



# United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

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## NEWS RELEASE

March 9, 2023

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## **Senate Confirms Judge James E. Simmons Jr. for Federal Judgeship in Southern District of California**

SAN FRANCISCO – The United States Senate today voted 51-43 to confirm President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.’s, nomination of California Superior Court Judge James E. Simmons, Jr., to serve as a U.S. district judge for the Southern District of California.

“My colleagues and I are delighted that President Biden has nominated and the Senate has confirmed another excellent person to serve on our Court,” said Chief District Judge Dana M. Sabraw of the Southern District of California. “Judge Simmons is well known in the community for his steady leadership as Supervising Judge in the North County Branch of the San Diego Superior Court. A highly regarded state court judge, Judge Simmons is known for his fairness and quiet, yet in charge demeanor on the bench. He also brings a wealth of trial experience as a former respected trial attorney in the District Attorney’s Office. We are so pleased and look forward with great anticipation to Judge Simmons joining our bench,” he noted.

Judge Simmons was nominated for the judgeship on July 14, 2022. His nomination was pending and thus was returned to the president when the Second Session of the 117th Congress adjourned on Jan. 3, 2023. He was renominated on Jan. 23, 2023, and his nomination was reported to the Senate floor on February 9. Following his oath, he will fill a judgeship vacant since March 31, 2021, when District Judge Anthony J. Battaglia assumed senior status. Judge Simmons will maintain chambers in San Diego.

Judge Simmons has been a judge on the California Superior Court in San Diego County since 2017 and has been the supervising judge of the North County Branch of the San Diego Superior Court since April 2022. From 2006 to 2017, he was a deputy district attorney in the San Diego District Attorney’s Office and was a deputy city attorney in the San Diego City Attorney’s Office in 2005.

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While district attorney, Judge Simmons received a number of awards including the San Diego County Prosecutor of the Year, San Diego Deputy District Attorney Association, in 2016; the President's Award, Earl B. Gilliam Bar Association, in 2011; and named Top Trial Attorney, San Diego District Attorney Superior Court Division, in 2008.

While at the district attorney's office, Judge Simmons directed the office's participation in Project LEAD (Legal Enrichment And Decision Making) which included presenting lessons at a local elementary school, a tour of the juvenile detention facility and a mock trial at the courthouse as well as lessons on budgeting, peer pressure, making good decisions, avoid joining gangs and encouraging them to succeed academically. While a board member of the California Young Lawyer's Association, from 2007 to 2009, Judge Simmons helped lead a project in San Diego to encourage and train new and young lawyers to provide advocacy services and assistance to foster children transitioning out of foster care.

Judge Simmons received his Juris Doctor from Golden Gate University School of Law in 2004 and his Bachelor of Arts from the University of California, Berkeley School of Law, in 2001.

The U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California had 5,146 new case filings in calendar year 2022. The court is authorized 13 judgeships and currently has one vacancy and one future 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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