



# United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

Office of the Circuit Executive · 95 7th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 · (415) 355-8800 · [mediarelease@ce9.uscourts.gov](mailto:mediarelease@ce9.uscourts.gov)

## NEWS RELEASE

August 20, 2024

Contact: Katherine Rodriguez  
[mediarelease@ce9.uscourts.gov](mailto:mediarelease@ce9.uscourts.gov)

## **Jon M. Sands Reappointed as Federal Public Defender for District of Arizona**

**SAN FRANCISCO** — Judges of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit have approved the reappointment of Federal Public Defender Jon M. Sands of the District of Arizona to a sixth four-year term. First appointed to lead the office in 2004, his reappointment is effective Sept. 1, 2024.

“We are fortunate to have Jon Sands at the helm of the nation’s oldest, and one of its largest, defender offices,” said Circuit Judge Kim McLane Wardlaw, who chairs the Ninth Circuit’s Standing Committee on Federal Public Defenders. “Jon is a generous mentor, a national leader on criminal justice issues, and an advocate of the highest caliber whose office provides its clients with outstanding defense services.”

Sands is supported by 197 attorneys and support staff working in offices in Phoenix, Tucson, Flagstaff, and Yuma. In addition to criminal defense and appeals, the office represents capital prisoners in habeas corpus proceedings and reported 5,397 new criminal cases opened in the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 2023. Total cases opened by the office in FY 2023 numbered 6,266.

Sands has worked in the Office of the Federal Public Defender for the District of Arizona since 1987. Before joining the FPD Office for the District of Arizona, Sands was in private practice in Phoenix from 1985 to 1987. He has chaired several national advisory committees, testifies regularly before the U.S. Sentencing Commission on sentencing policy issues, and is a Fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers. Sands also teaches courses at the Arizona State University College of Law. In 2022, Sands was honored by the District of Arizona with the John M. Roll Award for Distinguished Service and by the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers with a President’s Commendation and Exemplary Service Awards.

—more—



# United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

Office of the Circuit Executive · 95 7th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 · (415) 355-8800 · [mediarelease@ce9.uscourts.gov](mailto:mediarelease@ce9.uscourts.gov)

Page 2 of 2

Sands received his undergraduate degree, magna cum laude, from Yale University in 1978 and earned his Juris Doctor in 1984, with honors and Order of the Coif, from the University of California at Davis, School of Law, where he was editor-in-chief of the U.C. Davis Law Review. Following law school, he clerked for the Honorable Mary M. Schroeder of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit from 1984 to 1985.

The Office of the Federal Public Defender was created by Congress to fulfill the constitutional requirement that financially eligible individuals charged with crimes in the federal justice system be provided with professional legal representation at no cost. By statute, judges of the courts of appeals select and appoint the federal public defender for a renewable four-year term. In the Ninth Circuit, applicants are evaluated by both a local screening committee and the court's Standing Committee on Federal Public Defenders, applying Equal Employment Opportunity guidelines. Reappointment to additional terms is based on a comprehensive evaluation of the federal public defender's performance, including an invitation for public comment.

# # #