



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

NEWS RELEASE

April 15, 2025

Contact: Katherine Rodriguez
mediarelease@ce9.uscourts.gov

9th Circuit US Court of Appeals Reappoints Bankruptcy Judge William J. Lafferty III

SAN FRANCISCO — Judges of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit have reappointed Bankruptcy Judge William J. Lafferty III, U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of California, to a second 14-year term effective April 20, 2025.

Judge Lafferty was first appointed to the bankruptcy court in 2011. He has served on the Ninth Circuit Bankruptcy Appellate Panel (BAP) since 2016 and currently serves as the chief judge of the BAP. Before joining the bench, he worked from 1987 to 2011 at the law firm of Howard Rice in San Francisco, where his practice focused on insolvency-related issues in bankruptcy cases. He became the director and member of the firm’s Bankruptcy and Reorganization Practice Group in 1993.

A native of Oak Park, Illinois, Judge Lafferty received his Bachelor of Arts, with honors, in 1978 from the University of California, Berkeley, and his Juris Doctor in 1985 from UC Law San Francisco (formerly UC Hastings College of the Law), where he was a member of the “Constitutional Law Quarterly.” After law school, he clerked for the Honorable Thomas E. Carlson, U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of California, from 1985 to 1987.

The U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of California reported 5,965 bankruptcy filings in calendar year 2024. The court is authorized nine judgeships.

Bankruptcy judges serve a 14-year renewable term and handle all bankruptcy-related matters under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code. Judges of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit have statutory responsibility for selecting and appointing bankruptcy judges in the nine western states that comprise the 9th Circuit. The court uses a comprehensive merit selection process for the initial appointment. For reappointments, the court conducts a performance review and considers public comment evaluations.

#