



Public Information Office  
**United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit**

Office of the Circuit Executive · 95 7<sup>th</sup> Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 · (415) 355-8800 · (415) 355-8901 Fax

**NEWS RELEASE**

June 18, 2019

Contact: Marc Theriault, (415) 355-8800

## **Ninth Circuit Committee Issues Workplace Environment Report**

SAN FRANCISCO – The Ninth Circuit Ad Hoc Committee on Workplace Environment issued a report of its work and accomplishments over the past 18 months. The committee, which Chief Judge Sidney R. Thomas of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit created on December 17, 2017, identified challenges and presented initiatives that foster a healthy workplace environment for all employees.

The report provides an overview of the committee’s work to date, including its outreach to approximately 6,000 current and former employees and law clerks to inform its efforts on preventing and resolving workplace issues such as harassment and bullying.

“The Ninth Circuit takes seriously its commitment to a respectful workplace. Over the past eighteen months, we have worked hard to put in place revised policies and procedures to make that commitment a reality and we will continue our innovations to foster a culture of respect,” Chief Judge Thomas said.

The committee’s recommendations and the Ninth Circuit’s implemented changes highlighted in the report include:

- Revising the Ninth Circuit Employment Dispute Resolution (EDR) Policy;
- Establishing the Director of Workplace Relations, who will assist in guiding employees through the EDR process; serve as a resource to all employees on EDR-related matters; and oversee general workplace environment issues;
- Revising and simplifying the circuit’s confidentiality policy, which clarifies that misconduct issues are not protected by the confidentiality policy;

- Providing an expanded law clerk orientation and other resources for law clerks, including the formation of a Law Clerk Resources Group;
- Conducting an employee climate survey and law clerk exit questionnaire as ongoing mechanisms to monitor the workplace environment; and
- Expanding training and education on policies and practices for all employees, including judges.

The committee is chaired by Ninth Circuit Judge M. Margaret McKeown, who formerly chaired the Judicial Conference of the U.S. Committee on Code of Conduct and served on various committees and panels related to workplace and gender discrimination. Committee members include Chief District Judge Virginia A. Phillips of the Central District of California; Senior District Judge Charles R. Breyer of the Northern District of California; Magistrate Judge Candy W. Dale of the District of Idaho; and San Diego attorney Abby Silverman, one of the nation's top employment and alternative dispute resolution practitioners.

The Ninth Circuit is committed to maintaining a respectful workplace for all employees, and the committee will continue its work to ensure a healthy and productive workplace.

The full report can be found here: <https://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/workplace/committee-report>.

For more information on the Ninth Circuit's workplace relations initiatives, please visit the Office of Workplace Relations website at: <https://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/workplace>.

The U.S. Courts for the Ninth Circuit consists of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, and the federal trial and bankruptcy courts and related court units in Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, the U.S. Territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

###