrative law for the 75th Training Command. From February 2008 to May 2014, he was a legal assistance attorney in the 1st Legal Operations Detachment. He was also an associate in private practice, practicing maritime law from 2000 to 2002 with Stepp and Sullivan PC. Judge Johnson is a member of the Texas Bar.

#### **Benjamin S. Kuipers, Temporary Immigration Judge, Phoenix Immigration Court**

Benjamin S. Kuipers was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Kuipers earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2005 from Hillsdale College and a Juris Doctor in 2009 from the Arizona State University Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law. From 2024 to January 2026, he served as a deputy county attorney with the Yavapai County Attorney's Office in Prescott, Arizona. From 2023 to 2024, he served as a task force judge advocate for the U.S. Army in Jordan, Iraq, and Syria, advising on operational law. From 2021 to 2023, he served as a senior trial defense counsel for the Arizona Army National Guard. From 2019 to 2021, he was the legal officer in charge for Operation Guardian Support, a joint task force with U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security. From 2011 to 2023, he was the founder and managing partner of Kuipers Law PLLC. From 2009 to 2011, he worked at an insurance defense firm. He holds the rank of major in the Arizona Army National Guard. Judge Kuipers is a member of the State Bar of Arizona.

#### **Ferdinand Lugo Ortiz, Temporary Immigration Judge, Tacoma Immigration Court**

Ferdinand Lugo Ortiz was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Lugo Ortiz earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science in 2002 from the University of Puerto Rico and a Juris Doctor in 2006 from the University of Puerto Rico School of Law. From November 2021 to January 2026, he served as an assistant attorney general with the Office of the Attorney General, state of Washington, Olympia. From March 2018 to October 2021, he served as an attorney advisor in the U.S. Army Medical Command, and special victim prosecutor at Joint-Base Lewis McChord, Tacoma, Washington. From November 2013 to March 2018, he served as lead attorney at the Office of Soldiers' Counsel, U.S. Army Medical Command, El Paso, Texas. In 2017, he served as military defense counsel in the U.S. Army, Fort Bliss, El Paso, Texas. From June 2012 to 2013, he served as a judge advocate in the U.S. Army, Fort Carson, Colorado. In 2013, he was an attorney in private practice in Houston. Since 2009, Judge Lugo Ortiz has been a commissioned military officer in the U.S. Army Reserve. He holds the rank of lieutenant colonel. Judge Lugo Ortiz is a member of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Bar, the State Bar of Texas, and the Washington State Bar.

#### **Lionel Martin, Temporary Immigration Judge, Houston – S. Gessner Road Immigration Court**

Lionel Martin was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Martin earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1996 from the University of Wisconsin – Whitewater and a Juris Doctor in 1999 from the University of Houston Law

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Center. From 2022 to January 2026, he served as a labor and employment attorney with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. From 2002 to 2010, and 2011 to 2022, he was in private practice with various law firms in Houston. From 2010 to 2011, he was a special assistant U.S. attorney for the Western District of Texas, Waco Division. From 1999 to 2002, he was on active duty as a judge advocate in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Corps (JAG). Since 2002, he has also served as a judge advocate in the U.S. Army Reserve JAG including a deployment to the Middle East in Support of Operation Enduring Freedom (Spartan Shield). He holds the rank of lieutenant colonel. Judge Martin is a member of the State Bar of Texas.

#### **Nicole Mouakar, Temporary Immigration Judge, Orlando Immigration Court**

Nicole Mouakar was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Mouakar earned a Bachelor of Arts in Legal Studies in 2003 from the University of Central Florida, a Juris Doctor in 2009 from the University of Florida Levin College of Law, and a Master of Laws in International and Comparative Law in 2010 from George Washington University Law School. From February 2016 to January 2026, she served as a division supervisor and then trial attorney with the Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Middle District of Florida. In 2015, she served as a law clerk to U.S. District Judge Virginia M. Hernandez Covington of the Middle District of Florida, Tampa Division. From 2010 to 2014, she served as an active-duty judge advocate in the U.S. Air Force and continues to serve in the Air Force Reserves in various roles, where she holds the rank of lieutenant colonel. Judge Mouakar is a member of the Florida Bar.

#### **Lucky Narain, Temporary Immigration Judge, New York – Federal Plaza Immigration Court**

Lucky Narain was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Narain earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1999 from Christopher Newport University, a Master of Science in Public Policy and Management in 2004 from Carnegie Mellon University, and a Juris Doctor in 2009 from Fordham Law School. In 2025, he served as an assistant district attorney for the state of North Carolina. From 2022 to 2025, Judge Narain served as a general counsel for the U.S. Army in Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Syria, advising on international jurisdictional matters and regulatory compliance. From 2019 to 2022, he was in private practice as a principal at Narain Legal PLLC and of counsel at Bartko Pavia in San Francisco focusing on immigration, civil litigation and complex regulatory proceedings. From 2012 to 2017, he served as a judge advocate for the U.S. Army. From 2009 to 2012, he served as a tax consultant at Deloitte LLP in New York. From 2001 to 2003, he served as a Peace Corps volunteer in the Dominican Republic. Judge Narain holds the rank of lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve. He is a member of the New Jersey State Bar, the New York State Bar, and the North Carolina State Bar.

#### **Nancy Nevarez-Myrick, Temporary Immigration Judge, Hyattsville Immigration Court**

Nancy Nevarez-Myrick was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Nevarez-Myrick earned a Bachelor of Arts in

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2008 from the University of Loyola Chicago, a Master of Arts in 2013 from the University of Illinois Carbondale, a Juris Doctor in 2016 from Ave Maria School of Law, and Master of Laws in 2017 from the University of Alabama Tuscaloosa. From June 2021 to January 2026, she served as an attorney adviser at the Board of Appeals with the Department of Veteran Affairs in Washington, D.C. From August 2017 to June 2021, she served as a judge advocate with the U.S. Air Force at Robins Air Force Base, Warner Robins, Georgia, and Buckley Space Force Base, Aurora, Colorado. Since June 2021, Judge Nevarez-Myrick has served in the U.S. Air Force Reserves and holds the rank of major. Judge Nevarez-Myrick is a member of the Florida Bar and Illinois State Bar.

#### **Drew T. Nishiyama, Temporary Immigration Judge, Seattle Immigration Court**

Drew T. Nishiyama was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Nishiyama earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2002 from Muhlenberg College and a Juris Doctorate in 2009 from University of Missouri School of Law. From 2019 to January 2026, he served as a judge advocate in the U.S. Air Force Reserves Judge Advocate General's Corps (JAG) at Joint Base Lewis McChord, Washington. In 2025, he was in private practice in Bellingham, Washington. In 2024, he served as an attorney with the Department of Veterans Affairs, and from 2020 to 2024, with the Washington State Office of the Attorney General. From 2017 to 2019, he served as a judge advocate in the Wisconsin Air National Guard. From 2013 to 2017, he served as a JAG with the U.S. Air Force at Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi. From 2010 to 2013, he was a staff member for the Honorable Trent Franks, Arizona. Judge Nishiyama is a member of the State Bar of Washington.

#### **Leah A. OBrien, Temporary Immigration Judge, San Diego Immigration Court**

Leah A. OBrien was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge OBrien earned a Bachelor of Science in 2005 from the University of Georgia, a Juris Doctor in 2008 from the University of Notre Dame Law School, and a Master of Laws in 2020 from the George Washington University Law School. Judge OBrien has been on active duty in the U.S. Navy since 2008 and holds the rank of commander. From 2025 to January 2026, she served as the director of the Navy's Trial Counsel Assistance Program and the lead national security prosecutor. From 2023 to 2025, she served as the senior prosecutor at Region Legal Service Office, Southwest in San Diego. From 2022 to 2023, she served as the Navy's complex case prosecutor in Washington, D.C. From 2020 to 2022, she served as a managing defense counsel at the Military Commissions Defense Organization in Washington, D.C. From 2015 to 2019, she served as a professional development officer and the senior prosecutor at Region Legal Service Office, Northwest in Bremerton, Washington. From 2012 to 2015, she served as a defense counsel at Defense Service Office, West in San Diego. In 2011, she served as the staff judge advocate for Commander, Amphibious Squadron Six, deployed onboard the USS Bataan (LHD 5). From 2009 to 2011, she served as a prosecutor at Region Legal Service Office, Mid-Atlantic in Norfolk, Virginia. Judge OBrien is a member of the State Bar of Georgia.



**Jack D. Patten III, Temporary Immigration Judge, Denver Immigration Court**

Jack D. Patten III was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Patten earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2002 from Hanover College and a Juris Doctor in 2005 from the University of Denver Sturm College of Law. From 2014 to 2026, he served as an assistant attorney general for the Colorado Attorney General's Office, most recently as second assistant attorney general. From 2008 to 2014, he was as an associate attorney at Littler Mendelson PC's Denver office. From 2006 to 2008, he was an associate attorney at Baker & Hostetler LLP's Denver office. From 2005 to 2006, he served as judicial law clerk to the Honorable Robert G. James, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana. Since 2008, he also served in the U.S. Army Reserve Judge Advocate General's Corps, including in the following positions: deputy commander, 87th Legal Operational Detachment, Salt Lake City (2024-2026); S1/S3 and team chief, 7th Legal Operational Detachment, Schenectady, New York (2022-2024); chief of national security law, 412th Theatre Engineer Command, Vicksburg, Mississippi (2021-2022); deputy regional defense counsel, 22d Legal Operational Detachment, San Antonio (2019-2021); senior defense counsel, 22d Legal Operational Detachment, San Diego (2017-2019); command judge advocate, Army Medical Command Western Medical Area Readiness Support Group, San Pablo, California (2014-2017); legal assistance attorney, 87th Legal Operational Detachment, Aurora, Colorado; defense counsel, Aurora, Colorado, Balad, Iraq, Bagram, Afghanistan, and Camp Casey, South Korea (2008-2012). He holds the rank of lieutenant colonel. His military awards include the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, and other campaign and service medals. Judge Patten is a member of the Colorado Bar.

**Gurney F. Pearsall III, Temporary Immigration Judge, Hyattsville Immigration Court**

Gurney F. Pearsall III was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Pearsall earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science in 2013 from Yeshiva University and a Juris Doctor in 2016 from the University of Colorado School of Law. From November 2016 to January 2026, he worked in private practice with a focus on appellate litigation in San Antonio, Texas and Denver. Since March 2017, he has also served in the Judge Advocate General's Corps of the U.S. Army Reserve. As a judge advocate, he has served as a command judge advocate for Area Support Group–Balkans at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo; as an administrative law attorney for Headquarters, Department of the Army at the Pentagon; as a special assistant U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of North Carolina, Department of Justice, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; as a Defense Support of Civil Authorities officer for U.S. Army Reserve Legal Command at Gaithersburg, Maryland; and as a war crimes prosecutor for the Office of Military Commissions, Office of the Chief Prosecutor at the Pentagon. Judge Pearsall is a recipient of the Warren E. Burger Prize. He is a member of the New York State Bar, the State Bar of Texas, and the U.S. Supreme Court Bar.

**Kyle Pearson, Temporary Immigration Judge, Atlanta – Ted Turner Drive Immigration Court**

Kyle Pearson was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Pearson earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in 1990 from Georgia State University and a Juris Doctor in 1993 from Georgia State University College of Law. From 2022 to 2026, he served as a military judge with the Georgia Army National Guard in Marietta, Georgia. From 2006 to 2026, he served with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources in Atlanta, first as deputy executive counsel and then as executive counsel. From 2003 to 2006, he served in the private practice of law with Brock, Calhoun, Wilson and Rogers in Marietta, Georgia. From 1996 to 2003, he served as an assistant attorney general with the Georgia Department of Law in Atlanta. From 1995 to 1996, he served in the private practice of law with Brookins and Cook in Atlanta. From 1994 to 1995, he served as an assistant district attorney in the Piedmont Judicial Circuit in Homer, Georgia. Since 2003, Judge Pearson has been a commissioned officer in the Georgia Army National Guard, including service in various periods of active duty with the U.S. Army. He holds the rank of colonel. Judge Pearson is a member of the State Bar of Georgia.

**Catherine G. Phillips, Temporary Immigration Judge, New Orleans Immigration Court**

Catherine G. Phillips was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Phillips earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2009 from Louisiana State University and a Juris Doctorate in 2013 from Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. During 2025, while in private practice in Daphne, Alabama, she was called to active duty to serve as a special trial counsel to assist the newly formed Office of Special Trial Counsel in the prosecution of sexual assault and domestic violence cases. From 2014 to 2024, she served on active duty as a military justice litigation specialist, a special trial counsel, and she earned the Navy's Prosecutor of the Year award in 2022. From 2017 to 2024, she also served as a military defense counsel in Norfolk, Virginia, and Great Lakes, Illinois. Judge Phillips is a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Navy Reserves. Judge Phillips is a member of the District of Columbia Bar and Louisiana State Bar.

**Yeshaya Poyurs, Temporary Immigration Judge, Hyattsville Immigration Court**

Yeshaya Poyurs was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Poyurs earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1989 from Union College (Schenectady, New York), a Juris Doctor in 2002 from the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, Yeshiva University, and a Master of Arts in 2018 from the Fletcher School of Law and International Relations, Tufts University. From 2024 to 2025, he mobilized as an Army Reserve judge advocate to serve as a deputy associate general counsel in the Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Army, the Pentagon. From 2022 to 2024, he served as an attorney adviser for the Disability Evaluation System Counsel Program, U.S. Navy, Washington Navy Yard. From 2020 to 2022, he served as an attorney adviser in the Alternative Dispute Resolution program, Whistleblower Reprisal Investigations Directorate, Office of Inspector General, Department of Defense, Alexandria, Virginia. From 2019 to 2020, he mobilized to Poland in support of Atlantic

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Resolve as an International Law Officer for the 407th Civil Affairs Battalion. From 2015 to 2019, he served as an attorney adviser for the Office of Soldiers Counsel, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington. From 2002 to 2014, he primarily worked in private practice. Judge Poyurs holds the rank of lieutenant colonel in the Judge Advocate Corps, Army Reserve. Judge Poyurs is a member of the Maryland State Bar, the Massachusetts Bar, and the New York State Bar.

#### **Jeremy Sibert, Temporary Immigration Judge, Denver Immigration Court**

Jeremy Sibert was appointed as temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Sibert earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1997 from Lafayette College, a Juris Doctorate in 2000 from the University of West Virginia Law School, and a Master of Business Administration with a specialization in Finance in 2018 from the University of Colorado, Denver. From May 2004 to November 2024, he was an assistant U.S. attorney with the U.S. Attorney's Office in Del Rio, Texas, and Denver. From 2000 to 2004, he served on active duty with the U.S. Marine Corps. Judge Sibert holds the rank of colonel in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves and has conducted multiple deployments throughout his career. Judge Sibert is a member of the Colorado State Bar.

#### **Jorene Soto, Temporary Immigration Judge, Annandale Immigration Court**

Jorene Soto was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in 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 EOIR's Board of Immigration Appeals in Falls Church, Virginia, through 2019. Judge Soto is a member of the West Virginia State Bar.

#### **Kevin D. Stroberg, Temporary Immigration Judge, Atlanta – W. Peachtree Street Immigration Court**

Kevin D. Stroberg was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Stroberg earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science in 2000 from Auburn University, a Master of Public Administration in 2003 from Auburn University, and a Juris Doctor in 2011 from Mercer University School of Law. From June 2025 to January 2026, he was an assistant district attorney at the Ocmulgee Circuit District Attorney's Office in Georgia. From June 2017 to June 2025, he served as a public defender at the Ocmulgee Circuit Public Defender's Office in Georgia. From October 2014 to April 2016, he was an assistant district attorney at the Macon Circuit District Attorney's Office in Georgia. From August 2011 to October 2014, he served as a public defender at the Macon Circuit Public Defender's Office in Georgia. Judge

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Stroberg also has served an assistant staff judge advocate in the U.S. Air Force since May 2013, where he holds the rank of major. Judge Stroberg is a member of the State Bar of Georgia.

#### **Jennifer C. Whitko, Temporary Immigration Judge, Denver Immigration Court**

Jennifer C. Whitko was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Whitko earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1994 from Tulane University, a Juris Doctor in 1997 from California Western School of Law, San Diego, a Master of Arts in 1999 from the University of Arizona, Tucson, and a Master of Business Administration in 2009 from Regis University, Denver. From 2023 to November 2025, she was an associate general counsel for Coherent Corp. From 2020 to 2022, she was the senior legal counsel and vice president of ethics and trade compliance for FlightSafety International, a Berkshire Hathaway Company. From 2017 to 2020, she was an associate general counsel for UnitedHealthcare. From 2014 to 2017, she was the director of contract management and operations for Catholic Health Initiatives. From 2010 to 2014, she was the general counsel and director of compliance for CNIC Health Solutions. From 2005 to 2010, she was a contract analyst, project manager, and network operations and benefits manager for Kaiser Permanente. Since 1999, Judge Whitko has served in the U.S. Air Force Judge Advocate General Corps and holds the rank of colonel. Judge Whitko is a member of the State Bar of California.

#### **Benjamin D. Williams, Temporary Immigration Judge, Omaha Immigration Court**

Benjamin D. Williams was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Williams earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2009 from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and a Juris Doctor in 2012 from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. From August 2021 to January 2026, he served as an attorney advisor and deputy staff judge advocate at the Nebraska National Guard in Lincoln, Nebraska. From June 2013 to August 2021, he served on active duty as a judge advocate in the U.S. Army in various positions including legal assistance attorney, operational law attorney, and trial counsel at Fort Riley, Kansas (2013-2017); contract and fiscal law attorney at the Pentagon (2017-2019); and defense counsel at Fort Riley, Kansas (2019-2021). He clerked for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit following his graduation from law school in 2012. He continues to serve in the Nebraska Army National Guard and holds the rank of major. Judge Williams is a member of the Nebraska State Bar.

#### **Xinzhe Zhang, Temporary Immigration Judge, Phoenix Immigration Court**

Xinzhe Zhang was appointed as a temporary immigration judge to begin hearing cases in February 2026. Judge Zhang earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2009 from Saint Louis University and a Juris Doctor in 2016 from Saint Louis University School of Law. From 2023 to 2026, he served as a judge advocate in the U.S. Air Force Reserve, currently holding the rank of major at Legal Information Services, Office of the Judge Advocate General, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. From 2017 to 2023, he served on active duty in the U.S. Air Force, with assignments across the globe, including the United States, Japan, and the Republic of Korea. Judge Zhang is a member of the Missouri Bar.

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