



United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

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NEWS RELEASE

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Senate Confirms Judge Rita F. Lin for Federal Judgeship in Northern District of California

SAN FRANCISCO – The United States Senate today voted 52-45 to confirm President Joseph R. Biden Jr.’s nomination of San Francisco Superior Court Judge Rita F. Lin to serve as a U.S. district judge for the Northern District of California. Upon taking her oath, Judge Lin will be the first Chinese American woman judge to serve on the court.

“It is with great pleasure that the Judges of the Northern District welcome Judge Lin to our ranks. She is well known to many of her new colleagues, having served with distinction before the Court as a federal prosecutor and in private practice. Judge Lin brings with her the full gamut of professional experience in both federal criminal and civil practice along with a distinguished judicial record, and the Northern District is very lucky to have her join our very active Court,” said Chief District Judge Richard Seeborg, Northern District of California.

Judge Lin was nominated for the judgeship on Aug. 1, 2022, and had her nomination hearing on Nov 30, 2022. Her nomination was pending and thus was returned to the president when the Second Session of the 117th Congress adjourned on Jan. 3, 2023. Judge Lin was renominated on January 23, and her nomination was reported to the Senate and placed on the Senate Executive Calendar on February 9. She will fill a judgeship vacant since May 17, 2022, when District Judge Edward M. Chen assumed senior status. She will maintain chambers in San Francisco.

Judge Lin has served as a judge on the Superior Court of San Francisco since 2018. Prior to her appointment to the superior court, she had served as an assistant U.S. attorney for the Northern District of California since 2014. Before that, she was in private practice as a partner at Morrison & Foerster LLP in San Francisco where she worked since 2004.

Judge Lin sat on a number of committees at the San Francisco Superior Court, including the Executive Committee, the Adult Probation Committee, the Collaborative Courts Committee and the Pretrial and Bail Committee. As part of the Superior Court’s Judges in the Classroom program, she has visited elementary and middle schools to talk about the court system and

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careers in the law and the bench. She mentors law students and lawyers through the Asian American Bar Association's Mentorship Program and runs a mentoring circle for new judges through the California Asian Pacific American Judges Association.

Born in Oakland, California, Judge Lin received her Bachelor of Arts, magna cum laude, from Harvard College in 2000 and her Juris Doctor, magna cum laude, from Harvard Law School in 2003. Following law school, she clerked for the Honorable Sandra Lynch of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit from 2003 to 2004. Judge Lin taught criminal procedure as an adjunct professor at the University of California College of the Law, San Francisco, (formerly UC Hastings) in 2021.

Judge Lin received a number of honors and awards before taking the bench, including the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association, "Best Lawyers Under 40" in 2017; Fellow for the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity in 2014; Euromoney, "Litigation Rising Stars Finalist" in 2013; Daily Journal, "Top 100 Women Attorneys in California" in 2012; The Recorder, "50 Attorneys on the Fast Track" in 2012 and the Bay Area Lawyers for Individual Freedom, Legal Service Award in 2012.

The U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California had 9,419 new case filings in calendar year 2022. The court is authorized 14 judgeships and currently has one vacancy.

Appointed under Article III of the U.S. Constitution, federal district court judges are nominated by the president, confirmed by the Senate and serve lifetime appointments upon good behavior.

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