

NEWS RELEASE

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA

COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO



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THE HON. CHRISTOPHER C. HITE TO SERVE AS NEXT ASSISTANT PRESIDING JUDGE

The San Francisco Superior Court bench has elected Judge Christopher C. Hite to serve as Assistant Presiding Judge, effective January 1, 2025. Assistant Presiding Judge-elect Hite will serve with Presiding Judge-elect Rochelle East, who also was recently elected by the bench for a 2-year term.

“As Assistant Presiding Judge, I look forward to working with Presiding Judge-elect East to reach her goals and objectives for moving the Court forward in the areas of transparency, collaboration with judicial colleagues, community outreach, the realization of a new criminal courthouse, and the development and mentoring of individual judicial officers,” Judge Hite said. “With the specter of additional cuts to the judicial branch, we will need to find creative solutions to budget problems as the Court continues to focus on effective management of caseloads.”

During the nine years since his appointment to the bench in December 2015, Judge Hite has served in civil, criminal and administrative law assignments. His tenure has included experience in leadership positions, including Supervising Judge of the Criminal Division, and serving on many committees, such as the Court’s Executive Committee.

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Court Experience

- Currently assigned to civil trials (since January 2023).
- January to December 2022 – Served as the Supervising Judge of the Criminal Division.
- January to December 2021 – Assigned to felony criminal trials and a weekly probation violation calendar.
- January to December 2020 – Assigned to the master calendar for misdemeanor cases, which consists of assigning all misdemeanor cases for trial, conducting misdemeanor settlements, decided discovery disputes, and ruled on law and motion matters.
- January 2018 to December 2019 – Assigned to felony pretrial settlements, hearings and trials. During this assignment, he handled felony pretrial settlements, hearings and trials. He also handled half-day misdemeanor and felony trials.
- January 2017 to December 2017 – Assigned to preside over preliminary hearings and felony arraignments.
- January 2016 to June 2016 – Assigned to the Traffic Division, followed by an assignment to serve as Supervising Judge of the Traffic Division from June 2016 to December 2016.
- During his tenure, Judge Hite has presided in the Community Justice Center, Drug Court, Young Adult Court, Intensive Supervision Court, Veteran’s Justice Court, mental health, parole, domestic violence, probation, extradition, and additional civil departments, including civil harassment, default and small claims.

Judicial Committees

- Served on multiple court committees over the years, including the Court’s Executive Committee (January 2017-January 2020), pretrial detention, bail review, civil grand jury, new judge orientation and traffic oversight committees. He also served as chair of the events and the local rules committees.

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- Selected by the Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court to a special assignment to the Court's Appellate Division from September 2017 to February 2018, which led to his permanent appointment on the Appellate Division from January 2018 to December 2019. The Appellate Division judges handle writs and appeals from misdemeanor criminal trials, civil limited jurisdiction matters, and Real Property Housing Court.
- Served by Presiding Judge appointment on multiple special committees, including selection committees to hire a new Family Law Commissioner and Court Executive Officer.

Attorney Experience/Committee Service

- Prior to his judicial appointment, he practiced law for more than 20 years in civil and criminal litigation.
- In private practice, he specialized in civil litigation, civil rights, landlord/tenant, employment, appellate work and criminal law. He also was engaged in administrative law cases related to civil rights, mental health, and discrimination in housing and employment.
- Served in the San Francisco Public Defender's Office for 18 years. As a Deputy Public Defender, he served in the research unit, collaborative courts, clean slate, mental health, and the misdemeanor and felony units. At the time of his judicial appointment, he was assigned to the felony unit, handling serious and violent felonies, including homicides and three strikes cases.
- First chair of the Racial Justice Committee in the Public Defender's Office.
- Appointed to serve as chair of the Civilian Review subcommittee of the Bar Association of San Francisco's Task Force on Criminal Justice Reform.

"I am eager to work with Presiding Judge-elect East, the Executive Committee, and the entire Court," Judge Hite said. "I am excited about the opportunities available to our Court through the balance of new and experienced Judges. I look forward to the possibilities and the challenges ahead."

The San Francisco bench is comprised of 52 Judges and one Commissioner.

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