



# United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

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## NEWS RELEASE

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## **Senate Confirms Judge Cynthia Valenzuela Dixon to Federal Bench in Central District of California**

SAN FRANCISCO – The U.S. Senate today voted 49-47 to confirm President Joseph R. Biden Jr.’s nomination of Judge Cynthia Valenzuela Dixon, State Bar of California, to serve as a U.S. district judge for the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California.

“We are pleased to welcome Judge Valenzuela back to the Court and we look forward to having her as a colleague. She brings a wealth of experience and will be a wonderful addition to our Court,” said Chief U.S. District Judge Dolly M. Gee, Central District of California.

Judge Valenzuela was nominated for the judgeship on April 30, 2024, and had her nomination hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee on May 22, 2024. Her nomination was reported to the Senate floor on July 11, 2024. Upon taking her oath, Judge Valenzuela will fill a judgeship vacant since Oct. 15, 2024, when District Judge Philip S. Gutierrez assumed senior status. She will maintain chambers in Los Angeles.

Judge Valenzuela was appointed by the California Supreme Court to serve as a judge on the State Bar Court in 2016 and served as the supervising judge from 2020 to 2022. Previously, she was a Criminal Justice Act supervising attorney for the U.S. District Court in the Central District of California from 2011 to 2016. Judge Valenzuela worked for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, where she served as the national vice president/director of litigation from 2006 to 2011. She was an assistant U.S. attorney, from 2000 to 2006, for the Office of the U.S. Attorney in the Central District of California, where she was a recipient of the special commendation award for dedication to victim’s rights and was appointed as the district elections officer. From 1998 to 2000, she was a trial attorney for the U.S. Department of Justice’s Civil Rights Division, Voting Section, where she received a certificate of commendation for exceptional work performance. Judge Valenzuela served as special assistant to Vice Chair Cruz Reynoso of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights from 1995 to 1998.

Born in Tucson, Arizona, Judge Valenzuela received her Bachelor of Arts in 1991 in English literature from the University of Arizona, where she was a member of the Golden Key and Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Societies, and her Juris Doctor in 1995 from the University of California at Los Angeles School of Law.

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Judge Valenzuela has been a member of the American Bar Association National Conference of State Trial Judges since 2016, the California Judges Association since 2017 and the National Association of Women Judges since 2016. She was a Ninth Circuit lawyer representative in 2010 and was an extern for Ninth Circuit Judge Stephen Reinhardt.

Judge Valenzuela is the recipient of several awards and recognition including the Hispanic National Bar Association's Advocate of the Year Award in 2008 and the Daily Journal's "Top 20 Under 40" in 2008 and "Top 75 Women Litigators in 2006." She has a strong and lasting commitment to mentoring the next generation of lawyers through her volunteer activities including the Constitutional Rights Foundation Mock Trial Program (now Teach Democracy), the UCLA Moot Court Honors Program, Project LEAD, Shortstop juvenile crime diversion program, Reading to Kids, and Mentoring Our Students Through Experience (MOSTE).

The U.S. District Court for the Central District of California had 16,973 new case filings in fiscal year 2024. The court is authorized 28 judgeships.

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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