



**U.S. Department of Justice**  
Executive Office for Immigration Review  
*Office of Policy*  
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# NOTICE

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May 6, 2021

## **EOIR Announces 17 New Immigration Judges**

FALLS CHURCH, VA – The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) today announced 17 new Immigration Judges (IJs), including one Assistant Chief Immigration Judge (ACIJ) and six Unit Chief Immigration Judges (UCIJs). ACIJs are responsible for overseeing the operations of their assigned immigration courts. In addition to their management responsibilities, they will hear cases. UCIJs serve as IJs in formal judicial hearings conducted via video teleconference and supervise the staff assigned to their virtual courtroom. IJs preside in formal judicial hearings and make decisions that are final unless formally appealed.

After a thorough application process, Attorney General Merrick B. Garland appointed Megan B. Herndon, Wade T. Napier, Tamaira Rivera, David H. Robertson, Elizabeth Crites, Bryan E. DePowell, Nicholle M. Hempel, Kathy J. Lemke, Martinique M. Parker, David M. Paxton, Bryan D. Watson, Kenya L. Wells, and Mark R. Whitworth to their new positions; then-Acting Attorney General Monty Wilkinson appointed Adam Perl to his new position; then-Acting Attorney General Jeffrey A. Rosen appointed William H. McDermott to his new position; and then-Attorney General William P. Barr appointed Elliot M. Kaplan and Jeb T. Terrien to their new positions.

Biographical information follows:

### **Megan B. Herndon, Assistant Chief Immigration Judge, Richmond Immigration Adjudication Center**

Megan B. Herndon was appointed as an Assistant Chief Immigration Judge to begin supervisory immigration court duties and hearing cases in April 2021. Judge Herndon earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1999 from Occidental College and a Juris Doctor in 2002 from the University of San Diego School of Law. From 2020 to 2021, she served as Senior Regulatory Coordinator, Office of Visa Services, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Department of State (DOS), in the District of Columbia. From 2018 to 2020, she served as Deputy Director of Legal Affairs, Office of Visa Services, Bureau of Consular Affairs, DOS. From 2015 to 2018, she served as Chief of the Legislation and Regulations Division, Office of Visa Services, Bureau of Consular Affairs, DOS. From 2013 to 2015, she served as a Section Chief, Immigration Law and Practice Division, Office of the Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in the District of Columbia and Falls Church, Virginia. From 2009 to 2013, she served as an Appellate Counsel, OPLA, ICE, DHS, in Falls

## **EOIR Announces 17 New Immigration Judges**

Page 2

Church. From 2007 to 2009, she served as an Assistant Chief Counsel, OPLA, ICE, DHS, in San Diego. From 2002 to 2007, she served as an Assistant Chief Counsel, OPLA, ICE, DHS, in Los Angeles, entering on duty through the Attorney General's Honors Program. Judge Herndon is a member of the District of Columbia Bar and State Bar of California.

### **Wade T. Napier, Unit Chief Immigration Judge, Richmond Immigration Adjudication Center**

Wade T. Napier was appointed as a Unit Chief Immigration Judge to begin supervisory immigration adjudication center duties and hearing cases in April 2021. Judge Napier earned a Bachelor of Science in 2001 from Transylvania University and a Juris Doctor in 2005 from Northern Kentucky University–Salmon P. Chase College of Law. From 2008 to 2021, he served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky, in Lexington. In 2008, he served as a Staff Attorney for a Trial Court Judge, in Boone County, Kentucky. From 2005 to 2007, he worked in the Claims Litigation Department of Great American Insurance Company, in Cincinnati. Judge Napier is a member of the Kentucky Bar.

### **Tamaira Rivera, Unit Chief Immigration Judge, Richmond Immigration Adjudication Center**

Tamaira Rivera was appointed as a Unit Chief Immigration Judge to begin supervisory immigration adjudication center duties and hearing cases in April 2021. Judge Rivera earned a Bachelor of Science in 1991 from Florida State University, a Juris Doctor in 1995 from California Western School of Law, and a Master of Laws in 2004 from The George Washington University Law School. From 2019 to 2021, she was an Immigration Practitioner with Advantage Immigration PA, in Orlando, Florida. From 2017 to 2019, she served as an Assistant Chief Counsel, Office of the Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in Orlando. From 2012 to 2017, she served as an Assistant Chief Counsel, OPLA, ICE, DHS, in San Antonio. From 2010 to 2012, she served as an Attorney Advisor and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney, U.S. Air Force, in San Antonio. From 2009 to 2010, she served as a Senior Democracy Fellow, U.S. Agency for International Development, in the District of Columbia. From 2007 to 2009, she was a Senior Associate Attorney and Program Manager with BlueLaw International LLP, in the District of Columbia. From 1996 to 2006, she served as a U.S. Air Force Judge Advocate, in the following locations: Madrid, Spain; Tucson, Arizona; San Antonio; and Okinawa, Japan. Judge Rivera is a member of the District of Columbia Bar and the Florida Bar.

### **David H. Robertson, Unit Chief Immigration Judge, Richmond Immigration Adjudication Center**

David H. Robertson was appointed as a Unit Chief Immigration Judge to begin supervisory immigration adjudication center duties and hearing cases in April 2021. Judge Robertson earned a Bachelor of Science in 1986 from James Madison University, a Juris Doctor in 1989 from the University of Richmond School of Law, and a Master of Laws in 1999 from the Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School. From 1990 to 2020, he served as a U.S. Army Judge Advocate in various locations throughout the U.S. and Germany. During that time, from 2010 to 2020, he served as a Military Judge in the following locations: Fort Bliss, Texas; Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Kaiserslautern, Germany; and Fort Stewart, Georgia. While serving as a Military Judge, he also presided over trials in Kuwait and Afghanistan. From 2004 to 2006, he served as a Regional Defense Counsel; from 1999 to 2001, as a Senior Defense Counsel; from 1995 to

## **EOIR Announces 17 New Immigration Judges**

Page 3

1997, as a Prosecutor; and from 1993 to 1995, as a Defense Counsel. From 1995 to 1996, he deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina, and from 2007 to 2008, he deployed to Kosovo. In 2020, he retired in the rank of Colonel. Judge Robertson is a member of the Virginia State Bar.

### **Elizabeth Crites, Immigration Judge, Chicago Immigration Court**

Elizabeth Crites was appointed as an Immigration Judge to begin hearing cases in April 2021. Judge Crites earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2005 from Ball State University and a Juris Doctor in 2009 from the University of Illinois Chicago John Marshall Law School. From 2016 to 2021, she served as an Assistant Chief Counsel, Office of the Principal Legal Advisor, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Chicago. From 2009 to 2016, she was an Associate Attorney with Broyles, Kight & Ricafort PC, in Chicago. Judge Crites is a member of the Illinois State Bar.

### **Bryan E. DePowell, Immigration Judge, Adelanto Immigration Court**

Bryan E. DePowell was appointed as an Immigration Judge to begin hearing cases in April 2021. Judge DePowell earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2007 from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa and a Juris Doctor in 2009 from Widener University Commonwealth Law School. From 2019 to 2021, he served as a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, Felony Trials Division - Office of Prosecuting Attorney, City and County of Honolulu. From 2018 to 2019, he served as Chief Counsel for the House Minority Research Office, State of Hawai'i, in Honolulu. From 2012 to 2018, he was an Associate Attorney with Crisp and Associates LLC, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Judge DePowell is a member of the Hawaii State Bar and the Pennsylvania Bar.

### **Nicholle M. Hempel, Immigration Judge, Houston – Greenspoint Park Immigration Court**

Nicholle M. Hempel was appointed as an Immigration Judge to begin hearing cases in April 2021. Judge Hempel earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1996 from California State University, Fresno and a Juris Doctor in 2000 from Chicago-Kent College of Law. From 2010 to 2021, she served as an Assistant Chief Counsel, Office of the Principal Legal Advisor, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Los Angeles. From 2003 to 2010, she served as an Assistant State Attorney with the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, in Chicago. From 1998 to 2003, she served as a Law Clerk for the First Municipal District, Circuit Court of Cook County, in Chicago. Judge Hempel is a member of the Illinois State Bar.

### **Kathy J. Lemke, Immigration Judge, Portland Immigration Court**

Kathy J. Lemke was appointed as an Immigration Judge to begin hearing cases in April 2021. Judge Lemke earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1994 from the University of Chicago and a Juris Doctor in 1997 from Arizona State University School of Law. From 2019 to 2020, she served as the City Prosecutor for Phoenix. From 2009 to 2019, she served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona, in Phoenix. From 2004 to 2009, she served as an Assistant City Prosecutor for Phoenix. In 2003, she served as a Deputy County Attorney for Pinal County in Florence, Arizona. From 1998 to 2003, she served as a Deputy County Attorney for Maricopa County, in Phoenix. Judge Lemke is a member of the State Bar of Arizona and the District of Columbia Bar.

**Martinque M. Parker, Immigration Judge, Houston – Greenspoint Park Immigration Court**

Martinque M. Parker was appointed as an Immigration Judge to begin hearing cases in April 2021. Judge Parker earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2005, a Bachelor of Science in 2006 from the University of Georgia, and a Juris Doctor in 2011 from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock William H. Bowen School of Law. From 2017 to 2021, she served as an Assistant Chief Counsel, Office of the Principal Legal Advisor, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Lumpkin, Georgia. From 2011 to 2017, she served as a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, in Little Rock, Arkansas. Judge Parker is a member of the Arkansas Bar and the State Bar of Georgia.

**David M. Paxton, Immigration Judge, Houston – Greenspoint Park Immigration Court**

David M. Paxton was appointed as an Immigration Judge to begin hearing cases in April 2021. Judge Paxton earned a Bachelor of Science in 1998 from Texas State University, a Master of Business Administration in 2004 from the University of Texas at Austin, and a Juris Doctor in 2009 from Santa Clara University School of Law. From 2015 to 2021, he served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Texas, in McAllen and Corpus Christi. From 2011 to 2015, he served as a Deputy District Attorney for the San Luis Obispo County District Attorney's Office, in San Luis Obispo, California. From 2010 to 2011, he served as a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Criminal Division of the Northern District of California, in San Jose. From 1997 to 2004, he served as a Systems Engineer for Advanced Micro Devices and Legerity Inc., in Austin, Texas. Judge Paxton is a member of the State Bar of California.

**Bryan D. Watson, Immigration Judge, Atlanta – W. Peachtree Street Immigration Court**

Bryan D. Watson was appointed as an Immigration Judge to begin hearing cases in April 2021. Judge Watson earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1993 from the University of Missouri, a Juris Doctor in 1996 from the University of Missouri, a Master of Arts in 2006 from Air University, and a Master of Science in 2014 from the National Defense University. From 2019 to 2021, he served as the Chief Trial Judge of the U.S. Air Force Trial Judiciary, at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland. From 2017 to 2019, he served as the Commandant of the U.S. Air Force Judge Advocate General's School, at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. From 2014 to 2017, he served as the General Counsel of the White House Military Office, in the District of Columbia. From 1996 to 2021, he served as a U.S. Air Force Active Duty Judge Advocate, in the following locations: Moody Air Force Base, Georgia; Francis E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyoming; Langley Air Force Base, Virginia; Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama; Randolph Air Force Base, Texas; Joint Base Andrews, Maryland; Aviano Air Base, Italy; and the Pentagon, White House, Bolling Air Force Base, and Fort McNair, District of Columbia. He retired from the U.S. Air Force in 2021 as a Colonel. Judge Watson is a member of the State Bar of Georgia and the Missouri Bar.

**Kenya L. Wells, Immigration Judge, Houston – Greenspoint Park Immigration Court**

Kenya L. Wells was appointed as an Immigration Judge to begin hearing cases in April 2021. Judge Wells earned a Bachelor of Science in 2007 from Texas A&M University and Juris Doctor in 2010 from the University of Texas School of Law. From 2017 to 2021, he served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia. From 2010 to 2016, he served as an Assistant District Attorney with the New York County District Attorney's Office, in New York. Judge Wells is a member of the New York State Bar.

## **EOIR Announces 17 New Immigration Judges**

Page 5

### **Mark R. Whitworth, Immigration Judge, Houston – Greenspoint Park Immigration Court**

Mark R. Whitworth was appointed as an Immigration Judge to begin hearing cases in April 2021. Judge Whitworth earned a Bachelor of Journalism in 1985 and a Juris Doctor in 1993, both from the University of Texas at Austin. From 2003 to 2021, he served as an Assistant Chief Counsel, Office of the Principal Legal Advisor, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Harlingen, Texas. From 2001 to 2003, he served as an Assistant District Counsel with the former Immigration and Naturalization Service, Office of the District Counsel, Department of Justice, in Harlingen. From 1994 to 2001, he served as an Assistant Attorney General and an Assistant Managing Assistant Attorney General for the Texas Office of the Attorney General, in Harlingen. From 1993 to 1994, he was an Associate Attorney with Roerig, Oliveira and Fisher LLP, in Brownsville, Texas. Judge Whitworth is a member of the State Bar of Texas.

### **Adam Perl, Immigration Court, New York – Broadway Immigration Court**

Adam Perl was appointed as an Immigration Judge to begin hearing cases in April 2021. Judge Perl earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2006 from Florida International University and a Juris Doctor in 2011 from St. Thomas University School of Law. From 2018 to 2021, he served as a Deputy Chief Counsel, Office of the Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in New York. From 2016 to 2018, he served as an Assistant Chief Counsel, OPLA, ICE, DHS, in Newburgh, New York; from 2014 to 2016, he served as an Assistant Chief Counsel, in New York; and from 2011 to 2014, he served as an Assistant Chief Counsel, in Los Angeles. Judge Perl is a member of the Florida Bar.

### **William H. McDermott, Immigration Judge, New York – Federal Plaza Immigration Court**

William H. McDermott was appointed as an Immigration Judge to begin hearing cases in April 2021. Judge McDermott earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2007 from Long Island University and a Juris Doctor in 2011 from The Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law. From 2019 to 2021, he served as the Deputy State's Attorney for Wicomico County, Maryland. From 2011 to 2019, he served as an Assistant State's Attorney, Deputy State's Attorney, and Ad Interim State's Attorney, in Worcester County, Maryland. Judge McDermott is a member of the Maryland State Bar.

### **Elliot M. Kaplan, Unit Chief Immigration Judge, Richmond Immigration Adjudication Center**

Elliot M. Kaplan was appointed as a Unit Chief Immigration Judge to begin supervisory immigration adjudication center duties and hearing cases in April 2021. Judge Kaplan earned his Bachelor of Arts in 1998 from Antioch University, a Master of Business Administration in 1982 from Whittier College, and a Juris Doctor in 1982 from Whittier Law School. From 2019 to 2020, he was Of Counsel to Kutak Rock LLP, in Kansas City, Missouri. From 2004 to 2019, he was in private practice, in Kansas City. From 1995 to 2003, he was a Partner and Founder of Daniels & Kaplan PC, in Detroit and Kansas City. From 1991 to 1994, he was Of Counsel to Berman, DeLeve, Kuchan & Chapman LLC, in Kansas City. From 1990 to 1991, he was Of Counsel to DeWitt, Zeldin & Bigus PC, in Kansas City. From 1985 to 1990, he was Of Counsel to Husch, Eppenger, Donohue, Cornfeld & Jenkins, in Kansas City. From 1983 to 1985, he was Assistant General Counsel and Assistant Secretary of Air One Inc., in St. Louis. Judge Kaplan is a member of the Missouri Bar.

## **EOIR Announces 17 New Immigration Judges**

Page 6

### **Jeb T. Terrien, Unit Chief Immigration Judge, Richmond Immigration Adjudication Center**

Jeb. T. Terrien was appointed as a Unit Chief Immigration Judge to begin supervisory immigration adjudication center duties and hearing cases in April 2021. Judge Terrien earned a Bachelor of Science in 1994 from The University of Virginia and a Juris Doctor in 1997 from Tulane Law School. From 2009 to 2021, he served as a Managing Assistant U.S. Attorney and Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Virginia, in Harrisonburg. During that time, from 2014 to 2015, he served as an Assistant Director, National Advocacy Center, Office of Legal Education, Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, Department of Justice, in Columbia, South Carolina. From 2004 to 2008, he served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, in Cincinnati, and the Northern District of West Virginia, in Martinsburg. From 2000 to 2004, he served as a Regional Drug Prosecutor for the Commonwealth of Virginia in Halifax, Charlotte, and Campbell Counties. From 1999 to 2000, he served as an Assistant Attorney General with the Virginia Attorney General's Office, in Richmond. From 1998 to 1999, he served as an Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney for the Accomack County Commonwealth's Attorney's Office in Accomac, Virginia. Judge Terrien is a member of the Virginia State Bar.

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