



UNITED STATES COURTS
FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

2025

ANNUAL REPORT



The Office of the Circuit Executive would like to acknowledge the following individuals for their contributions to the 2025 Ninth Circuit Annual Report:

Honorable Mary H. Murguia
Chief Judge
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

Molly C. Dwyer
Clerk of Court
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

Susan Y. Soong
Circuit Executive
Office of the Circuit Executive
U.S. Courts for the Ninth Circuit

Honorable Dolly M. Gee
Chief District Judge
Central District of California

Honorable Ramona V. Manglona
Chief District Judge
District of the Northern Mariana Islands

Honorable Serena R. Murillo
District Judge
Central District of California

Honorable Frances Tydingco-Gatewood
Chief District Judge
District Court of Guam

Honorable Camille D. Bibles
Magistrate Judge
District of Arizona

Honorable Chi Soo Kim
Magistrate Judge
Eastern District of California

Susan M. Spraul
Clerk
Ninth Circuit Bankruptcy Appellate Panel

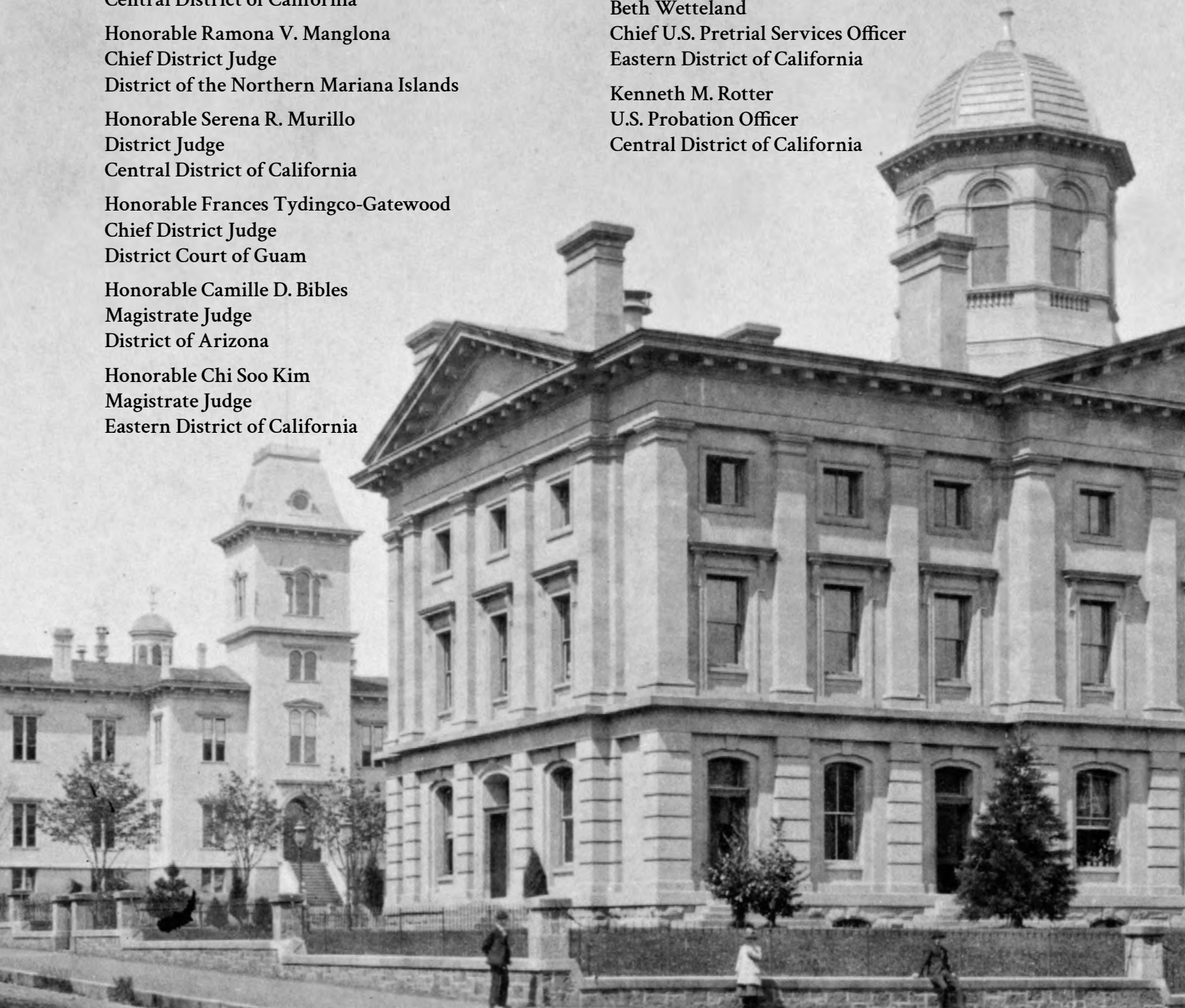
Brian D. Karth
District Court Executive/Clerk of Court
Central District of California

Robert M. Walch
Senior Deputy Clerk
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

Aaron F. McGrath Jr.
Chief U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services Officer
District of Alaska

Beth Wetteland
Chief U.S. Pretrial Services Officer
Eastern District of California

Kenneth M. Rotter
U.S. Probation Officer
Central District of California



The Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit

Mission Statement

The mission of the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit is to support the effective and expeditious administration of justice and the safeguarding of fairness in the administration of the courts within the circuit. To do so, it will promote the fair and prompt resolution of disputes, ensure the effective discharge of court business, prevent any form of invidious discrimination, and enhance public understanding of, and confidence in, the judiciary.



Top Row: Chief Circuit Judge Mary H. Murguia, Senior Circuit Judge Susan P. Graber, Circuit Judge Morgan Christen, Circuit Judge Jacqueline H. Nguyen, Circuit Judge Ryan D. Nelson, Circuit Judge Bridget S. Bade, and Chief District Judge Dolly M. Gee.

Middle Row: Chief District Judge Stanley A. Bastian, Chief District Judge Cynthia A. Bashant, Chief District Judge David G. Estudillo, Senior District Judge Edward M. Chen, Chief Bankruptcy Judge Whitman L. Holt, Senior District Judge Leslie E. Kobayashi, and District Judge Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers.

Bottom Row: Chief Magistrate Judge Karen L. Stevenson, District Court Clerk/Magistrate Judge Heather L. Kennedy, Bankruptcy Court Clerk Kirsten S. Wilkinson, Chief Probation Officer Aaron F. McGrath Jr., and Chief Pretrial Services Officer Beth Wetteland.

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Message from the Chief



**Chief Judge
Mary H. Murguia**

The 2025 Ninth Circuit Annual Report profiles the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and the federal district and bankruptcy courts in the nine most western states, including Alaska, Hawaii, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the U.S. Territory of Guam.

Looking back on 2025, I remain grateful for and impressed by the commitment of those working for and with the Ninth Circuit to support the administration of justice in the West. 2025 proved a challenging and fulfilling year for the Ninth Circuit Courts. We remember the deadly wildfires in January that burned across the Los Angeles metropolitan area and parts of San Diego County, causing widespread destruction and displacement. Our court community—particularly judges and staff at the Richard H. Chambers Courthouse in Pasadena and throughout the Central District of California—remained resilient as many in the region lost their homes and entire neighborhoods to the fires. A retrospective is found on page 24 of this report. We also found moments to celebrate in 2025, including the District Court of Guam’s 75th Anniversary and the 150th anniversary of the Pioneer Courthouse in Portland—both milestones are highlighted in this report on pages 30 and 36, respectively.

My role as chief judge allows me the opportunity to serve this circuit as presiding judge of the 11-judge en banc court, and as chair of both the Executive Committee of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit—the policy making bodies within this circuit. Additionally, I represent this circuit at various national meetings and events, including at the Judicial Conference of the United States, the national policy making body of the federal courts.

As chief, I also have the privilege to report on the venerable work and judicial milestones occurring within our circuit. It is my honor to acknowledge the judges we welcomed and those we lost in 2025. Congratulations and welcome to Circuit Judge Eric C. Tung; four district judges: Benjamin J. Cheeks, Southern District of California; Sharad H. Desai, District of Arizona; William W. Mercer, District of Montana; and Serena R. Murillo, Central District of California; Bankruptcy Judge Brent R. Wilson, District of Idaho; and five magistrate judges: Michael B.

Kaufman and Daniel S. Roberts, Central District of California; James E. Marner, District of Arizona; Amy E. Potter, District of Oregon; and Brian J. White, Southern District of California. Their biographies start on page 7 of this report.

In 2025, we also saw the passing of several judges throughout the circuit. We will miss Senior Circuit Judges Andrew J. Kleinfeld and Sandra S. Ikuta; Senior District Judges Carolyn R. Dimmick, Western District of Washington; Sam E. Haddon, District of Montana; Michael R. Hogan (Ret.), Robert E. Jones, and Malcolm F. Marsh, District of Oregon; William D. Keller, Central District of California; Alex R. Munson, District of the Northern Mariana Islands; Chief Bankruptcy Judge Theodor C. Albert, Central District of California; Retired Bankruptcy Judges Robin L. Riblet, Central District of California and David E. Russell, Eastern District of California; and retired Magistrate Judges James P. Donohue, Western District of Washington and Robert M. Holter, District of Montana. These judges impacted us throughout their storied judicial careers, and a tribute to those judges begins on page 12.

The circuit also welcomes new Chief District Judge Cynthia A. Bashant, Southern District of California, and several new chief bankruptcy judges: Julia W. Brand, Central District of California; Natalie M. Cox, District of Nevada; Christopher D. Jaime,

Eastern District of California; and Peter C. McKittrick, District of Oregon. In addition to their judicial duties, chief judges serve a critical role in the management and the administration of justice in their respective courts. Additionally, Bankruptcy Judge Jennifer E. Niemann, Eastern District of California, was appointed to serve on the Bankruptcy Appellate Panel, the appellate body that reviews appeals from judgments, orders, and decrees entered by bankruptcy judges from districts within the Ninth Circuit.

Many of our judges received awards for their exceptional service, leadership and commitment to our justice system. See page 48 for a listing of awards and recognitions. In addition to acknowledging our judges, I also commend the many professionals who support the judges and assist with administrative management of this circuit's immense workload. Our court of appeals continued to be the nation's busiest federal appellate court, accounting for 22.8% of all new appeals nationally, with 9,544 appeals, up 17.2% from fiscal year 2024. There were 72,629 new filings in our district courts, up 12.8% from fiscal year 2024. Total bankruptcy filings in the circuit were 95,430, up 14.2% from FY 2024, higher than the national increase of 10.6% in bankruptcy filings.

This report provides further detailed statistical summaries and emphasizes important events and

trends that span the 15 district courts in our circuit, including the 2025 Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference in Monterey, California, which brought together judges and lawyers from around the circuit. Highlights included visits by U.S. Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan and Judge Robert J. Conrad, director of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. You can read more about the Conference on page 43.

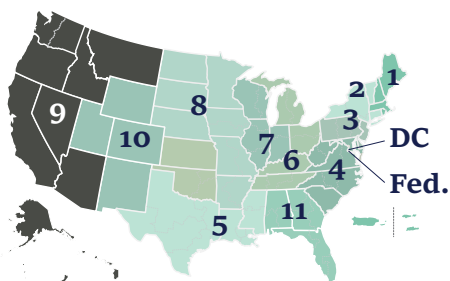
During the Conference, we also celebrated the young winners of the 2025 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest. The Ninth Circuit Public Information and Community Outreach (PICO) Committee sponsors this contest annually for high school students across our circuit. More about the celebration can be found on page 45. The winning essay and video submissions for the 2025 theme, "When Duty Calls: Why Exercising the Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship is Important to Me," can be found on the civics contest website, <https://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest>.

This annual report provides additional details on the great work of our Ninth Circuit judges, staff, and the legal community. It is an honor to collaborate with these colleagues who tirelessly support the administration of justice. I extend my sincerest gratitude for their commitment to public service and civic responsibility, and I commend the immensely important work they accomplished in 2025. 🏛️



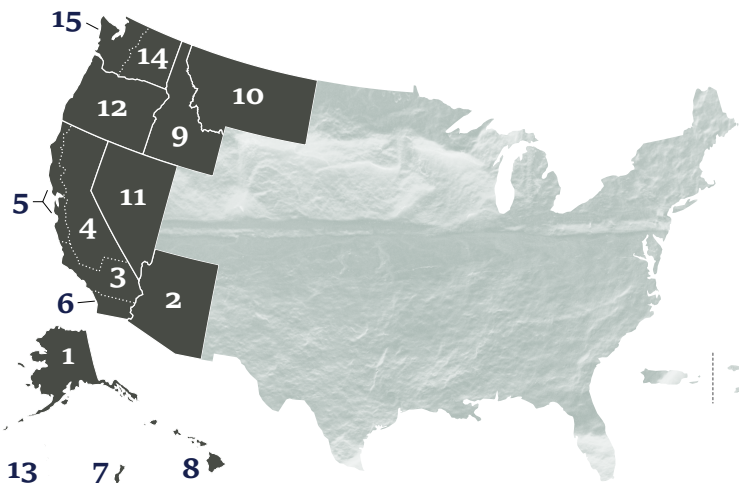
COURTS OF APPEALS

12 Regional Circuits + Federal Circuit



NINTH CIRCUIT

15 Districts



- | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 Alaska | 6 Southern California | 11 Nevada |
| 2 Arizona | 7 Guam | 12 Oregon |
| 3 Central California | 8 Hawaii | 13 Northern Mariana Islands |
| 4 Eastern California | 9 Idaho | 14 Eastern Washington |
| 5 Northern California | 10 Montana | 15 Western Washington |

Ninth Circuit Article III & Article I Judges

Authorized Judgeships as of December 31, 2025

<u>Circuit Judges</u>	<u>District Judges</u>	<u>Bankruptcy Judges</u>	<u>Magistrate Judges</u>
29	112	68 Permanent	107 Full-time
	4 Vacancies*	1 Temporary	6 Part-time
			1 Combination**

* Includes Article I judgeship for District of Guam.

** The District of the Northern Mariana Islands is authorized a combined magistrate judge/ clerk of court position.

Judicial Council, Advisory Groups and Administration

The Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit is the governing body for federal district and bankruptcy courts in the circuit. The judicial council's statutory mission is to "make all necessary and appropriate orders for the effective and expeditious administration of justice within its circuit," [28 U.S.C. § 332(d)(1)]. The judicial council also has been delegated responsibilities by the Judicial Conference of the United States, the national governing body for the federal courts. These responsibilities include authorizing senior judge staffing levels and pay, and managing the judicial misconduct complaint process, among others.

The judicial council is chaired by the chief judge of the circuit and relies on advisory groups and committees to accomplish its governance goals. Chairs of five advisory groups attend council meetings as observers.

In 2025, the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit added three new voting members and seven new observers. New voting members are Circuit Judge Ryan D. Nelson, Chief District Judge Cynthia A. Bashant of the Southern District of California and Senior District Judge Edward M. Chen of the Northern District of California. New observers are Chief Bankruptcy Judge Whitman L. Holt of the Eastern District of Washington, District Judge Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers of the Northern District of California, Chief Magistrate Judge Karen L. Stevenson of the Central District of California, Clerk of Court/Magistrate Judge

Heather L. Kennedy of the District of the Northern Mariana Islands, Bankruptcy Court Clerk Kirsten S. Wilkinson of the District of Oregon, Chief Probation Officer Aaron F. McGrath of the District of Alaska and Chief Pretrial Services Officer Beth Wetteland of the Eastern District of California.

Conference of Chief District Judges

The Conference of Chief District Judges advises the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit regarding the administration of justice in the circuit's 15 district courts. The conference is comprised of the chief district judges of each district. Chief District Judge Stanley A. Bastian, of the Eastern District of Washington, succeeded Chief District Judge Brian M. Morris, of the District of Montana, as chair on Oct. 1, 2025.

Conference of Chief Bankruptcy Judges

The Conference of Chief Bankruptcy Judges advises the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit on the administration of bankruptcy courts within the circuit. The conference consists of chief bankruptcy judges from each district, the chief bankruptcy judge of the Ninth Circuit Bankruptcy Appellate Panel and a recalled bankruptcy judge representative. Chief Bankruptcy Judge Whitman L. Holt of the Eastern District of Washington served as chair of the conference in 2025. Judge Holt succeeded Chief Bankruptcy Judge Thomas M. Renn of the District of Oregon as chair on Oct. 1, 2025.

Magistrate Judges Executive Board

The Magistrate Judges Executive Board communicates to the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit on behalf of full-time, part-time and recalled magistrate judges serving in the district courts. The 15-member board holds a session with all magistrate judges at the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference. Chief Magistrate Judge Karen L. Stevenson of the Central District of California succeeded Magistrate Judge Michael J. Bordallo, of the District of Guam, as chair on Oct. 1, 2025.

Other Committees of the Judicial Council and Court of Appeals

In addition to the judicial officer committees, the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit consists of standing committees, education committees, liaison groups and ad hoc committees. Additionally, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit has committees that provide support to the appellate court and to the circuit. See page 53 for highlights of the important work conducted by the committees in 2025.

Clerks of Court and Associated Court Units

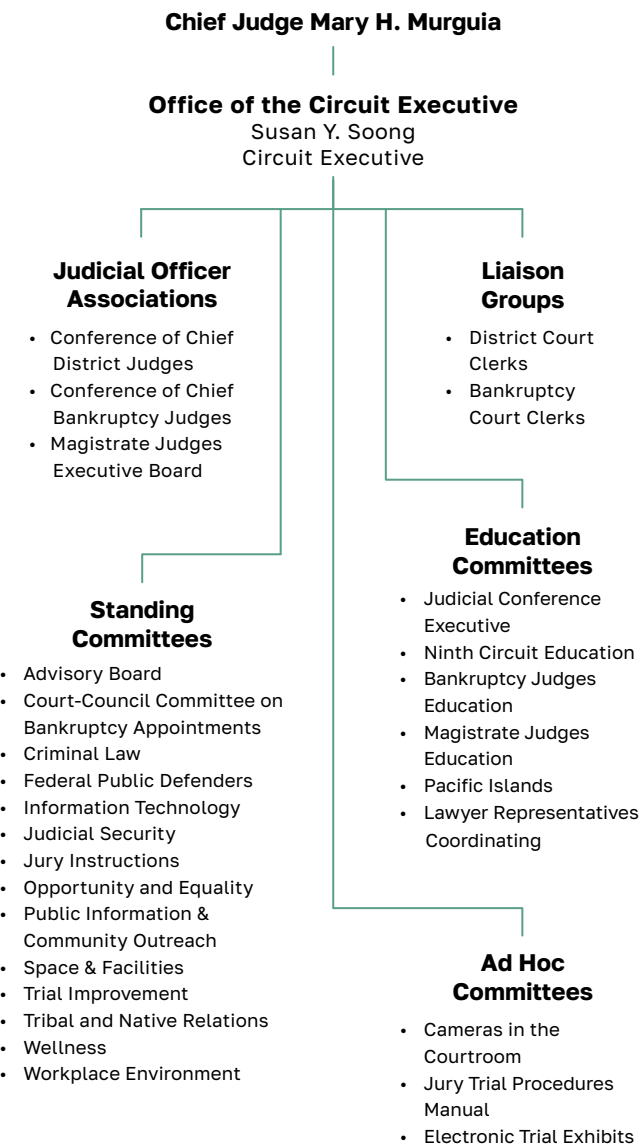
Daily management of the courts rests with the chief judges and clerks and/or district executives of the court of appeals and each of the district and bankruptcy courts of the circuit. The clerks' offices process new cases and appeals, handle docketing functions, respond to procedural questions

from the public and bar and ensure adequate judicial staff resources. The court of appeals works closely with the Circuit Mediation Office, the Office of the Staff Attorneys and the Office of the Appellate Commissioner. The district courts maintain oversight of U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services offices. Pretrial services officers are responsible for background investigations and reports on defendants awaiting trial, while probation officers supervise persons convicted of federal crimes after their release into the community. Additionally, federal public defender offices are staffed by federal judiciary employees, and community defender organizations are nonprofit organizations staffed by nongovernment employees. See page 20 for a summary of administrative changes.

Circuit Libraries


The Ninth Circuit Library System assists judges, attorneys, court staff and the public through a network of 22 law libraries housed in courthouses throughout the western states. The primary mission of court librarians is to provide research services to judges and their staff. Research librarians assist law clerks on case-related research by providing guidance and recommendations, offering training opportunities and performing direct research on more complex topics. The librarians also conduct research to assist court executives and judges in the administration of local courts and on matters involving committees of the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit and the Judicial Conference of the U.S. They also produce a range of publications and guides to inform the court community and increase the efficiency of court researchers. Library resources are made available to the bar and public with the level of access determined by local judges.

Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit



Office of the Circuit Executive

The Office of the Circuit Executive provides staff support to the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit and implements the council's administrative decisions and policies. By statute, the circuit executive is the administrative assistant to the chief judge of the circuit and secretary to the judicial council. The circuit executive and her staff advise the council on procedural and ethical matters; assist in identifying

circuit-wide needs; develop and implement policies; provide education programming; assist with workplace relations matters; coordinate building and space projects; conduct IT security assessments; provide management and technical assistance to courts within the circuit upon request; and administer the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference, among other duties. 



Judicial Transitions: New Judges

Circuit Judge



Eric C. Tung was confirmed by the U.S. Senate to serve as a U.S. circuit judge for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit on Nov. 5, 2025. He received his judicial commission on Nov. 7, 2025. Judge Tung was nominated for the judgeship on July 15, 2025, and his nomination was reported to the Senate floor on Sept. 11, 2025. Before his appointment to the bench, Judge Tung was in private practice as a partner at Jones Day in Los Angeles. He clerked on the U.S. Supreme Court—for Justice Neil M. Gorsuch during October Term 2017 and for Justice Antonin G. Scalia during October Term 2012. He also served in the U.S. Department of Justice in several different roles: as counsel in the Office of Legal Policy in 2017, during which time he received the Attorney General’s Distinguished Service Award; as an assistant U.S. attorney in the Office of the U.S. Attorney for the Central District of California from 2016 to 2017; and as a Bristow Fellow in the Office of the Solicitor General from 2011 to 2012. Prior to his service in the executive branch, Judge Tung was an attorney at Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP in Los Angeles, from 2014 to 2016, and clerked for

then-Judge Gorsuch, of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit, from 2010 to 2011. He graduated with a B.A. from Yale University in 2006 and earned his J.D., with high honors and Order of the Coif, in 2010 from The University of Chicago Law School, where he was managing editor of the Law Review. He maintains chambers in Pasadena, California.

District Judges



Benjamin J. Cheeks was confirmed by the U.S. Senate to serve as a U.S. district judge for the Southern District of California on Dec. 20, 2024, and received his judicial commission on Jan. 9, 2025. He was nominated for the judgeship on Nov. 18, 2024, and his nomination was reported to the Senate floor on Dec. 12, 2024. Judge Cheeks served as a magistrate judge for the Southern District of California from July 2024 until his appointment as a district judge. Previously, he was in private practice as a criminal defense attorney in San Diego from 2013 to 2024. He served as an assistant U.S. attorney for the Southern District of California, from 2010 to 2013, and as an assistant district attorney for New York County District Attorney’s

Office from 2003 to 2010. Judge Cheeks taught at California Western School of Law as an adjunct professor from 2014 to 2022 and at Thomas Jefferson School of Law from 2012 to 2013. Judge Cheeks graduated with a B.A. from the University of Miami in 2000 and earned his J.D. from American University, Washington College of Law, in 2003. He served as a lawyer representative for the Southern District of California, from 2020 to 2024, and on its Selection Committee from 2023 to 2024. He was a member of the Southern District of California’s Criminal Justice Act Advisory Committee, from 2022 to 2024, and a member of the district’s Merit Selection Committee for the Selection of Magistrate Judges from 2021 to 2023. Judge Cheeks maintains chambers in San Diego.



Sharad H. Desai was confirmed by the U.S. Senate to serve as a U.S. district judge for the District of Arizona on Nov. 21, 2024, and received his judicial commission on Jan. 7, 2025. He was nominated for the judgeship on Sept. 9, 2024, and his nomination was reported to the Senate floor on Nov. 14, 2024. Before joining the bench, Judge Desai was vice president and general counsel for Honeywell

Judicial Transitions: New Judges continued

International Inc.'s Integrated Supply Chain and Information Technology Departments in Phoenix since 2023. Previously, he served in various other executive general counsel and litigation counsel roles at Honeywell starting in 2015. He was in private practice as a litigation partner at Osborn Maledon, P.A., for eight years before joining Honeywell. Judge Desai graduated with B.A. and B.S. degrees in 2003 from the University of Arizona, where he was a Flinn Scholar, and earned his J.D. in 2006 from New York University School of Law, where he was staff editor of the Annual Survey of American Law, from 2004 to 2005, and was a Florence Allen Scholar in 2004. While in law school, he was a summer associate at Cravath, Swain & Moore LLP in 2005, a summer law clerk for Osborn Maledon, P.A., in 2005 and a summer law clerk for the Office of the Federal Public Defender for the District of Arizona in 2004. Following law school, he clerked for Justice Rebecca White Berch, Arizona Supreme Court, from 2006 to 2007. He served on the Arizona State Bar Association's Legislative Subcommittee on Mental Health from 2012 to 2015, as a law school mentor for the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity from 2015 to 2017 and again from 2020 to 2022. Judge Desai maintains chambers in Phoenix.



William W. Mercer was confirmed by the U.S. Senate to serve as a U.S. district judge for the District of Montana on Oct. 22, 2025, and received his judicial commission on November 6, 2025. Judge Mercer was nominated for the judgeship on July 15, 2025, and his nomination was reported to the Senate floor on Sept. 11, 2025. Prior to his appointment to the federal bench, Judge Mercer was in private practice at Holland & Hart LLP in its Billings office for 15 years. Before joining Holland & Hart, he served in several executive branch roles in the federal government for 21 years and served in the Montana House of Representatives from 2019 to 2025. Judge Mercer was the U.S. attorney for the District of Montana from 2001 to 2009. During that same period, he served as a senior Department of Justice official as acting associate attorney general, from 2006 to 2007, and principal associate deputy attorney general from 2005 to 2006. He also served as an assistant U.S. attorney in the District of Montana from 1994 to 2001. In his first job in the U.S. Department of Justice, he served as a senior policy analyst in the Office of Policy Development from 1989 to 1994. Before joining the U.S. DOJ, he was a presidential management intern in the Revenue Estimating

Division of the Office of Tax Analysis in the U.S. Department of the Treasury from 1988 to 1989. Judge Mercer graduated with a B.A. from the University of Montana in 1986 and received an M.P.A. from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government in 1988. He earned his J.D. from George Mason University in 1993. Judge Mercer maintains chambers in Missoula.



Serena R. Murillo was confirmed by the U.S. Senate to serve as a U.S. district judge for the Central District of California on Dec. 20, 2024, and received her judicial commission on Jan. 9, 2025. Judge Murillo was nominated for the judgeship on Nov. 18, 2024, and her nomination was reported to the Senate floor on Dec. 12, 2024. Prior to her appointment to the federal bench, Judge Murillo served as a judge for the Los Angeles County Superior Court since 2015. She was an associate justice pro tem for the California Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, Division Three, in Los Angeles from 2018 to 2019. Judge Murillo has been a lecturer in law at the University of Southern California, Gould School of Law, since 2022 and was a lecturer in law at the University

of California, Irvine School of Law, in 2022. Before her appointment to the bench, she was a deputy district attorney for the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, from 1997 to 2014, and was in private practice in L.A. as an associate attorney in 1997. Judge Murillo graduated with a B.A. from the University of California, San Diego, in 1993 and earned her J.D. from Loyola Law School, Los Angeles, in 1996. She maintains chambers in Los Angeles.

Bankruptcy Judge



Honorable Brent R. Wilson was appointed a U.S. bankruptcy judge for the District of Idaho on Oct. 6, 2025. Before his appointment to the bench, Judge Wilson was an associate and then equity partner, from 2015 to 2025, at Hawley Troxell Ennis & Hawley LLP in Boise, Idaho. His practice focused on bankruptcy and bankruptcy-related matters representing secured and unsecured creditors, trustees, purchasers, and other parties in interest in bankruptcy cases throughout the nation but primarily in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Idaho. Previously, Judge Wilson was a judicial law clerk for Judge Jim D. Pappas of the U.S. Bankruptcy

Court for the District of Idaho from 2012 to 2015. Prior to moving to Idaho, Judge Wilson worked at a small bankruptcy firm in Chicago, where he primarily represented debtors in Chapter 7 and Chapter 11 cases. Judge Wilson graduated with a B.A. from Indiana University and earned his J.D., cum laude, from the University of Illinois Chicago School of Law. He maintains chambers in Boise.

Magistrate Judges



Michael B. Kaufman was appointed a U.S. magistrate judge for the Central District of California on Feb. 20, 2025. Prior to his appointment to the bench, since June 2024, Judge Kaufman served as a deputy federal public defender for the Central District of California. From 2010 to 2024 he was a staff attorney at the ACLU of Southern California, where his practice focused on complex civil rights litigation, including class actions, with an emphasis on issues related to the immigration and criminal legal systems, and where he was named the Sullivan & Cromwell Access to Justice Staff Attorney in 2018. Judge Kaufman served as a Skadden Fellow at the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area from 2008 to

2010. In that role, he focused on wage-and-hour employment litigation and human-trafficking cases. Judge Kaufman graduated with a B.A. from Stanford University in 2003 and earned his J.D. from Stanford Law School in 2007. Following law school, he clerked for Circuit Judge Sidney R. Thomas of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. He maintains chambers in Los Angeles.



James E. Marner was appointed a U.S. magistrate judge for the District of Arizona on April 2, 2025. Before joining the federal bench, Judge Marner served as a judge for the Pima County Superior Court in Arizona for over 12 years and served on the civil, family and criminal benches. Prior to his appointment to the bench, Judge Marner practiced in a three-lawyer firm in Tucson, Arizona, handling civil matters for approximately 15 years. He started his legal career as a deputy prosecutor in Seattle. Judge Marner maintains chambers in Tucson.

Judicial Transitions: New Judges continued



Amy E. Potter was appointed a U.S. magistrate judge for the District of Oregon on Sept. 2, 2025. Before her appointment to the bench, Judge Potter was a principal at Angeli & Calfo LLC where she handled civil and criminal defense matters from 2023 to 2025. Prior to Angeli & Calfo LLC, she spent almost 18 years as an assistant U.S. attorney for the District of Oregon, where she prosecuted a wide range of criminal cases and handled numerous appeals. Judge Potter was also an associate at Latham & Watkins LLP in Washington, D.C., from 2002 to 2005. After law school, she served as a law clerk for Chief Judge J. Harvie Wilkinson III, of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, from 2001 to 2002. Judge Potter earned her B.A. from Rice University and her J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law. She maintains chambers in Eugene.



Daniel S. Roberts was appointed a U.S. magistrate judge for the Central District of California on Nov. 10, 2025. Before his appointment to the bench, he was the managing partner at Cole Huber LLP's Southern California office where he was a litigator focusing primarily on representing cities, counties and special districts on a variety of matters, including civil rights defense, government tort defense and land use litigation. Prior to joining Cole Huber LLP in 2013, Judge Roberts was a partner and associate at Best Best & Krieger LLP, where his practice focused on municipal law and litigation. Prior to entering private practice in 2000, Judge Roberts was a law clerk to District Judge Virginia A. Phillips of the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California. Judge Roberts obtained his B.A., magna cum laude, in political science and American studies, from the University of Southern California in 1996, and earned his J.D. in 1999 from the University of Southern California Gould School of Law, where he was elected to the Order of the Coif and served as senior editor of the Southern California Interdisciplinary Law Journal. Judge Roberts was also a student supervisor and certified law clerk in the school's in-house legal clinic,

where he represented clients in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and various federal district courts. He maintains chambers in Los Angeles.



Brian J. White was appointed a U.S. magistrate judge for the Southern District of California on Sept. 12, 2025. Before his appointment to the bench, Judge White was a solo practitioner specializing in criminal law for over 30 years, handling cases in state and federal courts, including accepting appointments through the Criminal Justice Act. Judge White received the Trial Lawyer of the Year Award from the San Diego County Criminal Bar Association in 2013 for his contributions to the legal profession for his excellence in advocacy, civility and ethics. As a certified criminal specialist, he served in several leadership roles in the Criminal Defense Lawyers Club and California Attorneys for Criminal Justice. Judge White graduated with a bachelor's degree from San Diego State University in 1987 and earned his law degree from Pepperdine University School of Law in 1991. He maintains chambers in San Diego.

Senior Judge



Dana L. Christensen was appointed a U.S. district judge for the District of Montana on Dec. 6, 2011. He served as chief judge of his court from 2013 to 2020 and assumed senior status on Nov. 7, 2025. Prior to his appointment to the bench, Judge Christensen was in private practice in Montana as an associate at Moulton, Bellingham, Longo & Mather, P.C., in Billings, from 1977 to 1981; a partner at Murphy, Robinson, Heckathorn & Phillips, P.C., in Kalispell, from 1981 to 1996; and a partner at Christensen, Moore, Cockrell, Cummings & Axelberg, P.C., in Kalispell, from 1996 to 2011. Judge Christensen graduated with a B.A. from Stanford University in 1973 and earned his J.D. from the University of Montana School of Law in Missoula in 1976. He maintains chambers in Missoula. 🏠

In Memoriam



Theodor C. Albert, of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Central District of California, died on May 5, 2025, at the age of 72. Judge Albert was appointed a bankruptcy judge for the Central District of California on June 1, 2005, and served as chief judge of his court from 2022 until his death. Prior to his appointment to the bench, Judge Albert was co-founder of the law firm of Albert, Weiland & Golden, LLP in Costa Mesa, California, and was a partner at the law firm of Buchalter, Nemer, Fields & Younger LLP in Newport Beach, California. Born at the Fort Sill Army base in Oklahoma, Judge Albert graduated with a B.A. from Stanford University in 1975 and earned his J.D. from the University of California, Los Angeles, School of Law, in 1978.



Carolyn R. Dimmick, of the Western District of Washington, died on Dec. 24, 2025, at the age of 96. Judge Dimmick was appointed a U.S. district judge for the Western District of Washington on April 4, 1985, and served as chief judge of her court from 1994 to 1997. She assumed senior status on Nov. 1, 1997. Prior to her appointment to the federal bench, Judge Dimmick served as a justice for the Supreme Court of the State of Washington from 1981 to 1985. Before that, she was a judge for the Superior Court of the State of Washington, King County, from 1976 to 1980, and was a judge for the Washington State Northeast District Court in King County from 1965 to 1975. Judge Dimmick was in private practice in Seattle from 1962 to 1965 and from 1959 to 1960. She was deputy prosecutor for King County, from 1960 to 1962 and from 1955 to 1959, and served as assistant attorney general for the State of Washington from 1953 to 1954. Judge Dimmick graduated with a B.A. from the University of Washington in 1951 and earned her J.D. from the University of Washington School of Law in 1953.



James P. Donohue, of the Western District of Washington, died on Feb. 6, 2025, at the age of 74. Judge Donohue was appointed a U.S. magistrate judge for the Western District of Washington on Feb. 6, 2005, and retired from the bench on Feb. 28, 2019. Prior to his appointment, Judge Donohue was a shareholder in the Seattle office of Heller Ehrman White & McAuliffe. He served as chair of the Intellectual Property Section of the Washington State Bar Association and was involved with the American Bar Association, drafting model jury instructions for IP cases. Judge Donohue graduated with an A.B. from the University of Illinois in 1973 and earned his J.D. from the University of California, Los Angeles, School of Law, in 1976.



Sam E. Haddon, of the District of Montana, died on Nov. 26, 2025, at the age of 88. Judge Haddon was appointed a U.S. district judge for the District of Montana on July 25, 2001, and assumed senior status on Dec. 31, 2012. Prior to his appointment to the bench, Judge Haddon was in private practice in Montana as a partner at Boone, Karlberg & Haddon in Missoula, from 1969 to 2001, and was an associate at Anderson, Symmes, Forbes, Peete & Brown in Billings, from 1966 to 1969. Judge Haddon graduated with a B.A. from Rice University in 1959 and earned his J.D. from the University of Montana Law School in 1965. Following law school, he clerked for Chief District Judge William J. Jameson of the District of Montana from 1965 to 1966.



Michael R. Hogan, of the District of Oregon, died on Nov. 28, 2025, at the age of 79. Judge Hogan was appointed a U.S. district judge for the District of Oregon on Sept. 16, 1991, and served as chief judge of his court from 1995 to 2002. He assumed senior status on Sept. 24, 2011, and retired from the bench on Nov. 1, 2012. Prior to his appointment, he served the District of Oregon as a U.S. magistrate judge from 1973 to 1991 and as a U.S. bankruptcy judge from 1973 to 1980. He graduated with a B.A. from the University of Oregon in 1968 and earned his J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center in 1971.



Robert M. Holter, of the District of Montana, died on May 11, 2025, at the age of 98. Judge Holter was appointed a U.S. magistrate judge for the District of Montana on Jan. 20, 1988, and after his term ended in 2002, Judge Holter served as a recalled magistrate judge until Jan. 9, 2019, when he retired from the bench. Before his appointment to the federal bench, Judge Holter was appointed as a district judge for Montana State in Libby in 1978, becoming the first to serve in that role. He began his legal career in Bozeman, where he practiced law for 22 years. Judge Holter served as president of Montana Legal Services and the Montana Judges Association, chaired the Sentence Review Division, and led commissions on criminal jury instructions and child support enforcement. He also served as the “water judge” for western Montana and taught at the National Judicial College in Reno, Nevada. While still a law student, Judge Holter served as a smokejumper during one of the most active seasons on record in 1953 and completed 23 jumps—a record that stood for many years. Judge Holter graduated from the University of Montana School of Law in 1954 and was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force.

In Memoriam continued



Sandra S. Ikuta, of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, died on Dec. 7, 2025, at the age of 71. Judge Ikuta was appointed as a U.S. circuit judge for the Ninth Circuit on June 23, 2006, and assumed senior status Nov. 7, 2025. Prior to her appointment to the bench, she served as deputy secretary and general counsel for California Resources Agency from 2004 to 2006. Previously, she was in private practice in Los Angeles from 1990 to 1994. Judge Ikuta graduated with an A.B. from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1976, and an M.S. from Columbia University in 1978. She earned her J.D. from the University of California, Los Angeles, School of Law, in 1988. Following law school, she clerked for Circuit Judge Alex Kozinski of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, from 1988 to 1989, and for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor from 1989 to 1990. See page 18 for the Court of Appeals' tribute to Judge Ikuta.



Robert E. Jones, of the U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon, died on March 29, 2025, at the age of 97. Judge Jones was appointed as a U.S. district judge for the District of Oregon on April 30, 1990, and assumed senior status on May 1, 2000. Before his appointment to the federal bench, Judge Jones was an associate justice for the Supreme Court of Oregon, from 1983 to 1990, and was a judge for the Oregon Circuit Court's Fourth Judicial Circuit from 1963 to 1982. He was an Oregon State representative in 1963. Judge Jones was in private practice in Portland from 1953 to 1963. He was a captain and law specialist for the U.S. Naval Reserve, from 1945 to 1947 and from 1949 to 1967, and served from 1967 to 1987 in the Navy's Judge Advocate General Corps, retiring as captain. Judge Jones graduated with a B.A. from the University of Hawaii in 1949 and earned his LL.B. from Northwestern School of Law, Lewis and Clark College, in 1954.



William D. Keller, of the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, died on Nov. 2, 2025, at the age of 91. Judge Keller was appointed as a U.S. district judge for the Central District of California on Oct. 4, 1984, and assumed senior status on Oct. 29, 1999. Prior to his appointment to the bench, Judge Keller was in private practice in California from 1977 to 1984 and from 1964 to 1972. He served as an assistant U.S. attorney in the Southern District of California and then as a U.S. attorney for the Central District of California from 1961 to 1964 and from 1972 to 1977, respectively. Judge Keller graduated with a B.S. from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1956 and earned his LL.B. from the UCLA School of Law in 1960. He served as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army Armor Branch in 1957 and received an honorable discharge from the Army Reserve in 1960.



Andrew J. Kleinfeld, of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, died on Nov. 7, 2025, at the age of 78. Judge Kleinfeld was appointed as a U.S. circuit judge for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit on Sept. 16, 1991, and assumed senior status on June 12, 2010. Before his appointment to the appellate bench, Judge Kleinfeld served the District of Alaska when he was appointed as a U.S. district judge on May 15, 1986, and appointed as a U.S. magistrate judge in 1971, serving in that capacity until 1974. Judge Kleinfeld was in private practice in Fairbanks, Alaska, from 1971 to 1986. He graduated with a B.A. from Wesleyan University in 1966 and earned his J.D. from Harvard Law School in 1969. Following law school, he clerked for Justice Jay A. Rabinowitz of the Alaska Supreme Court from 1969 to 1971. See page 17 for the Court of Appeals' tribute to Judge Kleinfeld.



Malcolm F. Marsh, of the U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon, died on March 15, 2025, at the age of 96. He was appointed as a U.S. district judge for the District of Oregon on March 24, 1987, and assumed senior status on April 16, 1998. Before his appointment to the bench, Judge Marsh was in private practice in Salem, Oregon, for over 30 years. He served in the U.S. Army as a corporal from 1946 to 1947. Judge Marsh graduated with a B.S. from the University of Oregon in 1951 and earned his LL.B. from the University of Oregon, School of Law, in 1954.



Alex R. Munson, of the U.S. District Court for the District of the Northern Mariana Islands, died on Dec. 5, 2025, at the age of 84. He was appointed as a U.S. district judge for the District of the Northern Mariana Islands on Nov. 13, 1988, and served as chief judge of his court until Feb. 28, 2010, when he assumed senior status. Previously, Judge Munson served as chief justice of the High Court of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands from 1982 to 1988. Before his appointment to the bench, he was in private practice at the law firm of Kirtland & Packard and at the law firm of Robert S. Talbert & Associates. Judge Munson was a teacher with the Inglewood Unified School District in Los Angeles County. He graduated with a B.A. and an M.A. from Long Beach State College in 1964 and 1965, respectively. He earned an Ed.D. from the University of Southern California in 1970 and a J.D. from Loyola Marymount University, Loyola Law School, in 1975.

In Memoriam continued



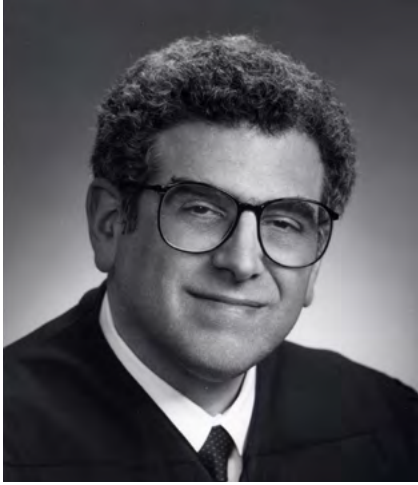
Robin L. Riblet, of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Central District of California, died on Dec. 26, 2025, at the age of 76. She was appointed as a bankruptcy judge for the Central District of California on March 29, 1988, and served as a recalled bankruptcy judge until she retired from the bench on Dec. 31, 2020. Prior to joining the bench, Judge Riblet was in private practice at Stutman Triester & Glatt PC from 1979 to 1988. Judge Riblet graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Florida in 1971. She earned her J.D., cum laude, from the University of San Diego School of Law in 1975 and her LL.M. from New York University School of Law in 1979.



David E. Russell, of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of California, died on April 1, 2025, at the age of 90. He was appointed as a U.S. bankruptcy judge for the Eastern District of California in October 1986 and was elevated to chief bankruptcy judge in February 1994. He retired in December 2000 and was subsequently recalled, sitting until Dec. 31, 2016, when he retired from the bench. Before his appointment to the bench, Judge Russell was a partner in the law firm of Russell, Jarvis, Estabrook & Dashiell in Sacramento, California, for over two decades. Previously, Judge Russell was a certified public accountant in 1965. He graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, and earned his J.D. from U.C. Berkeley, Boalt Hall School of Law (now Berkeley Law), in 1960.



In Memoriam: Senior Circuit Judge Andrew Jay Kleinfeld



Senior Circuit Judge Andrew Jay Kleinfeld died Nov. 7, 2025, after a long illness. Born on June 12, 1945, he was 80 years old.

“Judge Andy Kleinfeld’s service on the federal judiciary—first as a district court judge and later on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals—spanned nearly four decades. He was a respected and beloved colleague, and we will miss his reliable solstice reports, gentle reminders of the unique perspective he brought from Alaska, our northernmost state,” said Chief Circuit Judge Mary H. Murguia.

Judge Kleinfeld began his judicial career in 1971, serving as a part-time magistrate judge for the U.S. District Court in the District of Alaska for four years. Nominated by President Ronald Reagan in 1986, Judge Kleinfeld was confirmed by the U.S. Senate as a district judge for the District of Alaska, where he remained in that position until he was appointed as a U.S. circuit judge for the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in 1991

by President George H.W. Bush. Although his chambers were in Fairbanks, Alaska, he also heard cases in Anchorage, Nome and Ketchikan.

Born in the Bronx, Judge Kleinfeld grew up in the Washington, D.C., suburbs and was formally educated at Wesleyan University where he earned his Bachelor of Arts in 1966. During college, he considered a life in politics but ultimately chose law and earned his Juris Doctor from Harvard Law School in 1969. After law school, Judge Kleinfeld clerked for Justice Jay A. Rabinowitz, Alaska Supreme Court, and found Alaska was his new frontier and remained there throughout his career.

Judge Kleinfeld was well known in the Tanana Valley Bar Association (TVBA) to never miss a meeting unless traveling. Bobbie L. Allen, current TVBA secretary, shared, “About two weeks before his passing, one of our members visited him before coming to lunch. During their conversation, Judge Kleinfeld was asked, ‘If you had to start your career all over again, what would you change?’ To which Judge Kleinfeld responded, ‘Nothing, I would do it all over exactly the same.’” “The TVBA is grateful to Judge Kleinfeld for his years of service, and diehard commitment to our community to the very end,” Allen concluded.

“From my first days on the court, Judge Kleinfeld was a great friend and mentor. He was a superb judge. His curiosity, skepticism, and exceptional intelligence led him to

delve deeply into the record of each case to ensure he reached the right result. He crafted each opinion with the greatest care and precision. I will always remember him for his unparalleled friendliness and humor, which will be greatly missed,” said Senior Circuit Judge Sandra S. Ikuta.

Senior Circuit Judge Carlos T. Bea shared, “Years ago, the Kleinfelds invited us to their home for a meal. They lived in a house that resembled a log cabin, in the midst of a forest outside Fairbanks. Near the back door was a shelf with a large pistol on it. It may have been a .44 Magnum. I asked Andy why he had such a piece. ‘Out here, when you go for a walk, you may meet a hungry Grizzly bear. I don’t want to be his snack.’ This was typical no-nonsense Andy Kleinfeld. We all miss him and his wife Judy.”

Senior Circuit Judge Richard C. Tallman remembered his friend and colleague as a thoughtful and pragmatic jurist. “Judge Kleinfeld was an outspoken advocate for respecting individual liberties against government intrusion. He had deep respect for his fellow Alaskans in their never-ending struggle to wrest state control from federal oversight of Alaska lands and resources, reminding his colleagues on the court that the subsistence needs of both Native and non-Native inhabitants of our Last Frontier required a nuanced understanding of the rich history and cultural traditions of our fellow citizens living at the top of the world.” Judge Tallman concluded

by saying, “I will miss his colorful commentary and the deep insight that he provided us all on the Ninth Circuit in resolving our cases.”

Circuit Judge Johnnie B. Rawlinson shared her favorite memory of Judge Kleinfeld is when they sat

in Las Vegas and visited the Mob Museum. “Judge Kleinfeld showed up dressed in a pinstriped suit and matching fedora. We will always remember that day with a smile and a nod to Judge Kleinfeld’s joyful adoption of the spirit of the museum. He will be missed.” 🏛️

In Memoriam: Senior Circuit Judge Sandra Segal Ikuta



Senior Circuit Judge Sandra Segal Ikuta died on Dec. 7, 2025, after a long-fought battle with pancreatic cancer. She was 71, born June 24, 1954. Her career path includes an appointment as deputy secretary and general counsel of the California Resources Agency by California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2004 and service as a partner at O’Melveny & Myers LLP in Los Angeles. She also served as a law clerk for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, 1989-1990, and former Chief Judge Alex Kozinski of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, 1988-1989. Judge Ikuta was nominated by George W. Bush to a seat vacated by Chief Judge Emeritus James R. Browning and confirmed by the U.S. Senate on

June 19, 2006. She took senior status on Nov. 7, 2025.

“Judge Ikuta served with distinction during her long tenure on our court. She exemplified a tireless dedication to the rule of law, to collegiality, and to excellence in public service. Through her legendary work ethic, analytical rigor, and commitment to the court as an institution, Judge Ikuta deeply influenced our work and imbued the public with confidence in our administration of justice. She will be sorely missed by me and all who knew her,” said Chief Circuit Judge Mary H. Murguia.

“Her intelligence, knowledge, kindness, and fairness illuminated her relationships and decisions. All of that made her the wonderful judge, friend, and colleague that we all knew her to be,” said Senior Circuit Judge Ferdinand F. Fernandez.

Her education includes an undergraduate degree in literature from the University of California at Berkeley and a Master of Science from Columbia University School of Journalism. This trajectory led to becoming the first female editor-in-chief of a national martial

arts magazine, “Inside Kung Fu,” where she met her husband Ed, a photographer. She continued her education at the UCLA School of Law, earning her J.D., Order of the Coif, in 1988 and was later awarded their prestigious Public and Community Service Award in 2011. Additionally, in 2011, Judge Ikuta was one of two recipients who received the Alumni of the Year Award.

Circuit Judge Eric C. Tung, who succeeded Judge Ikuta, shared, “This court has suffered a great loss with the passing of Judge Sandra Ikuta. She is irreplaceable and will stand among the pantheon of greats in the history of our federal judiciary. One who kept the faith in our Constitution to the end, Judge Ikuta will remain for me a fixed star. May she rest in peace.”

Former law clerk, Annie H. Lee, shared a fond memory when fellow law clerk, David Schwartz and her accompanied Judge Ikuta and her family as they drove together for a sitting with her two former bosses, Justice O’Connor and Alex Kozinski. She reflected, “It truly felt like David and I were tagging along on a family road trip, while taking part in monumental civil rights

discourse on the side.” She added, “Judge Ikuta was a superlative jurist with a tremendous gift for cutting through complexity. I still hear her advice when facing thorny issues: ‘take it back to first principles’ - whether that meant researching texts back to the Founding Fathers or simply remembering why we practice law. Her precision with language and commitment to principled reasoning continue to guide my practice fifteen years later.”

“Judge Ikuta was truly dedicated. She took great care with her family, but also herself by exercising daily and would be at work from 7:00 am until 7:00 pm without breaks,” said Judge N. Randy Smith who also described her as “charitable, always willing to give to her staff as well as the court staff, and security officers.” She was known to invite staff to her home for dinner and personally deliver

holiday gifts throughout the court. These personal touches did not go without notice by staff as court birthdays were celebrated with cakes made by her husband, Ed, and toasted with personally vinted wine.

The theme that Judge Ikuta is and was a “Judge’s Judge” was echoed by Judge Consuelo M. Callahan and Judge N. Randy Smith. “She never speaks without being totally prepared and her writing is clear and decisive,” said Judge Smith. “With her brilliant and open mind and superb writing skills, she approached each case with no agenda and with a tireless work ethic,” commented Judge Callahan and added, “she treated all dissenting views with respect and collegiality. We all should aspire to the example she provided us for 20 years. Her legacy will live on, and the impact of her opinions will be felt for generations to come.” 🏛️

Administrative Changes



Grace Damian Flores was appointed as chief U.S. probation and pretrial services officer for the districts of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands on June 30, 2025. With over 28 years of experience, she began her career as a probation officer assistant, advancing to U.S. probation officer in June 1999. In 2009, she became the first deputy chief U.S. probation officer for the districts of Guam and NMI, serving in that role for over 16 years. During her tenure, Flores has overseen office operations, played a key role in establishing the Drug Offender Re-Entry Court—the first federal drug court in the Pacific—and managed contracts for treatment services. She holds a master's degree in management with a specialization in human resources management from the University of Phoenix and a bachelor's degree in criminal justice along with a certificate in alcohol and drug studies from Seattle University.



Timothy M. Jenkins was appointed as chief U.S. probation officer for the District of Hawaii on Jan. 2, 2025. He began his career in community corrections with the parole systems of Texas and Colorado. In 1994, he was appointed a U.S. pretrial services officer, and in 1996, a U.S. probation officer in the District of Nevada. He transferred in 2001 to the District of Hawaii, where he has since served in leadership roles as both supervisor and deputy chief. The District of Hawaii consolidated pretrial and probation in January 2022. Throughout his tenure in Hawaii, Jenkins has been instrumental in advancing evidence-based practices, not only helping to implement initiatives such as Motivational Interviewing and Interactive Journaling but also ensuring their sustainability as core components of the district's supervision model. As chief, he is leading the development of a cultural mentorship program and advancing the use of artificial intelligence to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of probation officers in serving the court and the community. Jenkins holds a master's degree in criminology and a bachelor's degree in political science.



Mariana Madrid was appointed as chief U.S. probation officer for the District of Arizona on May 1, 2025. Madrid began her career in probation at Pima County Adult Probation in 2000. She became a U.S. probation officer in 2007. During her career with U.S. Probation & Pretrial Services, Madrid worked in presentence investigations and post-conviction supervision, served as an intensive supervision specialist, a supervisor, a probation administrator in Washington, D.C., and the deputy chief in Arizona. She holds a master's degree in criminal justice administration and a bachelor's degree in public administration.



Shane Moore was appointed as chief U.S. probation and pretrial services officer for the Eastern District of Washington on Dec. 1, 2025. He began his career in 2003 working as a U.S. probation/pretrial services officer in the District of Idaho, supervising a pretrial and post-conviction caseload as well as preparing pretrial and presentence investigation reports for the court. From 2005 to 2012, he worked in the Northern District of Iowa, preparing presentence investigation reports, serving as a sentencing guideline specialist, and as an officer response tactics and firearms instructor. In 2012, Moore transferred to the Eastern District of Washington as a post-conviction supervision and presentence officer. From 2014 to 2025, he was the supervisor of the Presentence and Pretrial Investigations Unit. In addition to his roles in the district, Moore was a member of the Presentence Investigations Working Group from 2022 to 2024. He earned his bachelor's degree in 2002 and his master's degree in 2011 from the University of South Dakota.



Andrea K. Neumann was appointed as chief U.S. probation officer for the District of Oregon on Jan. 1, 2025. She began her federal career as a probation officer in 2007 in the Southern District of Iowa, where she worked from 2007 to 2018. While in Southern Iowa, she gained experience in all three disciplines—pretrial, presentence and post-conviction—as well as leadership experience as a supervisor. In 2018, she transferred to the District of Oregon and served as both an assistant deputy chief and deputy chief until her appointment as chief. Throughout her career, Neumann has served as a national STARR (staff training aimed at reducing re-arrest) coach faculty member for the Federal Judicial Center's (FJC) programs on "Supervising Officers in an Evidenced-Based Environment" and "Becoming an Executive." She has served on several district reviews and is a member of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Court's Review Working Group. Neumann is also a graduate of the FJC's Leadership Development program. She earned a B.A. from Saint Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa, and an M.A. from The Chicago School of Professional Psychology in Chicago.



Daniel (Dan) Owens was appointed as clerk of court for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in the District of Nevada on April 18, 2025. His appointment reflects a decades-spanning commitment to public service, including his prior role as administrative manager for the U.S. Probation Office in the District of Nevada, which he held beginning in July 2015. Earlier in his career, Owens served Clark County, Nevada, in multiple IT leadership capacities, ultimately retiring as manager of technical support for the Clark County Building Department. A long-term Nevadan since relocating from Southern California as a child, Owens began his professional journey after high school by enlisting in the U.S. Air Force, where he launched his career in information technology. He later earned a degree in accounting from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and holds a professional certificate in business analysis from George Washington University.



Angela T. Thompson was appointed as clerk of court for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Hawaii on Nov. 1, 2025. She has been with the bankruptcy court since 2015, serving as an appellate law clerk to Chief U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Robert J. Faris during his term on the Ninth Circuit Bankruptcy Appellate Panel. She was first exposed to federal service at the U.S. District Court for the District of Hawaii, where she clerked for U.S. District Judge Susan Oki Mollway, U.S. District Judge Leslie E. Kobayashi and U.S. Magistrate Judge Barry M. Kurren. She is also the past treasurer and current president of the Hawaii Bankruptcy Bar Association. Thompson holds undergraduate degrees in political science, Asian studies and Japanese from Tufts University. She obtained her J.D. from the University of Hawaii, William S. Richardson School of Law, and practiced civil litigation in Honolulu before joining the bankruptcy court.



JR Waller was appointed as chief U.S. probation and pretrial services officer for the District of Montana on June 2, 2025. His career with the district began in January 2006 as an intern, followed by his appointment as a probation officer assistant in August 2007. Over the years, Waller has served in multiple capacities including presentence investigator, supervision officer and pretrial services officer, with much of his career dedicated to post-conviction supervision. Waller was promoted to drug, alcohol and treatment services specialist in 2016. In this role, he focused on increasing the availability of treatment services across Montana, including for those residing on Indian reservations. He was promoted to supervisory U.S. probation officer in December 2022 and later to deputy chief in April 2024. In 2006, Waller earned his B.A. from the University of Montana, where he was a scholarship athlete and served as football team captain.



Scott A. Yach was appointed clerk of court for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in the Eastern District of California on March 1, 2025. Originally from Stevens Point, Wisconsin, Yach enlisted in the U.S. Navy as a nuclear machinist mate after high school. He was awarded an NROTC scholarship and graduated with a B.A. in political science from Marquette University in 1996. He served another 18 years in the U.S. Navy as a submarine officer before retiring in 2014. He then worked for Vision Service Plan in Folsom, California, manufacturing prescription eyewear. He held multiple managerial positions in the lab before being promoted to lab director in September 2023. He joined the U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Eastern District of California, in January 2025 as only the third clerk of court for that district. 🏛️



Judges and Employees Suffer Great Losses in Southern California Fires

In January 2025, while many reflected on holiday gatherings and contemplated the resolutions of the year ahead, a disaster quietly approached that would test even the most resolute among us. The Ninth Circuit is no stranger to natural disasters, given its vast geography spanning tectonic fault lines, thousands of miles of shoreline, mountain ranges and desert landscapes. These regions encompass some of North America’s most remarkable terrain, yet with such natural splendor comes inherent vulnerability, unforeseen challenges and, at times, disasters.

That vulnerability became evident on Jan. 7, 2025, when multiple wildfires ignited across Southern California. Among the most destructive were the Palisades fire in Pacific Palisades and the Eaton fire in Altadena, both of which burned for several weeks before reaching full containment on January 31. Intensified by the Santa Ana winds, with gusts over 100 miles per hour in the surrounding mountains, the fires spread rapidly and led to 180,000 evacuations.

The toll of these events cannot be measured solely in acreage burned or evacuation figures. For many, the experience was profoundly personal. Some faced unimaginable loss and only hours or minutes to leave their homes in search of safety. Judges and employees throughout the circuit were affected, particularly those serving throughout the Central District of California, including those at the

Richard H. Chambers U.S. Court of Appeals in Pasadena. The Ninth Circuit recognizes those who were directly affected and remains committed to supporting them as they rebuild and recover from the magnitude of what they endured.

Brian Karth, district court executive/clerk of court for the Central District of California, explained, “The aftermath of the devastation left many, including some of our own CACD court family, with complete property losses and few, if any, of their personal possessions as they escaped rapidly advancing wildfires that gave them little to no warning.”

prolonged power outages. These numbers do not reflect the many more who took precautionary steps to assess and protect their lives and personal possessions.

Chief District Judge Dolly M. Gee, of the Central District of California, and Karth immediately reached out to employees who lived in affected areas and also responded to inquiries from those concerned about their colleagues’ safety and well-being. While it was not business as usual, they prioritized essential court functions, guided by a focused assessment of critical needs of the court’s employees and the public they serve. Court

CalFire Damage Assessment



	Eaton	Palisades
Days Active	24	24
Acres	14,021	23,448
Structures Damaged*	1,074	973
Structures Destroyed*	9,414	6,837
Civilian Fatalities	19	12
Civilian Injuries	0	3
Firefighter injuries	9	1

*Residential, Commercial and Other
Source: <https://www.fire.ca.gov/incidents> (page last accessed 3/4/2026)

With 42 judges and staff affected by the wildfires, and 11 of those suffering significant damage or complete loss of their homes, the court acted quickly. Nineteen employees evacuated their homes with an additional 12 experiencing

calendars were immediately reevaluated, with schedules reorganized so that work continued, recognizing that the impact on the court and its employees was significant.

In the first week, constant communication was key as the court sought to better understand who was affected, what was needed, and how the district could best support everyone involved. Karth added that the “key to our ability to maintain uninterrupted services in the midst of this disaster were regular and frequent communications between supervisors and impacted personnel to keep apprised of the extent of the damages staff may have sustained and what, if any, accommodations could be provided.” One of the first things they did was create an internal court SharePoint site to centralize access to resources and information. This proved critical, as the information kept everyone informed and recognized that the site was not just for those who had to evacuate but also served to unite the entire district in the wake of the tragedy.

Of course, the tragedy extended far beyond the court; grace needed to be given to the greater community, and that required a team approach. Waves of impact became apparent as litigants, lawyers, and associated agencies directly related to the work of the courts shared their concerns and needs. “But for the extremely dedicated and resilient judges, clerk’s office, and probation/pretrial services staff of this district, we would not have been able to continue court operations,” said Judge Gee. Maximum flex schedules, along with additional telework options, were quickly implemented as employees assessed the damage, and the work of the court continued.

Support from the Court and Community Came in Many Forms

There were cards, monetary and household donations, well wishes and offers of housing assistance.

In addition, the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts’ Judiciary Emergency Response Team (JERT) provided water and additional respiratory face masks. At the court, GSA helped monitor and limit intake and exhaust vents, which continued extensively after the fires. Additionally, donations were available from the Federal Court Clerks Association Disaster Relief Program and were offered to judges and staff who suffered losses. For one employee, a co-worker’s gesture of a borrowed suit enabled him to bring a measure of normalcy and continue his work in the courtroom.

The remainder of this article shares the personal accounts of two employees who lost their homes in the fires. These narratives honor their experiences and reflect the profound impact of the disaster. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that not all those affected wish to revisit this anniversary or be defined primarily by the events they endured. The inclusion of these accounts is intended to recognize and honor the individuals who have chosen to share their stories, with full respect for those who prefer to reflect privately.

A New Judge

For her judicial investiture, District Judge Serena R. Murillo wore borrowed clothes from her sister. “What I thought was going to be one of the greatest career achievements ever, I stepped into it wearing someone else’s clothes.”

Having worked as a trial judge for the Los Angeles Superior Court for over 10 years, she was prepared to step into this new role as a U.S.

district judge; however, she was not prepared to lose her home within 36 hours. The Spanish Colonial home, built in 1924, that she and her husband, Superior Court Judge Christian Gullón, rebuilt room by room, was also the only home that her children ever knew. All the attention to historical detail and architecture that they painstakingly updated is now gone. Adding to the physical memories lost in the fire was the realization that the week before she moved out of her superior court chambers, she brought home the diplomas, photographs, and other mementos a judge collects over a career. These achievements were boxed in the shed and were ready to go to the new chambers.



District Judge Serena R. Murillo, right, being sworn in by Chief District Judge Dolly M. Gee.

On the day the fire broke out, she met with her courtroom deputy, Melissa Kunig, and Karth, for orientation, as well as Judge Gee. Seeing the inside of the First Street U.S. Courthouse for the first time was the last day she would see her home. After this day of meetings, tours and introductions,

she noticed the fire in the hills on the drive home. By the time she reached home—only hours after leaving the court—friends had evacuated from their neighborhood and sought refuge in hers, underscoring to Judge Murillo the gravity and immediacy of the fires burning around her. That sense of relative safety proved fleeting. By 1:30 a.m., the fire advanced and posed an imminent threat. The decision was made to evacuate. Assuming they would be back in their home soon, only “go bags” were packed quickly for themselves and the twins, who just started the spring semester of their senior year and were in the midst of university applications. Luckily, their oldest daughter, a sophomore at USC, had returned to school from winter break the week of the fire.

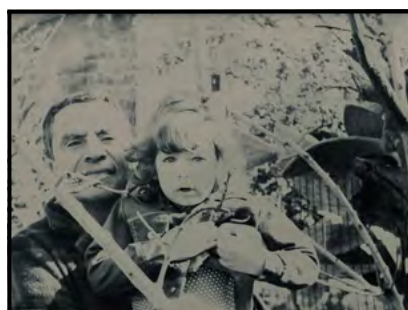
In a Judge’s Voice

“I didn’t think my house was going to burn down. We grabbed some important things, but we didn’t grab nearly enough. I had on jeans and a sweatshirt and some tennis shoes because I fully expected to go back.”

“In the early morning hours of January 8, we left at 1:30 in the morning, and then our house burned down a few hours after. On January 9, President Biden signed my commission. On January 10, I was sworn into the federal court wearing my sister’s clothing.” Judge Murillo added, “The impact was incredible and deeply disorienting. In a matter of days, I left my job of ten years and lost the home I had rebuilt and lived in for 23 years.”



Judge Murillo’s family home before and after the Eaton Fire. Below: Judge Murillo’s only photo of her and her grandfather that was saved from the fire.



What do you take?

On the way out the door, Judge Murillo realized she wanted to find one picture before they left, but she did not know where it was located. It was the only remaining picture of her grandfather, Jesus Jose Ocón Murillo, who came from Mexico to California as a farmworker under the Bracero Program.

In moments of crisis, instinct often guides decisions. For Judge Murillo, that instinct led her to the shed to search for the black-and-white photo of her and her grandfather; the same shed that contained every box from her former chambers. In a state of dazed urgency, she found herself in the shed with her daughter, sifting through boxes. With the fire approaching, her husband, however, insisted, “It’s time to go.” She is out of time, but in the last moment, she grabs a random box. Later, it was in that box that she found the picture.

The Next Chapter

With offers of housing and deliveries of blankets for her family and books for her chambers, Judge Murillo was “overwhelmed by the kindness and generosity of the entire court.” When she talks about the housing assistance and gifts from judges and staff that she had yet to meet, one can hear in her voice what these simple acts truly mean.

More than a year has passed. The lot has been cleared and graded, but construction remains on hold as the Murillo family continues working through the many steps necessary to move forward. For now, that pause has provided a necessary measure of stability. With many decisions still ahead, there is comfort in remaining grounded in the present—even as the future begins with a simple but meaningful question: which wall will hold her grandfather’s photograph?

“We Didn’t Think We Were in Danger.”



Top: The home of U.S. Probation Officer Kenneth Rotter and his partner, Morgan Soloway, after the Eaton Fire. Above: Kenneth and Morgan posing in front of their cleared property, preparing to rebuild.

Kenneth’s Story

“Tuesday night, the winds started to pick up. At first, we were not worried about the fire, but because of the winds, we lost power,” said U.S. Probation Officer Kenneth Rotter, Presentence Division, Central District of California. With his partner, Morgan Soloway, a project manager at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Altadena, they made the joint decision that, with the loss of power, it was time to evacuate to her parents’ home several miles away. They rounded up their two rescue dogs, along with a recent foster rescue and departed. They packed light, planning to return once

power was restored. Always prepared to take in another foster dog, their trunk was filled with more supplies for animals than for themselves.

This, however, was the last time they would see their home, a home they purchased and moved into just eight months prior. By Wednesday, in the early morning hours, it was gone.

Confirmation came from a neighbor who shared the final photograph: the lot in flames, with only the remnants of the driveway and gate still visible.

They had not been at Soloway’s parents’ home for long before the power went out. They evacuated a second residence, adding another dog to their car. Soloway’s mother was traveling, and her father was preparing to evacuate as the police came by and reiterated what they already knew—they had to leave immediately. Soloway and Rotter evacuated, now with four dogs, and Soloway’s father close behind. Having not gone far, Soloway had an odd feeling that they should go back to check on her father. Upon arriving, they saw a fallen pergola that had blocked the gate, preventing him from leaving. With some physical teamwork, they moved the pergola and were once again on the road with every person and dog accounted for.

Reminders of What was Lost and What is Needed

“Currently, we are renting a house where we live. And you know, every morning I get to wake up and I’m not home...every time I go to open a drawer to get a utensil, and it’s the wrong drawer, it is a reminder of what was lost,” Rotter said. Reflecting upon the devastation, he said “that although the world moves on and life goes on, we are still at this stagnant point where it’s really hard for us to progress and move on. We can’t take the next step in our lives until the house is back.”

Having lived in their home less than a year, speaking pragmatically, Rotter notes, “on the bright side, we didn’t have a huge amount of time to make those memories” that someone who had lived in their home for decades would have. But he is quick to point out that with his home closing less than a year before, their insurance was as up to date as one could get, and yet it was still not enough. He takes a moment during the interview to share a public service announcement about checking insurance policies throughout the life of a home as improvements are made over the years. “I tell all my home owning friends, go look at your insurance policy and update it, because whatever your coverage is, it’s not enough.”

The outpouring of physical items gifted to the Rotter family was at times overwhelming but always greatly appreciated. Many times the items were desperately needed, but without a house, he states, “I didn’t have anywhere to put it.” He worries that, after so much time

passed and significant assistance already provided, some may assume that those affected by the fires no longer require additional support. He cautions against that perception, underscoring that many survivors continue to face ongoing challenges and that each person processes and recovers from tragedy in their own way, with varying needs at different stages.

“Every home is a house, but not every house is a home.” Though the sentiment may sound familiar, it carries profound meaning to those who lost both. As Rotter reflected, “Rentals do not feel like home, and because of this, it can be very emotionally draining, and since you are not in your home, it’s just not as comfortable.” Despite efforts to expedite permits and provide other considerations for survivors, he notes navigating the rebuilding process remains complex and challenging. However, after almost a year stuck in “permitting purgatory,” Rotter recently shared the joy of receiving the approval to rebuild. At last, the path forward is clear.

Support During and After the Fires

When tragedy strikes, it is hard to focus, and the court recognized that employees at any level, judges, court staff, or someone who is part of the larger court family just need time. “The space to be able to take care of myself without having to worry about deadlines was incredibly supportive,” Rotter said. Sometimes he would try to work and realize that “all the letters and words were just a jumble.” It was now his time to step back, process what had happened, and move forward.

When he needed motivation, Rotter would visit the GoFundMe page a close friend set up and appreciate all the heartfelt wishes. And “when the world moved on, and I hadn’t, I really needed to revisit those words.” Thinking more about what he needs from others, he appreciates a call, a note, or just a chance to share thoughts over good food and drinks. Anniversaries are hard, but the month after can be harder.

In reflecting on the tragedy, Rotter expressed gratitude that his story is being memorialized in this Annual Report. “This is important,” he said, “not to let this just fade away.” Whether the home you lived in was recently purchased or you had lived there for 30-plus years, the pain of that loss does not go away quickly, and some might say it never does. As Rotter puts it, “We don’t want to be forgotten.”

A Final Word from Chief District Judge Dolly M. Gee and District Court Executive/Clerk of Court Brian Karth

“Unfortunately, many of the stories of personal tragedies which affected over 40 district judges and staff are still ongoing as most of their recovery and rebuilding efforts will be measured in years rather than months. Looking after the welfare of our workforce is vital and necessary especially to survive challenging times. We remain convinced, especially having been tested with challenges such as have beset us in 2025, that we have the finest group of professionals that we could possibly imagine in the Central District of California.”



U.S. District Court Joins Pacific Judicial Council in Hosting Historic 2025 District Conference

On Sept. 24, 2025, judicial officers, court staff and legal professionals from American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, the national and state courts of the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Marshall Islands, joined by presenters from the continental U.S. and students from several Saipan high schools, convened at the U.S. District Court for the District of the Northern Mariana Islands to kick off the three-day district conference held in partnership with the Pacific Judicial Council (PJC).

The conference opened with oral arguments before a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit—the first such sitting since 2002. Ninth Circuit Chief Judge Mary H. Murguia, Circuit Judge Johnnie B. Rawlinson and Senior Circuit Judge M. Margaret McKeown heard oral arguments in three criminal appeals: two cases from the U.S. District Court for the District of the Northern Mariana Islands and one case from the District Court of Guam. The two NMI cases concerned judgments on charges of conspiring to transport and aiding and abetting the transportation of an illegal alien. The Guam case concerned a sentence imposed upon revocation of supervised release. Following oral arguments, the three circuit judges fielded questions from attendees, sharing personal stories about their journeys to the bench and imparting advice to aspiring legal professionals.



Chief Justice Robert J. Torres, Jr., Guam Supreme Court

The conference then continued with Chief District Judge Ramona V. Manglona, U.S. District Court for the NMI, welcoming attendees and presenters, followed by Chief Judge Murguia’s keynote address on the State of the Ninth Circuit—another historic moment, as the last official appearance in the NMI by a sitting Ninth Circuit chief circuit judge was in 2004, when Chief Judge Mary M. Schroeder presided over a ceremony marking the termination of the Ninth Circuit’s jurisdiction to hear appeals from the Supreme Court of the Commonwealth of the NMI. Chief Judge Murguia’s remarks touched upon continuing challenges to the administration of justice in the U.S., the importance of wider community engagement with the work of the judiciary, and the longstanding collaborative relationship between the Ninth Circuit and the judiciaries of the island nations and territories making up the membership of the PJC.

The remainder of the conference continued at the Crowne Plaza, where Chief Justice Robert J. Torres, Jr., Supreme Court of Guam and PJC president, welcomed attendees. Remaining conference presentations addressed trends and challenges posed by artificial intelligence, constitutional and statutory interpretations, diversity in legal and cultural frameworks across the PJC member jurisdictions, role of judiciaries in developing local law and accounting for local traditions and values, and judicial ethics.

The conference concluded on Sept. 26, 2025, with reports from the PJC delegations on the state of their respective judiciaries and a meeting of the PJC Executive Committee.

Reflecting on the success of the conference, Judge Manglona stated, “The presence of the Ninth Circuit judges reaffirmed the Ninth Circuit’s deep connection to the Pacific region and our shared commitment to the rule of law. We were also fortunate to have members of the Pacific Judicial Council participate, including its president, Chief Justice Robert J. Torres, Jr., of the Guam Supreme Court. We further appreciate the presence and presentations of U.S. Sixth Circuit Chief Judge Jeffrey S. Sutton and District Court Judge Joseph Laplante from the District of New Hampshire at the conference.”



Guam Federal Court Conference

Chief District Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood and the District Court of Guam celebrated the 75th anniversary of the court's establishment at its annual district conference attended by many island lawyers, judges and court staff.

The conference was held on Sept. 22, 2025, at the Hilton Guam Resort & Spa and offered eight hours of continuing legal education. Rodney Jacob, the district's Ninth Circuit lawyer representative, served as the conference moderator.

Jacqueline Taitano Terlaje, Guam Bar Association president, provided updates on the state of the bar, and Federal Public Defender Leilani Lujan updated the conference participants on the state of the Guam Criminal Justice Act Plan.

A key highlight of the conference included conversations with two distinguished judges—Chief Judge Jeffrey S. Sutton, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, and Chief Judge Mary H. Murguia, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

The conference agenda covered a range of critical legal topics, including “Best Practices in Handling Pre-Trial Detention or Release” with Magistrate Judge Michael J. Bordallo, District of Guam, and others, and “Artificial Intelligence Updates and Demonstration” presented by Senior Circuit Judge M. Margaret McKeown, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.



Chief District Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood, holding the plaque, Magistrate Judge Michael J. Bordallo, back row, Magistrate Judge Joaquin V.E. Manibusan Jr. (Ret.), holding the award; and District Court of Guam staff at the Guam Federal Court Conference.

The “Evolving Federal Law on Guam: The District Court of Guam 75 Years Later,” panel discussion highlighted significant cases of the court over its 75-year history. Panelists included attorneys Roger Crouthamel, Ann Keith and Fred Black. Crouthamel and Keith were former law clerks for the court, and Black, former District of Guam U.S. attorney. Together, their service spanned 40 years of the court's history.

Circuit Judge Johnnie B. Rawlinson, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, presented on “Statutory Interpretation.”

Cristobal C. Dueñas Excellence Award

At the district conference, the Honorable Cristobal C. Dueñas Excellence Award was presented to Magistrate Judge Joaquin V.E. Manibusan Jr. (Ret.) for his

outstanding dedication, ethics, and professionalism in the practice of law and in service to the District Court of Guam and to the people of Guam. The award is named after the court's first Chamorro district judge, the Honorable Cristobal C. Dueñas, who served the court as its sole district judge and then senior judge from 1969 to 1991.

Judge Manibusan was appointed to be the first U.S. magistrate judge for the District Court of Guam on Feb. 9, 2004, and served two eight-year terms until February 2020. He served as a member of the Ninth Circuit's Magistrate Judges Executive Board.

“It was a blessing and a privilege to serve with Judge Manibusan for almost 25 years, first at the Superior Court and then here at the District Court of Guam. His quiet diligence served both courts well,” said Judge Tydingco-Gatewood.

“They say one good neighbor helps and elevates the whole neighborhood. It’s judges like Judge Manibusan who elevate the entire judiciary; someone who serves with such distinction—quietly and with humility,” said Chief Judge Murguia.

75th Anniversary Naturalization Ceremony

In celebration of the court’s 75th Anniversary, on Aug. 1, 2025, the District Court of Guam hosted a special naturalization ceremony at the Guam Congress Building, which housed the court at its inception in 1950. In partnership with the 75th Anniversary of the Organic Act of Guam Committee, the 38th Guam Legislature, and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Judge Tydingco-Gatewood and Judge Bordallo welcomed 75 new citizens from South Korea, China, India, Republic of Palau, Federated States of Micronesia (Yap & Chuuk), Georgia and the Philippines in front of family, friends and dignitaries. As part of the district’s community outreach initiatives, the U.S. Passport Office, Social Security Administration, and Guam Election Commission were invited to attend the ceremony to provide newly naturalized citizens information on the benefits of U.S. citizenship.



L-R: Sixth Circuit Chief Judge Jeffrey S. Sutton, Ninth Circuit Judges Johnnie B. Rawlinson and M. Margaret McKeown, Ninth Circuit Chief Judge Mary H. Murguia; Magistrate Judge Joaquin V.E. Manibusan Jr. (Ret.), District of Guam; and Chief District Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood and Magistrate Judge Michael J. Bordallo, District of Guam.



Citizens reciting the Oath of Allegiance at the Guam Congress Building.

The Supreme Court and My Hometown

In April 2025, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California, together with the Supreme Court Historical Society and the University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law, hosted an intensive week-long civics program, “The Supreme Court and My Hometown.” This was the first My Hometown program in the Ninth Circuit and the fifth in the country.

The My Hometown Program focuses on a local case that went to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Eastern District’s program focused on the Supreme Court case of Ex Parte Mitsuye Endo, 323 U.S. 283 (1944). Mitsuye Endo was an American citizen of Japanese descent born and raised in Sacramento, California, who worked at the California Department of Motor Vehicles until she was fired in 1942 after Japan’s bombing of Pearl Harbor when all Japanese American state employees were dismissed. Endo and her family were removed and sent to what was previously referred to as a Japanese “internment camp” at Tule Lake. Endo filed a habeas corpus petition in district court in July 1942 challenging her detention. During her appeal of the district court’s denial of her petition, the Ninth Circuit certified questions of law to the Supreme Court. In Ex Parte Endo, the Supreme Court reversed the district court’s denial of Endo’s habeas petition. In January 2025, Endo was posthumously awarded the Presidential Citizens Medal.

Thirty high school students from 17 Sacramento region high schools participated, including C.K. McClatchy, Christian Brothers, Da Vinci Charter Academy, El Camino Fundamental, John F. Kennedy, Mesa Verde, The Met Sacramento, Mira Loma, Natomas, Oak Ridge, Pioneer, Rio Linda, Rocklin, San Juan, Visa del Lago, West Campus, and West Park. Due to the high level of interest and record number of applicants, the program class was expanded from 25 to 30 high school students. The program was held in the Robert T. Matsui U.S. Courthouse in Sacramento.¹

The Sacramento My Hometown Program was years in the making, beginning with efforts by then U.S. District Judge Kimberly J. Mueller (Ret.). It was led by Juliet Morris, Supreme Court Historical Society curriculum development manager and former educator, U.S. District Judge Daniel J. Calabretta, U.S. Magistrate Judge Chi Soo Kim, and Rydder Kramer, then McGeorge School of Law program coordinator. The week-long program included a welcome from Chief U.S. District Judge Troy L. Nunley; an introduction to the judicial branch and court system by Judge Calabretta;



Top: Student participants discuss their work in The Justice Anthony M. Kennedy Learning Center. Left: Student participant presenting capstone project inside the courtroom.



Group photograph of all students with Juliet Morris, Supreme Court Historical Society curriculum development manager (front row, left), District Judge Daniel J. Calabretta and Magistrate Judge Chi Soo Kim (third row at center), and Rydder Kramer, then McGeorge School of Law program coordinator (back row at right).

a courthouse tour; a working lunch with law clerks and court staff; panel discussions with U.S. Probation, U.S. Pretrial Services, Office of the Federal Public Defender, and U.S. Attorney’s Office; lectures from college and law professors and educators regarding American-Japanese foreign relations, WWII, Japanese incarceration, Mitsuye Endo’s life, Ex Parte Endo, and the Civil Liberties Act of 1988; observation of Judge Mueller’s criminal court proceedings; presentations from attorneys regarding trial practice and advocating before the U.S. Supreme Court, including a former U.S. Department of Justice deputy assistant attorney general, Civil Division Appellate; a talk with Karen Korematsu, the daughter of Fred Korematsu of Korematsu v. United States, 323 U.S. 214 (1944)ⁱⁱ; and discussions with Japanese camp survivor Marielle Tsukamoto and former California State Legislature staff Priscilla Ouchida, who researched and managed the California Assembly Bill 2710 that

served as the model and basis for the Civil Liberties Act of 1988.

The students applied what they learned to create a capstone project—a virtual exhibit about Ex Parte Endo and Japanese incarceration that were displayed on digital monitors located in The Justice Anthony M. Kennedy Learning Center (KLC)ⁱⁱⁱ in the Matsui courthouse. The program culminated in the students’ presentation of their project to their families, and a certificate ceremony was held in the district court’s ceremonial courtroom. The students’ project was unveiled to the public at a reception held in October in the KLC, where the students formally presented their virtual exhibit. The reception was co-sponsored by the Ninth Circuit and the Asian/Pacific Bar Association of Sacramento.

The impact of the Sacramento My Hometown civics program was best described by the students, including one who shared “They navigated us

through the judicial process—from local trial courts to the Supreme Court—empowering us to see how youth can shape the future of law, policy, and leadership... This wasn’t just a program. It was a blueprint for impact.” 🏛️

ⁱ It was fitting that the Sacramento My Hometown program was held in the federal courthouse named after former U.S. Congressman Robert T. Matsui. Representative Robert Matsui and his parents, American citizens born in Sacramento of Japanese descent, were forced to leave their home in Sacramento and were initially detained at the Tule Lake camp. His family was then separated between two different camps before their release three years later. After their release, Representative Matsui and his family returned to Sacramento.

ⁱⁱ Abrogated by Trump v. Hawaii, 585 U.S. 667, 710 (2018) (holding that “Korematsu was gravely wrong the day it was decided, has been overruled in the court of history, and—to be clear—has no place in law under the Constitution.” 323 U.S. at 248, 65 S. Ct. 193 (Jackson, J., dissenting).”).

ⁱⁱⁱ Justice Kennedy is also a Sacramento native who graduated from the same high school, C.K. McClatchy High School, four years before Congressman Robert T. Matsui.

Northern Arizona Reentry Program

The Northern Arizona Reentry Court Program provides reentry services to participants who reside in and near the Navajo Indian Reservation in Northern Arizona.

At the prompting of Matthew D. Cary, an intensive supervision specialist with the Arizona U.S. Probation Office, Magistrate Judge Camille D. Bibles, the presiding federal judge in Northern Arizona, identified a need for reentry services for underserved populations in Northern Arizona. Those leaving federal custody after an arrest or conviction often go home to remote and isolated communities, which present additional hurdles to success on federal supervision. Most return to the same circumstances that contributed to their offense conduct without the positive support necessary to avoid recidivism. The Northern Arizona Reentry Court was established in 2021 in Chinle, Arizona, and expanded to Page, Arizona, in 2024.

The program is tied to the Navajo Nation by proximity to the Navajo Indian Reservation. Cary notes: “There is no requirement for participants to be Native American; all are eligible, they just need to reside within an area of the court locations. However, due to the location, all participants thus far, have been Native American.” Eligible participants must have at least 18 months of supervision time remaining, meet a minimum risk assessment level as determined by the Post Conviction Risk Assessment tool, and reside within areas in proximity to the Chinle court or Page court. They must

also comply with court-imposed treatment, be employed or be enrolled and attend a vocational or academic school, remain sober, and participate in a weekly self-improvement or community-based organization. Most referrals to the program are for those in violation status, i.e., under a petition to revoke probation or have violated supervised release in a pending criminal matter.

officer reports their observations of the participant’s conduct, suggests how the participant can progress during the next period, and makes a recommendation for point assessment, which is a tracking method used to measure progress toward the goal of obtaining enough points to be a successful graduate of the program. After this report the reentry court team—the assistant U.S. attorney, defense lawyer, and



Arron Francis successfully completed the reentry program and was presented with a court certificate by Magistrate Judge Camille D. Bibles and Intensive Supervision Specialist Matthew D. Cary.

Once enrolled in the program, participants must attend a court hearing at least every six weeks and check in with the team by telephone between hearings. During the hearings participants describe their recent activities, and family and community members are encouraged to attend the hearing and provide insight into the participant’s efforts. The probation

the magistrate judge, discuss the case. Finally, the magistrate judge makes a finding as to a point assessment and directs the participant on needed changes for the next six weeks.

A participant is awarded up to six points per session based on adherence to program criteria and will progress through four, 12-point

phases as points accumulate. When the participant reaches 52 points, they are eligible for graduation. As they near the goal, Judge Bibles prepares a report and recommendation, providing a description of the individual's participation in the reentry program and recommending a reduction in the term of supervision or an early termination of supervision. Upon completing all criteria, the participant receives a certificate and a challenge coin and participates in a celebration with family and friends.

As the program matured, the court officers recognized that the court appearances every six weeks were not sufficient to monitor and encourage the participant's activities, so the telephone meetings between court appearances were added to the program. Additionally, it was determined that some participants benefit most from attending residential rehabilitation program meetings and permanently moving away from their prior residences. The court also found that accolades and certificates are powerful motivators for program participants; when one participant received his first certificate for

moving into the second phase of the program, he was moved to quietly note that he had never before received a certificate for anything. And the participants' success was strongly motivated by a positive impact on family members.

Cary recognized the need for such a program to address the higher-than-average revocation rates on Native American lands as compared to other locations. "I was looking for a way to impact revocation rates and improve outcomes," he said. "Native Americans often speak of generational trauma, and I wanted to have an impact on individuals in this program to ideally change the futures of their children and family members by seeking ways to assist in improving their lives with the assistance of the Court and additional resources." Judge Bibles concurs, noting that the isolated nature of these communities enhances the wider impact of an individual's rehabilitation; the children of participants perform much better in school and extra-curricular activities, and reentry court participants' spouses and elders experience improved health and other benefits as result of the

participant's sobriety and dedication to their community.

The Northern Arizona reentry program was modeled on a program established in the U.S. District Court for the District of Utah and received a great deal of assistance from the district in establishing the Northern Arizona program.

The Chinle program of the reentry court has had 15 participants, three of whom have graduated. Two of the three are employed, largely due to collaboration with Navajo Nation Office of Workforce Development. Audrey Bethel, an intensive supervision specialist, and U.S. Probation Officer Andrew Brown now work with the Chinle reentry court, and they have facilitated expanding the geographical boundaries for the reentry court and introduced some appropriate flexibility to the program. U.S. Probation Officer Helena Uentillie works with the Page reentry court. The long-term plan is to continue to expand the program to additional remote locations to reach more participants in and near Arizona's often-underserved reservations.





The Pioneer Courthouse Sesquicentennial



On Dec. 17, 2025, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit convened a special session in Portland, Oregon, to commemorate the 150th anniversary of one of the most significant federal buildings in the American West—the historic Pioneer Courthouse. Presiding over the session was Chief Judge Mary H. Murguia, who was joined on the bench by Portland-based Senior Circuit Judges Diarmuid F. O’Scannlain and Susan P. Graber, Circuit Judges Danielle J. Forrest and Jennifer Sung. Also participating were Circuit Judges Daniel A. Bress of San Francisco and Lawrence J. VanDyke of Reno, Nevada, underscoring the courthouse’s enduring importance not only to Oregon but to the entire Ninth Circuit.

The commemorative session brought together members of the judiciary, court staff, distinguished

guests, and members of the public to reflect on a century and a half of judicial service, architectural distinction and civic history. Guest speakers included Regional Commissioner Amanda Sweeney, of the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), and Executive Director Kerry Tymchuk, of the Oregon Historical Society, each of whom addressed the courthouse’s significance as both a federal institution and an important public landmark.

A Landmark of the American West

The Pioneer Courthouse is widely regarded as the single most important 19th-century government building in the Pacific Northwest. It is the oldest federal courthouse west of the Rocky Mountains and the second oldest federal courthouse west of



Top: Chief Judge Mary H. Murguia presides during the Pioneer Courthouse Sesquicentennial celebration, welcoming attendees in the historic courthouse. Above: Kerry Tymchuk, director of the Oregon Historical Society, shares an original volume of an 1883 diary that belonged to Oregon’s first U.S. district judge, Matthew P. Deady.

the Mississippi River. When it opened its doors in October 1875, the building was designed to serve as the center of federal authority, housing not only the courtroom but also the chambers of the U.S. district judge, the offices of the collector of U.S. Customs, the Internal Revenue Service collector and assessor, the U.S. attorney, the U.S. marshal and the clerk of court.

center, reflected the city's increasing prominence and its role as a gateway between the Pacific coast and the interior of the nation.

Origins and Architectural Vision

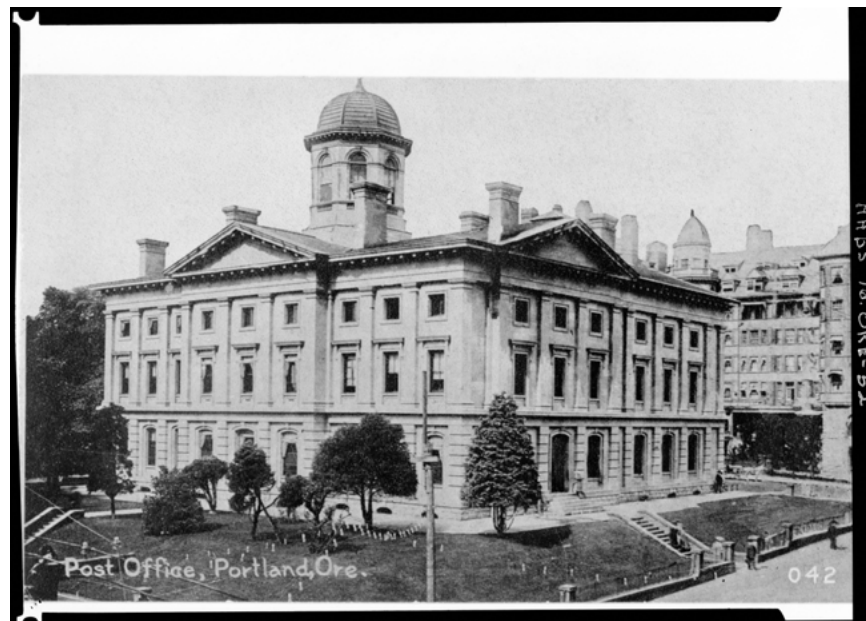
The establishment of a federal courthouse in Portland traces its origins to the administration of President Abraham Lincoln.

the federal court from Salem to Portland. His efforts proved successful, laying the groundwork for what would become one of the most enduring federal buildings in the region.

Planning for a combined U.S. Customs House, courthouse and post office began in 1866. The architectural concept was finalized in 1868 by Alfred Bult Mullett, supervising architect of the U.S. Treasury Department. Mullett's design reflected a restrained but dignified interpretation of the Italian Renaissance style, drawing inspiration from the Palladian tradition popularized by 16th-century architect Andrea Palladio and later adapted in 18th-century England.

While the building incorporates classical Greek elements, most notably its pediments, it is distinguished by its austere Palladian symmetry, proportion and balance. This stylistic approach was relatively rare in Mullett's body of work; another notable example being the U.S. Mint in San Francisco. Together, these structures represent some of the finest surviving examples of 19th-century federal architecture in the western United States.

Although construction began in the late 1860s, numerous delays—financial, logistical and political—postponed completion until October 1875. Nevertheless, the finished building stood as a testament to federal ambition and architectural excellence in a rapidly developing frontier region.



Above: The Pioneer Courthouse as the combined U.S. Customs House, courthouse, and post office in 1903. Right: Construction of the Pioneer Courthouse began in 1869. Images courtesy of the Library of Congress.



From its earliest days, the courthouse symbolized the growing presence of the federal government in the Pacific Northwest. Its location in Portland, then an emerging commercial and political

According to long-standing accounts, Matthew P. Deady, the first U.S. district judge for the District of Oregon, traveled to Washington, D.C., in the early 1860s to advocate for relocating

A Center of Civic Life

From its opening until 1930, the Pioneer Courthouse served as a focal point of civic and governmental life in Portland. It was visited by numerous U.S. presidents and other dignitaries, several of whom climbed to the cupola to take in sweeping views of Mount Hood and Mount St. Helens, vistas that symbolized both the natural grandeur and the promise of the Pacific Northwest.

In 1933, when the federal court relocated to a new courthouse, the Pioneer Courthouse faced an uncertain future. The building was placed on the auction block, and during the depths of the Great Depression, it appeared likely that this historic structure would be lost. Economic hardship ultimately prevented its sale but in August 1939, Congress, unable to identify a viable alternative, authorized the building's demolition.

History intervened however, and with the onset of World War II, the federal government found itself in need of additional space to support the expanding military and civilian workforce. The Pioneer Courthouse was reactivated, postponing its destruction. Following the war, and later during the Korean War, the building again found temporary reprieve. By the late 1950s, however, it was once more declared surplus and placed back on the auction block.

Preservation Through Advocacy

Despite its architectural and historical importance, the Pioneer Courthouse stood largely abandoned through much of the 1960s, a silent monument to governmental inaction. Circuit Judge John F.

Kilkenny observed that the building had fallen into significant disrepair and faced imminent demolition to make way for a parking lot.

The building's survival ultimately depended on the determined advocacy of judicial leaders and preservation-minded public officials. Ninth Circuit Chief Judge Richard H. Chambers and Judge Kilkenny championed the cause, working alongside influential allies including U.S. Senator Mark O. Hatfield, U.S. Representative Edith Green, and Thomas Vaughan, then director of the Oregon Historical Society. Together, they proposed rehabilitating the Pioneer Courthouse for use by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Their efforts proved successful when formal plans for restoration were approved in 1971, and the building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1973. Later that year, the courthouse was officially reopened with chambers for Judges Kilkenny and Alfred T. Goodwin. The courthouse received further recognition as a National Historic Landmark in 1977, firmly establishing its status as a cornerstone of federal judicial heritage in the Pacific Northwest.

Restoration and Furnishings

The restoration of the Pioneer Courthouse in the early 1970s was guided by a commitment to historical authenticity. Much of the original oak and ash woodwork



Above: Interior view of the Pioneer Courthouse courtroom. Left: A view of the first floor hallway at the courthouse.

was carefully preserved, including the paneling in chambers, hallways, lobbies and courtrooms, as well as architectural details that lend the building its distinctive character.

The courthouse also houses an extraordinary collection of historic furnishings, drawn from federal courthouses across the country. Among these are bench lamps from Chicago; public benches from St. Paul, Minnesota; a hat and umbrella rack from Butte, Montana; counsel tables and matching lecterns from Spokane, Washington; Seth Thomas clocks, desks and cabinets from Bellingham, Washington; antique furniture from Los Angeles and San Francisco; the historic McGinn chair from Multnomah County Circuit Court in Portland, Oregon; a Mahoney roll top desk from Heppner; and original items from Judge Deady's chambers. Together, these artifacts create a living museum of the federal judiciary.

Over time, resident chambers were established for Judges Otto R. Skopil Jr., Diarmuid F. O'Scannlain, Edward Leavy, Susan P. Graber, Danielle J. Forrest and Jennifer Sung, reinforcing the courthouse's role as an active center of appellate justice.

Seismic Rehabilitation and Modernization

By the early 1990s, growing awareness of seismic risks in the Pacific Northwest raised serious concerns about the courthouse's structural safety. Engineering studies determined that the building was at high risk of catastrophic failure in the event of a major earthquake.



Crews working on the Pioneer Courthouse seismic retrofit.

In response, the GSA, in collaboration with the Ninth Circuit, SERA Architects of Portland, and a multidisciplinary team of seismic and preservation experts, developed a comprehensive rehabilitation and seismic retrofit plan. Although the design was completed in 1996, funding delays postponed construction until 2001, when Congress appropriated \$16.5 million for the project. Renovation began in late 2002 and concluded in November 2005. The project pursued three primary objectives: preserving the building's historic character, modernizing its mechanical and structural systems, and ensuring compliance with contemporary safety and accessibility standards.

One of the most significant achievements was the installation of 75 friction pendulum seismic isolators beneath the building's foundation. These devices allow the building to move up to 18 inches in any direction during seismic activity, dramatically improving resilience while preserving the historic fabric of the structure.


Public Engagement and Judicial Legacy

Given its civic importance, the restoration was accompanied by an extensive public outreach effort led by the Pioneer Courthouse Historical Society. Permanent interpretive exhibits were developed to educate visitors about the courthouse's architectural evolution, judicial function and broader role in American civic life.

Throughout its history, the Pioneer Courthouse has hosted numerous justices of the U.S. Supreme Court, further underscoring its national significance. Distinguished visitors have included Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr., and Justices Sandra Day O'Connor, Antonin Scalia, Anthony M. Kennedy, Clarence Thomas, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan.

A Living Monument

Today, the Pioneer Courthouse remains an active and vibrant part of the federal judiciary. Open to the public, it welcomes approximately 6,000 to 8,000 visitors each year. Members of the public are invited to explore its historic courtroom, public spaces, and iconic cupola, ensuring that the courthouse continues to serve not only as a place of law, but also as a living repository of civic memory.

The sesquicentennial celebration marked more than a milestone in years; it honored a legacy of justice, preservation, and public service that continues to define the Pioneer Courthouse. As it enters its next century and a half, the building stands as a powerful reminder that history, when carefully preserved, remains a vital and active part of our civic life. 

General Services Administration Reorganization Severely Impacts Ninth Circuit

In 2025, the General Services Administration (GSA) experienced a series of layoffs in quick succession, creating uncertainty and upheaval for our courts. The employees who were lost—many with decades of service—were the unsung heroes of daily courthouse operations, working behind the scenes to support the court’s larger mission of justice.

As GSA services in the courts were reassigned, reorganized and reevaluated, judges and court employees struggled to fully understand the magnitude of the loss in physical and administrative support. Courthouse tenants’ building concerns ranged from not knowing whom to call for basic functions to high-level security concerns about alarm systems, hardening projects, and the general coordination of building maintenance.

With Heads Held High, They Continued the Work

Many GSA staff were given just hours’ notice via reduction-in-force (RIF) notices. With only hours-to-a-week to conclude positions that, in some instances, had encompassed an entire career, employees had to determine if they would pack their desks and collect their things; start the arduous process of sharing the impending news with their families; or race the clock to finish outstanding and urgent tasks.

Lindsey Snow served as the GSA Region 10 leasing director in the Public Building Service (PBS), which oversees all federal real estate. Based in Tacoma, Washington, she and her team of 50 employees were responsible for more than 400 leases across Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Alaska. PBS suffered some of the most far-reaching cuts. Snow had a 16+ year career at GSA that was suddenly set to end in less than a week in early March, when she received the news. The emotional toll for Snow was compounded as the day she learned of her departure was her son’s 16th birthday. Likewise, as she held a town hall to share the impending news that additional layoffs were coming across all levels, dozens of employees began receiving their notices during the call.

Ensuring the Medford Courthouse Moves Forward

In the middle of the GSA layoffs, the Medford, Oregon, Courthouse project was in the queue to begin the award process. Breaking ground for a new 40,000-square-foot building as a replacement for the historic James A. Redden U.S. Courthouse, which was not seismically or security compliant, was a top priority. The yearslong process to commission a replacement courthouse was in jeopardy as Snow and other key leaders were leaving, and soon 50 of her employees would be leaving as well. Time was of the essence as Medford had not moved past the critical award stage. Snow was not going to let the ball drop.

“The first order of business was to determine how to continue access to project documents for those left, and not knowing who might be in that pool



Rendering of the new Medford, Oregon, courthouse.

in the future, a new shared system had to be created immediately,” Snow said. With the help of Jay Bell, senior transaction manager for Cushman & Wakefield, Medford project calls were next in line to push through at breakneck speed. If anything related to Medford could get immediate approval, calls were made. Medford was not the largest of Snow’s projects at the time, but it was considered “high risk given the courts as the tenant and the complexity of the building and contracts.” Her final official act was awarding the Medford courthouse lease to ensure the project would move forward; she then signed off her own computer for the last time.

A Clerk’s Perspective

When Clerk of Court Deb Lucas, District of Arizona, received the startling call from her chief deputy, Mags Everette, she was en route to Phoenix from the Tucson courthouse in Arizona. She learned the entire GSA field office located at the Sandra Day O’Connor U.S. Courthouse in Phoenix was eliminated that afternoon. A member of Lucas’ staff noticed a long-term GSA employee crying in the atrium, and the GSA employee shared that her entire office had just a few hours to clean out their personal belongings. Word traveled fast back to Lucas as she quickly assessed that 10 GSA employees in Phoenix were leaving that day. “There was no heads up; no preparation. One day we had a GSA office, and the next day they were gone.”

As she discusses court operations, she is keenly aware that the relationships she developed over the years with GSA staff across her district made her job easier.

The loss of these GSA jobs impacts many other court functions, from court security to civic education and community programs. For example, she knew the courthouse was a fixture of civic programming and after-hours events, but it wasn’t until calls came in for one of the largest Cinco de Mayo celebrations in the country, with 25,000 attendees, that she realized the courthouse plaza was key to its success. The plaza was seamlessly managed by GSA over the years, so she never had to worry about how an event of that size would be handled after hours.

A Courthouse Proceeds



Construction of the Flagstaff courthouse underway. From left to right: Van Bayless, USMS; Magistrate Judge Camille D. Bibles; Rob Vogel, USMS; Senior District Judge G. Murray Snow; Chief District Judge Jennifer G. Zipp; Debra D. Lucas, District Court Executive/Clerk of Court; Victoria Snively, Court Architect; Bart Butzine, Court IT Director; and Nathan Powell, USMS.

During this organizational and personal upheaval, the new Flagstaff, Arizona, courthouse hung in peril. The Flagstaff courthouse’s critical location will serve the Northern Arizona reservations and communities—its inhabitants currently required to commute hours to the Phoenix courthouse to attend hearings or complete jury service. Losing the GSA project manager, who took the early retirement option, added to the uncertainty. The new project manager had a steep learning curve as they picked up the pieces. The delay in obtaining the “Notice to

Proceed” extended the project by approximately eight months. Despite the uncertainty, Lucas credits Diana Schlump of GSA’s PBS Center in San Diego for providing continuity of service during a difficult period, and despite these setbacks, there is still optimism that the Flagstaff courthouse will be completed in 2027 due to the dedication and perseverance of everyone involved.

GSA Regions 8, 9 & 10


The GSA is nationalizing its processes to achieve a more streamlined approach with a single customer-facing portal. On Nov. 19, 2025, Acting PBS Commissioner Andrew Heller said, “the reorganized PBS is better equipped to take on today’s pressing real estate challenges while supporting federal agencies by delivering consistently excellent service across the country.”

Reorganized now into seven zones, the previous 11 GSA regions across all states are now more closely aligned with the current geography of the circuit courts. However, this reorganization significantly affected former Region 9 which lost approximately 75% of its GSA staff, including the District of Nevada's loss of all on-site GSA employees. The remaining employees who were spared from layoffs or RIF notices face monumental tasks as they oversee major building and renovation projects in the Ninth Circuit. They remain and continue to shape and support GSA's streamlined approach and ultimately support the function of the courts in the Ninth Circuit.

Every Number Has a Story

Gayle Tsern Strang, assistant circuit executive, whose team supports the functions and projects for space and facilities in the Ninth Circuit, fielded calls from court clerks, judges and staff, noting that transition planning was fast and furious. "All of a sudden, you had messages sent throughout the entire executive and judicial branches regarding acceleration of lease terminations...Our partners across GSA, including facilities staff, capital project, and lease managers, were all affected. Essentially, every component of how GSA functions was in turmoil." She went on to say that courts wanted to know, "[A]re we going to have lights on tomorrow or even be able to get into the courthouse?" Working with

the GSA regional commissioner, she responded to the ensuing barrage of crises ranging from basic triage of facilities deficiencies to more complex issues, such as contract negotiations and project stoppages, as building contractors needed to be paid.

Echoing Lucas' sentiment on the importance of relationships, Tsern Strang acknowledged "[W]e lost many of our partners that we relied upon for decades." However, Tsern Strang, like Lucas, remains optimistic, highlighting the progress on the Medford and Flagstaff courthouses, and acknowledging the judges, court staff, and remaining GSA employees who continue to prioritize and support these critical projects. 

Ninth Circuit Bench and Bar Convene for Annual Conference

The 2025 Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference, “Floating on the Waves of Change,” held July 21-24, in Monterey, California, brought together judges, lawyers and court unit executives to learn about and discuss issues facing the legal community of the Ninth Circuit and beyond.

The conference commenced with a morning welcome from Ninth Circuit Chief Judge Mary H. Murguia. She engaged in a discussion on the state of the judiciary with the Honorable Robert J. Conrad Jr., director of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. They discussed a variety of topics, including the judiciary’s budget, IT security surrounding the judiciary’s case management system, increasing threats against judges, and the need to increase the number of judgeships nationwide.

Roger M. Townsend, chair of the Ninth Circuit Conference Executive Committee, presided over the Opening Program, held later that afternoon. During this program, Chief Judge Murguia provided a State of the Circuit address. She emphasized that “the public still instinctively recognizes the court’s constitutional role. The court’s legitimacy rests on the enduring perception that judges act in good faith, applying the law impartially and dutifully.”

Chief Judge Murguia also presided over the American Inns of Court Ninth Circuit Professionalism Award and the John P. Frank Award presentations, honoring California Court of Appeal Justice Patricia Bamattre-Manoukian (Ret.), and Arizona Federal Public Defender Jon M. Sands, respectively, for their dedication to the law. See pages 46 and 47 for details.



Top: Honorable Robert J. Conrad Jr., director of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, engages in a discussion with Ninth Circuit Chief Judge Mary H. Murguia. Above: Chief District Judge Jennifer G. Zipp, District of Arizona, speaks at a meeting of chief district judges.

Additionally, the 100th anniversary of the U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services was acknowledged during the Opening Program. John J. Fitzgerald, chief, U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services, Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, presented an overview of the creation of the U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services Offices and its excellent work over the last century.

Other general sessions, open to all attendees, covered a wide range of panels and presentations, including the Supreme Court Review; A Fireside Chat with the Honorable Janet Napolitano; When Disaster Strikes: Insiders’ Views on the Law of Catastrophe; AI and Copyright: A Sea Change or More of the Same?; Legal Airwaves: Navigating the Law of Podcasting; Health and Incarceration; Independence



Top left: Kenneth R. Feinberg describes his role in disaster settlements during the program, “When Disaster Strikes: Insiders’ Views on the Law of Catastrophe.” Top right: Evaristo Salas, at center, discusses solitary confinement and prisoner conditions from his 27 years of wrongful incarceration while on the “Health and Incarceration” panel. Right: During the civil breakout session, “Ethics and Civility in Civil Litigation: Upholding Integrity in the Courtroom,” attorney Nina D. Boyajian, left, was joined by District Judge Jacqueline Scott Corley, Northern District of California, and Magistrate Judge Douglas F. McCormick, Central District of California.



of the Judiciary; and Trawling for Meaning After Loper Bright. All conference videos can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/@9thCircuit>

Bryan Stevenson, founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative, served as the conference’s keynote speaker, and the conference concluded with the Conversation with the Justice, featuring U.S. Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan. Justice Kagan discussed nuances between writing

opinions for the court and writing a dissent; independence and safety of the judiciary; disagreement and collegiality between justices; the emergency docket; and how AI will affect the court, among other topics.

In addition to the general sessions, the Ninth Circuit Civics Contest Program and Reception was held during the conference (see page 45 for a full report), as were business meetings for judges, court unit executives and lawyers.

Authorized by law under 28 USC § 333, the judicial conference convenes “for the purpose of considering the business of the courts and advising means of improving the administration of justice within the circuit.” 🏛️

Civics Contest Winners Expound on the Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship at Program and Reception



Winners of the 2025 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest were celebrated at the Civics Contest Program and Reception at the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference held in July in Monterey, California. The contest, organized by the Ninth Circuit Public Information and Community Outreach (PICO) Committee, received 885 essays and 126 video entries from students who competed in local contests held by 15 judicial districts throughout the Ninth Circuit. Forty-five essays and 39 videos advanced from the district judging to the Ninth Circuit for final judging. In its 10th year, the contest has received over 10,000 entries in both categories over the decade.

Students responded to the contest prompt, “When Duty Calls: Why Exercising the Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship is Important to Me.” Senior District Judge John A. Kronstadt, Central District of California, PICO chair, opened the program with two relevant quotes from Founding Father Thomas Jefferson: ‘An informed citizenry is the heart of a dynamic democracy,’ and ‘Whenever the people are well informed, they can be trusted with their own government.’ The circuit contest is intended to serve these very objectives and priorities.”

Judge Kronstadt presented the winners, the team of Srinidhi Punnam and Neha Santhosh, both

of BASIS Chandler, Chandler, Arizona, in the video category, with certificates and prize money. Essay winner Colton Hong, Anacortes High School, Anacortes, Washington, was unable to attend the conference due to his admittance into the prestigious Notre Dame University Leadership Seminars for academically talented students who demonstrate impressive leadership within their communities. Hong appeared via pre-recorded video thanking the committee and acknowledging the importance of the theme and contest.

Punnam and Santhosh participated in a panel discussion led by PICO members Bankruptcy Judge Madeleine C. Wanslee, District of Arizona, and attorney Licia E. Vaughn, executive director with DLA Piper. The panel asked first what inspired the winners to participate in the contest. Punnam responded that it was a chance to reflect on the value of citizenship beyond its legal status. She stated, “I came to understand the exercising our rights and responsibilities as citizens is what turns someone from being a bystander into a change-maker.”



Top: Video contest winners Srinidhi Punnam, center, and Neha Santhosh, left, discuss their contest experiences with PICO Committee member Licia E. Vaughn. Left: Chief Judge Mary H. Murguia welcomes the audience to the contest program and relays the importance of civics education.


Santhosh added, “When I first heard about the contest, I thought it was a really creative way to connect me, as the younger generation, to something that I thought only adults were involved in. I thought it was a really great way to engage in politics and make a difference.”

Ninth Circuit Chief Judge Mary H. Murguia remarked, “I am just so impressed with the video and the essay and how eloquent and how compelling these presentations

have been.” She then congratulated the circuit and district winners and highlighted that “the trickle effect of putting on this contest is immeasurable.”

Chief Judge Murguia then welcomed U.S. Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan to join her at the podium. Justice Kagan highlighted the importance of “this incredibly inspiring event and ... the students who make it so.” She stated that these students allow us

to “see what the future is and get really quite excited about that.” She then presented the winners with a booklet of the U.S. Constitution and stood for a photo with each.

The full video of the recorded panel discussion is available at <https://youtu.be/DbBjEO6ZQ6U>, and more information about the winners is available at <https://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest>. 

2025 American Inns of Court Ninth Circuit Professionalism Award Presented to Justice Patricia Bamattre-Manoukian




California Court of Appeal Justice Patricia Bamattre-Manoukian (Ret.), left, holding her award with Ninth Circuit Judge Consuelo M. Callahan, president of the national American Inns of Court.

California Court of Appeal Justice Patricia Bamattre-Manoukian (Ret.) received the 2025 American Inns of Court Ninth Circuit Professionalism Award at the 2025 Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference. Bamattre-Manoukian began her career as a deputy district attorney in the Orange County District Attorney’s Office, becoming one of the first women to

prosecute homicides in that office. After six years, she became a judge for the Orange County Municipal Court. In 1985, she was appointed to the Santa Clara County Municipal Court and was elevated to the Santa Clara County Superior Court. In 1989, the governor appointed her to her role as an associate justice of the California Court of Appeal, Sixth Appellate District, becoming the

court’s first woman justice.

Ninth Circuit Judge Consuelo M. Callahan, president of the national American Inns of Court and a past recipient of the award, presented the award to Justice Bamattre-Manoukian. “I am extremely honored, humbled and grateful for the nomination and I’m completely overwhelmed,” said Bamattre-Manoukian. “I would not be standing here before you today without the help of so many mentors of mine, so many judges, so many colleagues and my family. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your kindness and consideration.”

The American Inns of Court Professionalism Awards are bestowed annually in each circuit to lawyers or judges whose life and practice display sterling character and unquestioned integrity, coupled with ongoing dedication to the highest standards of the legal profession and the rule of law. 

Arizona FPD Jon M. Sands Receives Ninth Circuit's John P. Frank Award

Arizona Federal Public Defender Jon M. Sands received the 2025 John P. Frank Award on July 21, the opening day of the 2025 Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference.

Chief Judge Mary H. Murguia noted the award “is our circuit’s lawyer’s lawyer award. It was created by our circuit’s advisory board more than 20 years ago to honor members of the legal profession in the West who are not only great lawyers but who have also provided notable service to the courts of our circuit.”

Melinda Haag, former U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of California and current chair of the Ninth Circuit Advisory Board, and Scott Bales, former chief justice of the Arizona Supreme Court, presented the award. “It became incredibly clear during our selection process that Jon had demonstrated throughout his professional lifetime all of the qualities we look for in connection with the John Frank Award,” Haag said. “He has clearly touched the lives of many people in this room and countless others in the District of Arizona and beyond. We received many nominations on Jon’s behalf and all of them contained long, heartfelt descriptions of his character, integrity and humanity.”

“I practiced with John Frank at the end of his career, and I have known Jon Sands since we began practicing law in Arizona some 40 years ago,” said Bales. “Like John Frank, Jon Sands has spent his career in the Ninth Circuit working to advance

the rule of law and the ideal of justice for all ... He is a national leader on criminal justice issues, and he is an advocate of the highest caliber whose office consistently provides its clients with outstanding criminal defense services.” Bales concluded, “All who know Jon love and admire him for his incomparable combination of brilliance, wry wit, gentle humor and engaging humility.”

The award was established in 2003 by the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit at the recommendation of the Ninth Circuit Advisory Board, a group of experienced attorneys who advise on circuit governance issues.

The late John P. Frank was a renowned Phoenix attorney who, over the course of a 62-year career, argued more than 500 appeals before



Arizona Federal Public Defender Jon M. Sands remarks on receiving the award at the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference.

After accepting the award, Sands said, “I do want to thank you all for the John P. Frank Award. I am grateful to the committee, the Ninth Circuit, my district, my nominators and for my clients. It is humbling and meaningful. I hope it reflects an acceptance of responsibility. This award affirms the importance of Sixth Amendment right to counsel; this right is exemplified by the Criminal Justice Act. This award shows the Ninth’s support for strong and zealous defense.”

the Arizona Court of Appeals, the Arizona Supreme Court, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit, other federal circuit courts and the U.S. Supreme Court. 🏛️

Award Recipients and Honorees

Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals

Circuit Judge Consuelo M. Callahan received the following honors:

Anthony M. Kennedy Inn of Court Hammy Extraordinaire 2025 Award, American Inns of Court, for running the program for the last 20 years. The award was presented on Oct. 14, 2025, during the Kennedy Inn of Court Hammy Awards Ceremony.

Honorary Doctor of Laws, University of the Pacific, recognizing a lifetime of extraordinary achievement and positive impact on the world. The honorary degree was presented at the University of the Pacific All-University Commencement held May 10, 2025.

Cover star of the September 2025 issue of HERLIFE Magazine, a publication with the mission of keeping women connected. Each month is dedicated to the celebration of all that is exceptional in our communities, including the inspirational women within. The article, "Judge Consuelo Callahan: Prepared and Professional" is included in the 'Inspirations' section.

Senior Circuit Judge M. Margaret McKeown received the following awards:

Lawyers Club Icon Award, Lawyers Club of San Diego. The award is "earned by someone who shows exceptional achievement furthering the advancement of women in the law and society and honors

those who have continued to make meritorious contributions to society..." The award was presented in San Diego in June 2025.

Warren M. Christopher International Lawyer of the Year Award, California Lawyers Association. The award "honors legal practitioners who render distinguished service in the promotion of the international rule of law or for significant achievement in the practice of international law."

Law School for "his lasting impact as a Jurist, Educator, and Mentor, for his service on the U.S. Court of Appeals since 1986 and as a trusted advisor to the Law School."

Circuit Judge Johnnie B. Rawlinson received the Nevada Legal Services 2025 Champion of Justice Award. The award was presented in Las Vegas on Oct. 3, 2025.

Circuit Judge Lawrence VanDyke received the 2025 Jurist of the Year Award, Texas Review of Law and



Senior Circuit Judge M. Margaret McKeown, right, at the William H. Webster Profiles in Leadership Award ceremony with Judge Royce Lamberth and Linda Webster, November 13, in Washington, DC.

William H. Webster Profiles in Leadership Award, National Economic Security Alliance. The award recognizes individuals in "public service who have demonstrated exceptional leadership qualities and have set an example for others to follow."

Senior Circuit Judge Diarmuid F. O'Scannlain was recognized on Oct. 24, 2025, by the Lewis & Clark

Politics. The awardees are "selected on the basis of their contributions to conservative and libertarian causes of national importance." The award was presented in Austin, Texas, on March 1, 2025.

District of Alaska

Senior District Judge Ralph R. Beistline received the Distinguished Judge and Attorney Award, Tanana

Valley Bar Association, for 50 years of distinguished service as lawyer, state superior court judge and U.S. district court judge. The award was presented in February 2025.

District of Arizona

Magistrate Judge Maria S. Aguilera received the James A. Walsh Outstanding Jurist Award presented by the State Bar of Arizona, Board of Governors, on June 25, 2025, at the bar's 92nd Annual Convention. The award "recognizes a judge whose career exemplifies the highest standards of judicial conduct, including integrity and independence. It is awarded to a judge who is knowledgeable of the law and faithful to it; who remains unaffected by partisan interests, public pressure, or fear of criticism; who is patient, dignified, and courteous to all who appear before them; and who seeks to improve the administration of justice and enhance public understanding and respect for it."

Bankruptcy Judge Daniel P. Collins was appointed a Business Court Representative for the American Bar Association's Business Law Section in 2025. Business Court Representatives are current members of the judiciary who preside over courts or dockets consisting primarily of complex business and commercial litigation.

District Judge Diane J. Humetewa received the following honors:

Spirit of Excellence Award, American Bar Association. "The award celebrates the efforts and accomplishments of lawyers who work to promote a more racially and ethnically diverse legal

profession. Awards are presented to the lawyers who excel in their professional settings; who personify excellence on the national and international level; and who have demonstrated a commitment to racial and ethnic diversity in the legal professional." The award was presented during the Annual ABA Convention held Feb. 1, 2025, in Phoenix.

Women's Plaza of Honor, University of Arizona. Judge Humetewa's name was permanently affixed to a stone pillar in the Women's Plaza of Honor on the UA campus in Tucson. The plaza is a permanent public celebration of women in Arizona who have made significant contributions to the history of Arizona. The pillar includes U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, Arizona Supreme Court Justice Lorna E. Lockwood and Ninth Circuit Chief Judge Emerita Mary M. Schroeder, among others. The award was presented on Sept. 5, 2025, at the UA campus, where invited guests included the Hopi Tribal chairman and vice chairman.

Senior District Judge G. Murray Snow received the John M. Roll Award for Distinguished Service to the District of Arizona on April 11, 2025. The John M. Roll Award is given each year at the District Court Conference to an individual who demonstrates outstanding service and dedication to the administration of justice in Arizona.

Central District of California

Bankruptcy Judge Martin R. Barash was inducted as a Fellow of the American College of

Bankruptcy on March 21, 2025, at the Smithsonian American Art & Portraiture Museum, in Washington, D.C. "The College is an honorary association of insolvency professionals. Fellows are elected on highly selective criteria including expertise, professionalism, scholarship, and service. Fellows exemplify the highest standards of integrity and excellence, mentoring younger practitioners while promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in the insolvency community."

Bankruptcy Judge Sheri L. Bluebond was named president elect in March 2025, National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges. "The mission of the National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges is to promote the interests of United States Bankruptcy Judges generally; to utilize our expertise on issues of bankruptcy law and procedure to improve the administration of the bankruptcy system; to foster scholarship, collegiality and diversity among members of the bankruptcy bench and bar; and to provide opportunities for education and networking for bankruptcy judges and the bankruptcy community at large."

Bankruptcy Judge Scott C. Clarkson was appointed by the Ninth Judicial Circuit Historical Society as 2026 Guest Editor of the Western Legal History Journal in August 2025.

Senior District Judge James V. Selna was elected as one of inaugural inductees into The Stanford Daily Hall of Fame in November 2025, The Stanford Daily. Judge Selna was the editor-in-chief for Volume 150, Fall 1969.

District Judge Fred W. Slaughter received the Lei Lei Wang Ekvall Award from the Orange County Bar Association on June 5, 2025, in Irvine, California. The award “honors a member of the Orange County legal community who demonstrates the highest commitment to achieving diversity, equity, and inclusion in the legal profession, while also exemplifying professional excellence.”

District Judge Sunshine S. Sykes received the 2025 National NALSA Alumni Changemaker Award, National Native American Law Students Association. The award is in recognition of Judge Sykes’ many accomplishments, especially being the first Native American appointed to the Riverside Superior Court and the first Native American federal judge appointed in California, and for her many years of service to Indian Country, her Stanford NALSA Chapter and NALSA community.

Bankruptcy Judge Vincent P. Zurzolo received the Public Outreach Award from the National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges (NCBJ) for his achievements in expanding access to justice for self-represented litigants. The award was presented at NCBJ’s annual meeting held Sept. 17–20, 2025, in Chicago.

Eastern District of California

Magistrate Judge Barbara A. McAuliffe received the 2025 Justice Pauline Davis Hanson Award, Fresno County Women Lawyers Association. The award is “bestowed upon a deserving Fresno County attorney or legal professional who has made strides

to advance the position of women in the legal community.” It is given in honor of Justice Pauline Davis Hanson, the first woman judge appointed in Fresno County in 1977 and the first woman justice appointed to the California Fifth District Court of Appeal in 1980. The award was presented in Fresno, California, on Oct. 9, 2025.

Senior District Judge William B. Shubb was honored by the Eastern District of California for his continuing service to the district, now spanning more than 60 years. The district renamed and dedicated the ceremonial courtroom, now named the Honorable William B. Shubb Ceremonial Courtroom, at the Robert T. Matsui Federal Courthouse in Sacramento on Nov. 5, 2025. The date held special significance, marking the 35th anniversary of Judge Shubb’s first trial as a federal district court judge. The Honorable William B. Shubb Ceremonial Courtroom recognizes Judge Shubb’s unparalleled institutional knowledge, profound commitment to justice, and his entire career devoted to serving the Eastern District of California—a legacy that represents the highest ideals of judicial service.

Northern District of California

Senior District Judge Maxine Chesney received the 2025 Judge D. Lowell and Barbara Jensen Public Service Award from Berkeley Law at a dinner held in Berkeley, California, on May 31, 2025. The award is “given to a prominent UC Berkeley law graduate who has demonstrated outstanding dedication to public service in the legal profession.”

Senior District Judge William H. Orrick received the Excellence in Ethics in Complex Litigation Award, Center for Litigation and the Courts, UC Law San Francisco. The award honors “professionals who have made extraordinary contributions to the effective functioning of complex litigation over the course of their careers and who, in doing so, have acted with extraordinary integrity.” The award was presented at the university’s Complex Litigation Ethics Conference held Oct. 10, 2025, in San Francisco.

District Judge Trina L. Thompson received the 2025 Honoree Lifetime Achievement Award from Berkeley Law Students of African Descent (LSAD) on March 14, 2025. The award recognizes “the outstanding work done by legal professionals in our community and the achievements of individuals who have made significant contributions to the legal industry.”

Magistrate Judge Kandis Westmore received the 2025 Hon. Sandra Brown Armstrong ‘77 Alumni Award from University of San Francisco School of Law in December 2025, and the Guardian of Justice Award from the Charles Houston Bar Association in May 2025.

District Judge Noël Wise received the Jurist of Distinction Award, Women Lawyers of Alameda County, presented annually to a member of the judiciary who has demonstrated exemplary service, dedication to advancing women in the law, and a steadfast commitment to justice.

Southern District of California

Senior District Judge Anthony J. Battaglia received the 2025 Presidential Certificate of Recognition for Civics & Civility from San Diego County Bar Association at SDCBA's Membership Gala held Dec. 5, 2025. Judge Battaglia was recognized for "over 30 years of service to the community continually supporting civics, civility, and the rule of law."

District Judge Cathy Ann Bencivengo was recognized as outgoing president, Ninth Circuit District Judges Association, at the association's business meeting held at the 2025 Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference in Monterey, California.

Magistrate Judge Michael S. Berg, Special Director's Award for Civility, Board of Directors of the San Diego Criminal Defense Bar Association. Judge Berg received the award "for consistently demonstrating exceptional professionalism, respect, and fairness in the courtroom and promoting civility in the profession."

Magistrate Judge Allison H. Goddard and Magistrate Judge Michelle M. Pettit received the Justice in Action Award from the South Asian Bar Association of San Diego at their Annual Gala on Sept. 27, 2025. "The first-ever SABA-SD Justice in Action Award honors individuals and organizations whose hands-on leadership and service have measurably advanced an SABA-SD initiative and lifted our San Diego legal community. Celebrating tangible

impact, sustained dedication, and collaboration, this award recognizes those who turn vision into action." Judges Goddard and Pettit were recognized for their support of the Afghan Outreach Project, which supports refugees from the Afghan legal community by helping them make connections and find employment in the San Diego legal community. They shared the award with law clerks Sarah Almond Pike, Eleanor Rune, and Michael L. Menna, and Ninth Circuit Lawyer Representatives Brandon Kimura and Kristin Mihelic.

Senior District Judge John A. Houston received the following awards:

2025 Outstanding Jurist Service Award, San Diego County Bar Association. Presented in San Diego in May 2025.

Legacy Award, Pan Asian Lawyers of San Diego (PALSD), for mentoring support of PALSD Law Students and Lawyers. Presented in May 2025.

President's Award, The Earl B. Gilliam Bar Association, for support provided to the president and board of directors of the Earl B. Gilliam Bar Association. Presented in November 2025.

The Leadership Excellence Award, The Ebony Pearl's Foundation of San Diego, Inc., Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and Epsilon XI Omega Chapter. Presented in Vista, California, in September 2025, this "community impact award" was given to Judge Houston for his outstanding efforts to advance equity in justice.

Chief District Judge Dana M. Sabraw received the following awards:

2025 Lifetime Achievement Award, National Asian Pacific Islander Prosecutors' Association (NAPIPA), presented on Sept. 13, 2025.

2025 Pillar and Pioneer Award, Philippine American Business Improvement and Development Organization (Phil Am BID), presented on Nov. 15, 2025.

Judicial Service Award, Federal Bar Association, San Diego Chapter, presented on May 13, 2025.

District Judge Janis L. Sammartino received the 2025 Judge David M. Gill Pillar of the Legal Community Award. The award was presented on Oct. 11, 2025, at the 41st annual Red Boudreau Trial Lawyers' Dinner by the Consumer Attorneys of San Diego, the San Diego Defense Lawyers and the American Board of Trial Advocates. The award is bestowed to a judge for their outstanding commitment to the San Diego legal community over the course of their career.

District of Idaho

Magistrate Judge Debora K. Grasham received the Idaho State Bar's Service Award presented during the bar's 100th anniversary celebration on July 16, 2025. The award was presented to Judge Grasham "in recognition of exemplary service to the legal profession and to Idaho citizens." Judge Grasham was also the editor of a book detailing the history of the practice of law in Idaho, entitled "Tents to Towers:

the history of the practice of law in Idaho.” It was a project, 20 years in the making, that Judge Grasham and a team completed in time for the bar’s 100th anniversary celebration.

District of Oregon

Recalled Magistrate Judge John A. Jelderks received the Lifetime Service Award from the Oregon U.S. District Court Historical Society at their annual dinner on Nov. 6, 2025.

Chief District Judge Michael J. McShane received the Lane County Bar Association Distinguished Service Award on April 9, 2025. The award honors “an individual who has provided extraordinary service to the legal profession and people of Lane County.”



Idaho Court of Appeals Judge Jessica Lorello and Magistrate Judge Debora K. Grasham with the “Tents to Towers” book at the anniversary celebration.

Eastern District of Washington

Chief Bankruptcy Judge Whitman L. Holt was inducted as a Fellow in the American College of Bankruptcy, which is a national, invitation-only organization that recognizes exceptional bankruptcy professionals for excellence in their work, their contributions to the administration of justice, their public service, and their integrity.

Western District of Washington

Senior District Judge James L. Robart was recognized for his years of service on the Whiteman College Board of Trustees, including eight years as board chair. A new upper-class student dormitory, Robart Hall, at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington, was named after him on Nov. 9, 2025. 🏛️

Committee Highlights

Court of Appeals Artificial Intelligence Committee

The Court of Appeals Artificial Intelligence Committee, chaired by Circuit Judge Eric D. Miller, hosted a special training session on “Generative AI in Chambers” in October. Committee member Magistrate Judge Allison H. Goddard, of the Southern District of California, presented. Judges, law clerks and staff received an overview of generative AI and related tools. The AI Committee continues to explore ways in which artificial intelligence can be safely used in the courts.



Court of Appeals Appellate Lawyer Representatives Committee

The Appellate Lawyer Representatives Committee, chaired by attorney Johanna Schiavoni of the Southern District of California, completed a two-year CLE tour of the circuit in December. Appellate lawyer representatives in Phoenix, Las Vegas, San Diego, San Francisco, Pasadena, Seattle and Portland produced CLE materials tailored to the needs and interest of each local bar.

Ad Hoc Committee on the Jury Trial Procedures Manual

The Ad Hoc Committee on the Jury Trial Procedures Manual, chaired by District Judge Michael H. Simon of the District of Oregon, published the sixth edition of the “Ninth Circuit Judges’ Trial Manual” to assist trial judges. In addition to updating the manual, new topics and information have been provided, and the scope has been expanded to all civil and criminal trials, both bench and jury.

Senior District Judge Marsha J. Pechman, Western District of Washington, guides participants through the creation of plans for dealing with high-profile cases at their courthouses during the 2025 Trial Summit. The summit was organized by the Ninth Circuit Trial Improvement Committee.

Magistrate Judges Executive Board

The Magistrate Judges Executive Board published the fourth edition of “Carpe Data: A Magistrate Judge’s Guide to Electronic-Information Requests in Criminal Cases.” District Judge Andrew G. Schopler, a former U.S magistrate judge in the Southern District of California, and law clerk Wendell M. Alford provided primary authorship.

Ninth Circuit Education Committee

The Ninth Circuit Education Committee, with support from the Federal Judicial Center, held a Mid-Winter Workshop for circuit and district judges in January in San Diego. The workshop is held every other year and provides education

and training for Article III judges. District Judge Daniel J. Calabretta, of the Eastern District of California, succeeded Circuit Judge Daniel A. Bress as chair of the committee on Oct. 1, 2025.

Pacific Islands Committee

The Pacific Islands Committee, chaired by Senior Circuit Judge M. Margaret McKeown, coordinated and funded several judicial training programs with the assistance in partnership with the Pacific Judicial Council. These trainings included “Enhancing Judicial Performance Through Stress Management and Focused Decision-Making” in Yap, “Case Management for Judges and Chief Clerks” in Kosrae, the Pacific Judicial Council Mid-Year Training in Saipan, and a Trial Advocacy Training in Pohnpei.

Additionally, mediator training was provided in Palau with the assistance of two magistrate judges on the committee. The Marshall Islands Community Court Conference and 22 scholarships were funded for specialized training in the Pacific region as well as in the mainland U.S.

Public Information and Community Outreach Committee

The Public Information and Community Outreach Committee, chaired by Senior District Judge John A. Kronstadt of the Central District of California, sponsored the 2025 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest—an annual essay and video contest for high school students throughout the circuit. The contest theme was “When Duty Calls: Why Exercising the Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship is Important to Me.” Students submitted 885 essay entries and 126 video entries. See page 45 for more information.

Trial Improvement Committee

The Trial Improvement Committee, chaired by District Judge Jennifer A. Dorsey of the District of Nevada, held the 2025 Trial Summit at the Sandra Day O’Connor U.S. Courthouse in Phoenix in April. The 1 1/2-day summit brought together federal judges, court leadership and jury administration staff throughout the circuit who heard from experts in fields related to juries and trials.


Tribal and Native Relations Committee

The Tribal and Native Relations Committee, chaired by District Judge Diane J. Humetewa of the District of Arizona, held a virtual “Pro bono Work to Empower and Represent Act,” or POWER Act, webinar on September 16. A total of 240 judges, lawyers, and tribal and state service providers attended. The POWER Act aims to shine a light on the problems of domestic violence in communities as well as the disproportionate violence suffered by Native American and Alaska Native women. The Act requires that the chief judge, or his or her designee, of each judicial district hold two events “promoting pro bono legal services as a critical way in which to empower survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking and engage citizens in assisting those survivors.” One must be an annual event held “in partnership with a State, local, tribal or territorial domestic violence service provider or coalition and a State or local volunteer lawyer project” and the other must be a biennial event held in judicial districts “that contains an Indian tribe or tribal organization.” POWER Act programs also highlight the opportunities to provide pro bono legal services to domestic violence victims.

Wellness Committee

The Wellness Committee’s 2025 spring issue of its newsletter, *Courting Good Health*, was dedicated to hearing loss as a matter of public health and how it affects judges and their work. The committee undertook the project to illuminate the causes of hearing loss, its impact on professional and personal relationships, and effective treatments for the condition. Some judges with hearing loss contributed to this special edition. The Wellness Committee was chaired by Senior District Judge Phyllis J. Hamilton of the Northern District of California from 2010 until Oct. 1, 2025, when District Judge Anne R. Traum of the District of Nevada succeeded Judge Hamilton as chair.

The Wellness Committee sponsored the Chief Judges Biennial Training on Cognitive Issues, held in July at the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference in Monterey, California. Chief judges received training from Dr. Bruce L. Miller, director of the Memory and Aging Center at the University of California, San Francisco, on innovations and research related to cognitive impairment.

The Wellness Committee also welcomed two consulting medical professionals (CMPs), Dr. Rebecca Allen and Dr. Jake Roth. The CMPs staff the Private Assistance Line Service (PALS), and both are board certified in psychiatry with extensive experience in leadership, clinical care, education and research. PALS is a confidential telephone service designed to support all judges in the Ninth Circuit. Callers receive consultation, referral services and expert guidance on a wide range of issues affecting judges. 



U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit


Total filings in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit increased by 17.2%, up from 8,145 in fiscal year 2024 to 9,544 in FY 2025, making up 22.8% of 41,824 filings received by federal courts of appeals nationwide. The Ninth Circuit terminated 8,189 cases, up .5% from 8,150 in FY 2024 to 8,189 in FY 2025, making up 20.3% of 40,411 cases terminated nationwide.

Median time intervals measure how long it takes for cases decided on the merits to proceed through the appellate process. In FY 2025, the Ninth Circuit's median time interval in months for cases terminated on the merits from filing of a notice of appeal to final disposition was 11.9 months, down from 12.7 months in FY 2024. The median time interval from the filing of a case in a lower court to last opinion or final order in the Ninth Circuit was 32 months; the national average was 33.9 months in FY 2025. In FY 2025 the median time interval for oral arguments to last opinion or final order was 1.4 months, a little under two months than the national average of 3.2 months in FY 2025.

Ninth Circuit district courts, which serve as trial courts in the federal judicial system, accounted for 17.6% or 5,679 of all new appeals originating from district courts nationwide which totaled 32,204 in FY 2025. Of the total filings in the circuit, 4,755 were civil appeals and 924 were criminal appeals.

Filings originating from administrative agencies numbered 3,166 or 33.2% of total filings in the

circuit, and 2,910 or 92% of those filings involved immigration.

En banc courts, which consist of 11 judges rather than three, are convened quarterly to resolve intra-circuit conflicts of law or other legal questions of exceptional importance. During FY 2025, the court received 730 petitions seeking en banc review, an increase of 17.9% from FY 2024 when 619 petitions were received. 

Appellate Caseload Profile

Caseload Measure	2023	2024	2025	Change 2024-2025
Filings	7,784	8,145	9,544	17.2%
Terminations	8,581	8,150	8,189	0.5%

Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals En Banc Ballots

Year	Petitions Filed for Rehearing En Banc	En Banc Ballots Sent	Grants of Rehearing En Banc Following A Vote	Denials of Rehearing En Banc Following A Vote
2025	730	30	11	19
2024	619	28	11	17
2023	650	30	14	16

Median Time Intervals in Months for Cases Terminated on the Merits

By Stage of Appeal	Ninth Circuit 2025	National 2025
¹ From Filing of Notice of Appeal or Docket Date to Filing of Appellee's Last Brief	6.7	6.0
From Filing of Appellee's Last Brief to Oral Argument or Submission on Briefs	5.6	4.4
From Oral Argument to Last Opinion or Final Order	1.4	3.2
From Submission on Briefs to Last Opinion or Final Order	0.0	0.3
¹ From Filing of Notice of Appeal or Docket Date to Last Opinion or Final Order	11.9	9.9
From Filing in Lower Court to Last Opinion or Final Order in Appeals Court	32.0	33.9

Note: This table does not include data for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. Beginning in March 2014, data include miscellaneous applications not included previously. Cases terminated include appeals, original proceedings and miscellaneous applications.


¹ Docket date is used when computing the mean time intervals for original proceedings, miscellaneous applications and appeals from administrative agencies.

District Courts in the Ninth Circuit

“U.S. district courts are the primary trial courts of the federal court system that conduct trials and hearings. District courts resolve disputes by determining the facts and applying the law to those facts. Within limits set by Congress and the U.S. Constitution, district courts have jurisdiction to hear nearly all categories of federal civil and criminal cases.”¹

In fiscal year 2025, Ninth Circuit district courts reported 72,629 filings, or 19.6% of the total district court filings nationwide, ranking first in the nation. Total nationwide filings were 370,579 in FY 2025.

Total civil filings nationwide numbered 303,563, while total criminal filings numbered 67,016 in FY 2025. The circuit ranked first in total civil filings and ranked second in total criminal filings nationwide in FY 2025, with 55,430 cases and 17,199 cases, respectively.

Ninth Circuit district courts terminated 65,161 civil and criminal cases in FY 2025, a slight decrease of .6% from 65,577 cases terminated in FY 2024, ranking second in the nation for total cases terminated. Criminal cases terminated in the circuit increased by 6.9%, while civil cases terminated decreased by 3.1%. Civil and criminal cases terminated nationwide were 476,110. 

¹ United States Courts, About U.S. District Courts, <https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure/about-us-district-courts> (page last accessed 3/10/2026).

U.S. District Courts - Total Civil and Criminal Cases Commenced

District	Civil 2025	Criminal 2025
Alaska	411	113
Arizona	5,767	8,936
C. Calif.	17,755	1,036
E. Calif.	5,493	286
N. Calif.	10,679	268
S. Calif.	3,450	4,353
Guam	46	20
Hawaii	629	122
Idaho	749	292
Montana	744	381
Nevada	3,047	186
Northern Mariana Islands	15	13
Oregon	2,240	434
E. Wash.	892	327
W. Wash.	3,513	432
Circuit Total	55,430	17,199

U.S. District Courts - Total Civil and Criminal Cases Filed and Terminated

Caseload Measure	2023	2024	2025	Change 2024-2025
Civil Filings	45,131	47,916	55,430	15.7%
Criminal Filings	10,802	16,493	17,199	4.3%
Total Filings	55,933	64,409	72,629	12.8%
Civil Terminations	43,002	49,348	47,815	-3.1%
Criminal Terminations	11,410	16,229	17,346	6.9%
Total Terminations	54,412	65,577	65,161	-0.6%

Bankruptcy Courts in the Ninth Circuit

“All bankruptcy cases are handled in federal courts under rules outlined in the U.S. Bankruptcy Code.”ⁱ Cases include those filed by individuals, municipalities, businesses, family farmers and fishermen, and cases that involve parties from more than one country, and these different types of bankruptcies are usually referred to by their chapter in the U.S. Bankruptcy Code.ⁱⁱ

Bankruptcy courts in the Ninth Circuit ranked second in the nation with the most total filings reported, 95,430, in fiscal year

2025, up 14.2% from FY 2024, when total filings numbered 83,597. Bankruptcy courts nationwide reported 557,376 total filings in FY 2025, up 10.6% from FY 2024. Ninth Circuit bankruptcy courts accounted for 17.1% of total bankruptcy filings in the nation.

The U.S. Bankruptcy Court in the Central District of California, the largest bankruptcy court in the nation covering “approximately 40,000 square miles and stretches from the Central Coast area of the state eastward to the Nevada and Arizona borders,”ⁱⁱⁱ ranked first in the nation with the most total

Ninth Circuit Bankruptcy Courts

Caseload	2023	2024	2025	Change 2024-2025
Filings	66,568	83,597	95,430	14.2%
Terminations	68,374	80,398	91,591	13.9%

Ninth Circuit Bankruptcy Courts Cases Commenced

District	2025 Total Filings
Alaska	209
Arizona	12,425
C. Calif.	28,485
E. Calif.	12,337
N. Calif.	6,397
S. Calif.	5,457
Guam	28
Hawaii	1,171
Idaho	2,347
Montana	766
Nevada	8,993
N. Mariana Is.	0
Oregon	7,731
E. Wash	2,273
W. Wash.	6,811
Circuit Total	95,430

Business and Nonbusiness Bankruptcy Cases Commenced by Chapter of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code

Predominant Nature of Debt	2023	2024	2025	Change 2024-2025
Business Filings				
Chapter 7	2,240	2,937	3,291	12.1%
Chapter 11	765	965	1,010	4.7%
Chapter 13	260	304	241	-20.7%
¹ Other Chapters	22	47	44	-6.4%
Nonbusiness Filings				
Chapter 7	49,472	63,091	74,099	17.4%
Chapter 11	110	120	162	35.0%
Chapter 13	13,699	16,133	16,583	2.8%
Total	66,568	83,597	95,430	14.2%

NOTE: The nature of debt is business if the debtor is a corporation or partnership, or if debt related to the operation of a business predominates. Nonbusiness debt includes consumer debt, as defined in Section 101 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code, or other debt that the debtor indicates is not consumer debt or business debt. The United States territorial courts assume the jurisdiction of the U.S. bankruptcy courts within their respective territories, which do not have separate bankruptcy courts.


¹Other Chapters includes cases filed under—FY2025: Chapters 9 (2), 12 (32) and 15 (10); FY 2024: Chapters 9 (0), 12 (30) and 15 (17); and FY 2023: Chapter 9 (1), 12 (0) and 15 (4).

bankruptcy filings reported in FY 2025. The district's total was 28,485 bankruptcy filings, up 14% in FY 2025, and accounted for 29.8% of total bankruptcy filings in the Ninth Circuit and 5.1% nationwide.

Total bankruptcy cases terminated in the Ninth Circuit rose in FY 2025 with 91,591 cases terminated, up 13.9% from FY 2024. Total percentage increase of bankruptcy cases terminated in the Ninth

Circuit was higher when compared to total percentage increase of bankruptcy cases terminated nationwide at 8.5%.

Business and nonbusiness filings in the Ninth Circuit totaled 95,430, up 14.2% from FY 2024, when filings were 83,597. Chapter 7 business filings were the most numerous of the business filings with 3,291 cases, up 12.1% from FY 2024, while Chapter 13 nonbusiness filings

were the most numerous of the nonbusiness filings with 16,583 cases, up 2.8%. 

ⁱUnited States Courts, Bankruptcy, <https://www.uscourts.gov/court-programs/bankruptcy> (page last accessed 2/19/2026).

ⁱⁱ *ibid.*

ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Central District of California, <https://www.cacb.uscourts.gov/about-court> (page last accessed 2/19/2026).

U.S. Bankruptcy Appellate Panel of the Ninth Circuit

The Bankruptcy Appellate Panel (BAP) operates under the authority of the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit to hear appeals from the bankruptcy courts of the circuit. All district courts within the Ninth Circuit have issued general orders providing for the automatic referral of bankruptcy appeals to the BAP. However, if any party files a timely election, the appeal is transferred to the appropriate district court according to the consent rule.

Six bankruptcy judges from the circuit are appointed to serve seven-year terms on the BAP; each BAP judge may be reappointed to an additional three-year term. In their appellate capacity, BAP judges are precluded from hearing matters arising from the districts in which they are designated to hear bankruptcy cases.

New Filings

For the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025, 434 new bankruptcy appeals were filed in the circuit, a 9% increase when compared to FY 2024. The BAP handled 47% of all bankruptcy appeals and the district courts handled 53%.

New Bankruptcy Appeal Filings

District	Bankruptcy Appellate Panel	District Court ¹	Total
Alaska	1	0	1
Arizona	7	13	20
C. Calif.	73	88	161
E. Calif.	26	9	35
N. Calif.	29	33	62
S. Calif.	11	16	27
Hawaii	7	11	18
Idaho	1	4	5
Montana	1	5	6
Nevada	23	22	45
Oregon	10	2	12
E. Wash.	4	14	18
W. Wash.	12	12	24
Total	205 (47%)	229 (53%)	434

¹The numbers for bankruptcy appeals to the district courts are taken directly from a statistical caseload table prepared by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts. The number for bankruptcy appeals to the BAP are calculated based on data from Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts tables and on data from the BAP's Case Management/Electronic Case Files, or CM/ECF, docketing system. The district court numbers include all appeals in which a timely election was made to have the appeal heard in the district court (both appellant and appellee elections) as well as other cases transferred in the interest of justice. The BAP numbers exclude all such appeals.

Ninth Circuit Bankruptcy Appeal Filings, 2023-2025

Year	Bankruptcy Appeals Total	Raw Bankruptcy Appeals Received by BAP ¹	Net Bankruptcy Appeals BAP ²	Net Bankruptcy Appeals District Court ³	Election Rate ⁴	Percentage of Appeals Heard by BAP
FY 2023	410	217	177	233	57%	43%
FY 2024	398	207	183	215	54%	46%
FY 2025	434	238	205	229	53%	47%

¹Number of new appellate filings received and opened as new case files at the BAP Clerk’s Office. This figure includes some appeals where an appellee files an election and the appeal thereafter is transferred to district court. (Where a timely election is made by an appellant, the bankruptcy court generally bypasses the BAP and refers the appeal directly to the district court.)

²The number of raw bankruptcy appeals received by BAP less the number of appeals transferred from BAP to district court by election or other transfer.

³Includes the number of all bankruptcy appeals received by district court either referred directly from the bankruptcy court or transferred from the BAP.

⁴Percentage of bankruptcy appeals where one or more parties timely elected to have their appeal heard in district court.

Dispositions

The BAP disposed of 227 appeals, up 27% over FY 2024. Of those, 76 appeals were merits terminations. Oral argument was held in 70 appeals. Six appeals were submitted on briefs. The BAP published 14 opinions, 17% of merits decisions. The reversal rate was 4%. The percentage of cases either reversed or remanded was 17%. The median time for an appeal decided on the merits was 8.5 months. Of the remaining 151 closed cases, 33 were transferred to the district courts after appellee elections or

in the interest of justice. A total of 118 appeals were terminated on procedural grounds, such as lack of prosecution, lack of jurisdiction, or voluntary dismissal. The BAP ended FY 2025 with 125 appeals pending, up 10% compared to FY ending 2024.

Pro Se Appeals

BAP pro se filings equaled 57% of new appeals in FY 2025. Fifty-six percent of BAP cases closed were initiated by pro se parties. At fiscal year end, the BAP pro se caseload equaled 61% of pending appeals.

Appeals to the Ninth Circuit

Appeals from a bankruptcy decision of either the BAP or a district court may be filed with the court of appeals for second-level appellate review. In FY 2025, 108 second-level appeals were filed, down 10% compared to FY 2024. Of these, 39 were appeals from decisions by the BAP and 69 were from decisions by the district courts. Thus, of the 227 appeals that were disposed of by the BAP, roughly 83% were fully resolved with only 17% seeking second-level review. 🏛️

NOTE: Detailed statistical tables of the work of the U.S. court of appeals, district courts and bankruptcy courts, as well as the federal probation and pretrial services system are available on the U.S. Courts website at <https://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/reports/statistical-reports/statistical-tables-federal-judiciary> (page last accessed 3/27/2026).

U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services in the Ninth Circuit

OVERVIEW

The work of a U.S. probation or pretrial services officer has never been more challenging. Years of significant budget reductions have placed pressure on officers as they carry out their public safety functions, strive to help those under supervision make positive changes, and serve the court by producing accurate and timely reports. Despite these challenges, probation and pretrial officers throughout the Ninth Circuit continue to take pride in their work and fulfill their mission to serve the federal courts and the public by helping ensure the fair administration of justice and protecting the community.

Pretrial services officers investigate defendants charged with federal crimes, recommend to the court whether to release or detain them, and supervise those who are released to the community while awaiting trial. Using the least restrictive supervision strategies and interventions, pretrial services officers monitor defendant compliance with court ordered conditions of release, attempt to minimize the likelihood of re-arrest, and increase the likelihood defendants make all required court appearances. Pretrial services officers also conduct pretrial diversion investigations and prepare written reports regarding a diversion candidate's suitability for the Office of the U.S. Attorney's Pretrial Diversion Program. They are also responsible for supervision of diverted individuals who are deemed appropriate and accepted into the program.

Probation officers assist the court by preparing thorough presentence reports to assist the judicial officer in making sentencing decisions. In a presentence report, the officer provides a summary of the offense conduct, describes a defendant's personal and criminal history, and applies the sentencing guidelines. Following sentencing, officers provide community supervision for individuals serving a term of probation, supervised release or parole. They strive to implement an evidence-based approach to supervision aimed at reducing the person under supervision's risk of recidivism and providing them with a meaningful opportunity to change. Supervision officers also must enforce court-ordered conditions and hold those under supervision accountable to protect the public.

PROBATION & PRETRIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Evidence-Based Practices

Evidence-based practices (EBPs) have been found through research to enhance overall desired outcomes. The desired outcomes of the pretrial services functions are to reasonably assure defendants do not pose either a risk of non-appearance or danger to the community. For post-conviction supervision, officers strive to reduce risk of recidivism in those they supervise to protect the public from the impacts of future criminal activity.

Pretrial services officers continue to utilize the Pretrial Services Risk Assessment (PTRA) tool, designed to be an objective, quantifiable

instrument that provides a consistent and valid method of predicting risk of failure-to-appear, new criminal arrest, and technical violations leading to revocation while on pretrial release. For post-conviction supervision, officers utilize the Post-Conviction Risk Assessment (PCRA), which has been validated to predict risk of re-arrest and the risk of violent re-offending. The PTRA also provides the officer with dynamic risk factors on which officers can focus to reduce recidivism risks.

Districts continue to implement Staff Training Aimed at Reducing Re-Arrest (STARR), which is a set of interpersonal skills rooted in cognitive behavioral therapy principles. STARR helps officers integrate evidence-based decision making into meetings with defendants that forge more effective relationships; help defendants manage and change behavior; and use specific interventions to increase the likelihood of long-term changes in thinking and behavior. Further, officers are trained to teach those under supervision cognitive skills to improve pro-social decision-making and problem solving.

Officer Safety Incidents

Probation and pretrial officers' routine presence in the community and serving in their unique law enforcement capacity can carry safety risks, particularly in today's volatile circumstances. Officer safety incidents declined slightly in 2025, but with a three-year average of 77 incidents per year, safety concerns remain of paramount importance. The two most commonly occurring

types of incidents are intimidation and animal-related threats. In the past year within the circuit, there were five instances of verbal or written threats to an officer, 12 instances of intimidation, 10 animal attacks, nine vehicle-related incidents, and one attempted physical attack on an officer.

Staff Wellness Initiatives

Retention of top talent has continued to be a challenge in many districts, increasing the importance of preventing burnout and addressing staff wellness issues. U.S. probation offices in the circuit are being intentional about attempting to help mitigate the impacts of stress, foster resilience, and provide support, with most recent efforts focusing on Stress First Aid (SFA) and the expansion of Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM).

Offices sent staff to become local trainers in SFA, which aims to take a preventative approach centering on mitigating the impacts of stress. Further, SFA seeks to destigmatize discussions around wellness and provide staff with a common vocabulary to enable better triage of the severity of impacts. Several districts have moved forward with implementation.

CISM is a set of specialized interventions to be deployed in the event of a critical incident, an officer safety event, staff exposure to trauma, or following a natural disaster. CISM as a model is not new to the circuit, and in 2025, the District of Nevada hosted the Quad-State CISM Training for Peer Support and CISM team members from Idaho, Nevada, Utah, and newest member district, Montana.

The team rotates yearly training, budget permitting, to stay prepared to deploy to assist a district in need following a critical incident. Also in 2025, an additional regional team formed consisting of staff from probation offices in the Districts of Hawaii, Guam, Alaska, and Arizona, with the District of Hawaii hosting certification training for team members.

Rising Treatment Costs

Since FY 2022, treatment costs have risen roughly 9.6% in the probation and pretrial services system with the biggest increases being seen in the sex offender treatment costs, which have risen 15.4% during the same period. Rising costs present challenges, as when districts face a shortage in treatment accounts, funds to resolve the shortage must be funneled from salaries and other discretionary spending.

DISTRICT UPDATES

Central District of California

The district's Cyber-Investigation Unit (CIU) assists districts with advanced capabilities in forensic examination of electronic devices for investigative purposes. The CIU team operates one of four forensic labs in the country and currently has Memorandums of Understanding to provide forensic services to 15 other districts. The CIU also aids the Cybercrime Management Focus Group of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts' Probation and Pretrial Services Office.

The district partnered with the California Workforce Development Board, which was awarded a \$4-million grant by the Department

of Labor for "Partners for Reentry Opportunities in Workforce Development (PROWD) initiative." 200 individuals under supervision were served through the PROWD program via federal Residential Reentry Centers (RRCs) in the Central District of California (Los Angeles County) and Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) Terminal Island. The partnership expanded with community agencies in other counties that were also awarded the PROWD program grant, collaborating with Family Assistance Program which provides services in Victorville's FCI and the Inland Empire RRC. The district's largest office now has direct referral access to the program for additional employment and housing assistance.

The district's Workforce Development Committee, along with community agencies, hosted eight district wide Job and Resource Fairs from June to September 2025. Nearly 300 persons under supervision attended and over 80 community agencies participated. Supervisees were provided resume building tips, submitted job applications, received information about school enrollment, as well as additional basic need resources including mental health and housing services.

District of Hawaii

A veteran developer in the District of Hawaii is working on high-impact electronic learning modules to produce job-specific training designed to meet the training needs of all positions from interns to probation clerks and from line officers to chiefs, addressing training gaps within the district and in the probation system.

District of Montana

In August 2025, the District of Montana hosted the National Indian Country Conference in Missoula, bringing together participants from 15 U.S. probation districts, tribal leaders, educators, treatment providers and community partners. The conference focused on culturally responsive supervision, strengthening tribal partnerships, and understanding the historical and intergenerational factors affecting individuals under supervision in Indian Country. Sessions emphasized trust-building, integrating cultural knowledge into supervision, and collaboration with tribal justice systems, with focused discussions on sex offense management, substance use treatment, and the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous people.

SPECIALTY COURT PROGRAMS

Central District of California

The Conviction and Sentence Alternatives (CASA) Program is a collaboration between the U.S. District Court, U.S. Attorney's Office, U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services Office (USPPSO), and the Federal Public Defender's Office. In addition, licensed social workers and mental health clinicians are active members of the CASA Team. It is a post-guilty-plea diversion program that offers a creative blend of treatment, sanction alternatives, and incentives to address behavior, support rehabilitation, and ensure community safety. In 2025, the four CASA courts held several graduation ceremonies for participants who successfully completed the program.



Central District of California's CASA program team and participants at a CASA session at the U.S. Courthouse in Los Angeles.

Probation and Pretrial Services CASA team members were selected to participate in the Federal Judicial Center-hosted workshop on Science-Informed Decision Making. The workshop was held at Harvard Law School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in June 2025. District Judge Hernán D. Vera, Magistrate Judge Alka Sagar, USPPSO Deputy Chief Jamille Nicholas, Supervisor Devona Gardner and Specialist Theodore Cha were in attendance. The objective of this workshop was to learn how scientific insights can be applied at key decision points in all stages of the federal criminal justice system. The workshop supported competencies for district and magistrate judges, as well as experienced probation and pretrial services officers. In addition to the two-day workshop, there was a follow-up session that was attended by USPPSO staff.

In August and September 2025, five members of the CASA and STARR Courts visited the District of Utah's Mental Health Court and the Eastern District of Missouri's Re-entry, Pretrial, and Gang Courts. These court visitations included participation in pre-meeting sessions, opportunities to discuss guidelines, and meet with judicial

officers, treatment providers, and other team members. They were not only informative but also beneficial for examining our own processes to ensure ongoing success.

Eastern District of California

The Better Choices Court (BCC) program in the Eastern District of California continues to operate following its implementation in 2010. The program is a collaboration between the U.S. District Court, the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Federal Public Defender's Office and pretrial services. There are two BCC courts operating monthly in the district at the direction of U.S. Magistrate Judges Jeremy D. Peterson (Sacramento) and Erica P. Grosjean (Fresno). BCC is an alternative to detention program, and it provides treatment and sanction alternatives to address both behavior and rehabilitation, as well as the safety of the community. The program continues to have participants consistently graduate throughout each year.

Southern District of California

The Southern District of California has operated the longest running pretrial diversion program in the Ninth Circuit commencing in

November 2010. The Alternative to Prison Solutions Diversion (APSD) program's primary goal of utilizing an early intervention approach to reduce recidivism has historically yielded favorable results. During 2025, 111 participants entered the program with 95% of participants graduating successfully from the program. Additionally, the Southern District of California operates a Veteran's Treatment Court. Formed in 2016, it offers an alternative to conviction and incarceration for veterans who suffer from significant service-related injuries and entered the federal criminal justice system. In 2025, there were six veterans who entered the program with 100% of participants graduating from the program successfully.

District of Nevada

In 2025, the District of Nevada's Recovery, Inspiration, Support & Excellence (RISE) program reached its five-year anniversary as a permanent court program. This court-led, treatment-centered program targets defendants with a documented substance use disorder that is associated with their involvement in the criminal justice system. Nine individuals participated in the RISE program throughout 2025, and individual graduation ceremonies were held for three participants. Graduation from RISE signifies the successful completion of months of rigorous effort, including a final graduation project, and results in the dismissal of the pending charges. A meaningful hallmark of the program is the presence of past graduates, who return to celebrate new graduates, demonstrating their ongoing support for current participants and the program.



U.S. Pretrial Services of Eastern District of California with U.S. Magistrate Judge Jeremy D. Peterson, seated at center, during the Better Choices Court pre-meeting.

District of Oregon

The District of Oregon continues to operate its Court Assisted Pretrial Services (CAPS) program. CAPS provides resources and active supervision for criminal defendants whose criminal history, charged crimes, and other relevant data would make it unlikely for that defendant to be released based on typical considerations under the Bail Reform Act. CAPS involves collaboration between the defendant, the court, an assistant U.S. attorney, an assistant federal public defender and a pretrial services officer.

WORKLOAD

Case Activations

In fiscal year 2025, U.S. Pretrial Services in the Ninth Circuit activated 21,859 new cases, representing a 3.8% increase in activations. Comparatively, case activations nationwide were 81,228, up 11.9% from FY 2024. In FY 2025, the Ninth Circuit ranked second in cases activated, accounting for 26.9% of all new cases.

Pretrial Bail Reports and Supervision

U.S. Pretrial Services in the Ninth Circuit ranked second nationally in pre-bail reports prepared which totaled 21,364. Pre-bail reports were completed in 97.7% of all cases activated. Excluding immigration cases, officers made recommendations for initial pretrial release to the court in 53.8% of cases, the highest rate of any circuit nationally, while assistant U.S. attorneys in the circuit recommended release in 39.7% of cases.

During FY 2025, 4,866 defendants were supervised by pretrial services, down 2.4% from the 4,985 defendants in FY 2024. Defendants who were supervised by pretrial services included 3,533 for regular supervision, 1,280 on a courtesy basis from another district or circuit, and 53 for pretrial diversion supervision, including courtesy supervision diversion cases.

Pretrial Services Caseload by District - Interviews and Types of Report

District	Interviewed	¹ Not Interviewed	² Prebail Written Report	Postbail Written Report	No Reports Made	Total Cases Activated 2024	Total Cases Activated 2025	Change 2024-2025
Alaska	76	95	162	1	8	209	171	-18.2%
Arizona	1,750	7,646	9,331	24	41	11,209	9,396	-16.2%
C. Calif.	2,032	116	2,127	14	7	1,377	2,148	56.0%
E. Calif.	221	216	424	8	5	433	437	0.9%
N. Calif.	246	186	289	135	8	555	432	-22.2%
S. Calif.	1,563	4,718	6,180	58	43	4,611	6,281	36.2%
Guam	35	5	40	0	0	49	40	-18.4%
Hawaii	137	26	153	0	10	105	163	55.2%
Idaho	155	183	330	0	8	351	338	-3.7%
Montana	346	195	523	12	6	471	541	14.9%
Nevada	196	107	299	0	4	342	303	-11.4%
N. Mariana Is.	22	0	21	0	1	29	22	-24.1%
Oregon	326	246	560	3	9	488	572	17.2%
E. Wash.	171	224	336	0	59	341	395	15.8%
W. Wash.	227	393	589	12	19	496	620	25.0%
Circuit Total	7,503	14,356	21,364	267	228	21,066	21,859	3.8%
National Total	42,281	38,947	76,158	1,683	3,387	72,587	81,228	11.9%
Circuit % of National	17.7%	36.9%	28.1%	15.9%	6.7%	29.0%	26.9%	-2.1%

Note: This table excludes data for the District of Columbia and includes transfers received.

¹Includes cases in which interviews were refused, includes defendants not available for interview, and includes transfer-received cases in which defendants were interviewed in other districts.

²Includes prebail reports both with recommendations and without, and includes types of report categorized in previous periods as "other reports."

Detention Summary

The Ninth Circuit detained 24,185 defendants during FY 2025. Defendants were detained an average of 278 days during this same period. The courts located along the U.S.-Mexico border, the Southern District of California and the District of Arizona, reported the highest number of defendants detained and collectively accounted for 69.9% of all defendants detained in the circuit. The Southern District of California detained 5,387 defendants, and the District of

Arizona detained 11,519 defendants. The Ninth Circuit accounted for 19.8% of the total days of defendant incarceration nationally.

Presentence Reports

U.S. probation offices in the Ninth Circuit submitted 10,478 presentence reports in 2025, representing an increase from the 9,603 reports completed last year. The number of reports submitted covers 15.7% of all reports submitted in the nation.

Post-Conviction Supervision

Total persons under post-conviction supervision by Ninth Circuit probation offices decreased slightly to 22,208 cases, down 4.5% from FY 2024 and still making up 18.6% of the total number in the nation. The Ninth Circuit has three of the five offices nationwide supervising the highest number of people in the District of Arizona, Central District of California and the Southern District of California.

Probation: Persons Under Post-Conviction Supervision by District

District	¹ Probation from Courts	Supervised Release from Institutions	² Parole from Institutions	³ BOP Custody from Institutions	Persons Under Supervision, 2024	Persons Under Supervision, 2025	Change 2024-2025
Alaska	31	314	1	0	334	346	3.6%
Arizona	929	3,815	13	0	4,715	4,757	0.9%
C. Calif.	498	4,622	15	0	5,472	5,135	-6.16%
E. Calif.	129	1,465	8	2	1,682	1,604	-4.6%
N. Calif.	140	1,368	2	2	1,486	1,512	1.7%
S. Calif.	189	3,125	2	0	3,820	3,316	-13.2%
Guam	9	69	0	0	83	78	-6.0%
Hawaii	22	345	2	3	424	372	-12.3%
Idaho	82	594	2	4	699	682	-2.4%
Montana	82	739	1	0	804	822	2.24%
Nevada	99	906	3	7	1,116	1,015	-9.1%
N. Mariana Is.	1	15	0	0	27	16	-40.7%
Oregon	92	903	5	17	1,032	1,017	-1.5%
E. Wash.	40	583	0	0	622	623	0.2%
W. Wash.	95	806	12	0	934	913	-2.2%
Circuit Total	2,438	19,669	66	35	23,250	22,208	-4.5%

¹Includes conditional release, probation and the former categories known as judge probation and magistrate judge probation.

²Includes parole, special parole, mandatory release and military parole.

³BOP accounts for Bureau of Prisons Federal Location Monitoring and Elderly Home Confinement (effective Jan. 26, 2020).

Early Termination

U.S. probation offices in the Ninth Circuit significantly increased their early terminations in FY 2025 with a total of 2,400 cases. The early terminations in the circuit make up 26% of the national total. The Southern District of California led the nation with 787 cases receiving early termination, and the District of Arizona followed with 591 cases. The estimated cost savings resulting from early terminations in the Ninth Circuit was \$15,894,242 for FY 2025.

OUTCOMES

Pretrial Services

Of the 10,917 cases in release status during FY 2025, cases with violations reported to the court numbered 1,795 or 16.4% of all cases in release status. They included 46 violations due to a felony rearrest, 56 violations due to a misdemeanor rearrest and 121 for failure to appear. The remaining violations included 1,685 technical violations for noncompliance with court ordered conditions of release, such as violations of location monitoring

conditions, positive urine tests for illegal substances, possession of contraband, or failure to report to a supervising officer. In the Ninth Circuit, the 16.4% of cases with violations remained unchanged from FY 2024 to FY 2025.

Probation

In 2025, a total of 10,417 post-conviction supervision cases were closed, with 35% of those due to revocation. Of the total cases that were closed, 41.9% had successful results, and 22.9% were closed due to early termination. 🏠

DETAILS OF WOODWORK

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