



United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

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NEWS RELEASE

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Jodi H. Linker Reappointed as Federal Public Defender for Northern District of California

SAN FRANCISCO — Judges of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit have reappointed Federal Public Defender Jodi H. Linker of the Northern District of California to a second four-year term. First appointed to lead the office in 2022, her reappointment is effective March 4, 2026.

“Jodi Linker has shown extraordinary leadership in her first term,” said Circuit Judge Kim McLane Wardlaw, who chairs the Ninth Circuit’s Standing Committee on Federal Public Defenders. “She is a committed advocate who fosters collaboration among stakeholders, working to build unity and ensure the highest quality representation for indigent defendants.”

Linker said, “I am honored that the Court has entrusted me with the privilege of continuing to lead this tremendous office. Every day, the talented and dedicated attorneys and professionals here show why a strong public defender’s office is essential to protecting all of our rights and ensuring that every person is treated with dignity and humanity.”

Appointed as FPD in 2022, Linker began working in the district’s FPD Office in 2007 and represents financially eligible individuals charged with a broad range of federal offenses. She is a regular presenter at criminal defense training seminars locally and nationally and has been a guest lecturer at Stanford Law School and the University of California College of the Law. Before joining the FPD Office, Linker was an associate at Clarence, Dyer & Cohen in San Francisco from 2004 to 2007. She clerked for District Judge Charles R. Breyer of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California from 2003 to 2004.

Raised in the Bay Area, Linker received her Bachelor of Arts degrees in international development studies and geography/environmental studies in 1995 from the University of California, Los Angeles, where she was a member its women’s soccer team. She received her Juris Doctor, Order of the Coif, in 2003 from Stanford Law School, where she was an articles review board member of the Stanford Environmental Law Journal.

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The Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Northern District of California is headquartered in San Francisco with divisional offices in Oakland and San Jose and serves a population of nearly nine million people. The California Northern FPDO has approximately 66 employees, which include attorneys, paralegals, investigators and administrative personnel. The office opened 1,831 cases and closed 1,889 cases in fiscal year 2025 ending September 30.

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 9th 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.

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