



NEWS RELEASE

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Steven G. Kalar Takes Oath as Federal Public Defender for Northern California

SAN FRANCISCO — Attorney Steven G. Kalar was sworn into office Tuesday as Federal Public Defender for the Northern District of California, becoming just the third person to serve in the position since the office was created in 1972.

Mr. Kalar took the oath of office in the Oakland chambers of Chief District Judge Claudia Wilken of the United States District Court for the Northern District of California. Present for the ceremony was a small group of other judges from the court, colleagues and family members.

Mr. Kalar, 46, succeeds Barry Portman, who held the post for 23 years before retiring on December 31, 2011. Geoffrey A. Hansen had served as acting defender since Mr. Portman's retirement. The Northern District's first Federal Public Defender was the late James F. Hewitt, who served from 1972 to 1988.

“The Court looks forward to a continuation of the excellent representation that the Federal Public Defender and his assistants have always provided to the indigent defendants in this district,” Judge Wilken said of the appointment of Mr. Kalar.

The Northern District of California stretches along the coast from Monterey County in the south to the Oregon border in the north. The Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Northern District has a staff of more than 60 employees working in San Francisco, Oakland and San Jose. The office, which represents 75 percent of the defendants in criminal actions in the district, opened 1,198 new cases in fiscal year 2011, up 4.4 percent from the prior reporting period.

Mr. Kalar has worked in the Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Northern District of California since 1998 and was promoted to senior litigator in 2003. In addition to carrying a full caseload, he had served as a training attorney and mentor to new

assistant federal defenders, and as a liaison and resource to the Northern District's Criminal Justice Act panel attorneys. He also co-chaired complex cases undertaken by the office and is closely involved in obtaining representation for federal capital habeas inmates in the Northern District.

Prior to his public service, Mr. Kalar worked briefly as an associate in the San Francisco office of Morrison & Foerster, LLP.

A native of Santa Rosa, California, Mr. Kalar received his A.B. in 1988 from Harvard University, graduating *cum laude*, and his J.D. in 1996 from the University of California, Hastings College of the Law, where he served as a board member and associate notes editor of the *Hastings International and Comparative Law Review*. After law school, he clerked for Judge Harry Pregerson of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Mr. Kalar has been a guest lecturer at Hastings and Stanford Law School and has taught locally and nationally on indigent defense and other matters.

The Office of the Federal Public Defender was created by Congress to fulfill the constitutional requirement that indigents charged with crimes in the federal justice system be provided with professional legal representation at no cost. Congress funds the offices of the Federal Public Defender through the Defender Services Division of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts.

By statute, judges of the courts of appeals select and appoint the Federal Public Defender for a renewable term of four years. The court makes its initial appointment after a nationwide recruitment and the use of a local screening committee pursuant to Equal Employment Opportunity guidelines. A Federal Public Defender may be reappointed if the court concludes that he or she is performing in a highly satisfactory manner based upon a broad survey and performance evaluation process.

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