

Supreme Court of Wisconsin: Judge Jason A. Rossell appointed chief judge of Second Judicial Administrative District

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Madison, Wis. (March 20, 2017) – The Wisconsin Supreme Court has appointed Kenosha County Circuit Court Judge Jason A. Rossell as chief judge of the Second Judicial Administrative District, effective May 8. Rossell will replace current Chief Judge Allan P. “Pat” Torhorst, Racine County Circuit Court, who is retiring. The Second District encompasses Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties in Southeastern Wisconsin.

Rossell was appointed to the Kenosha County bench in 2011 and elected in 2012. He served in private practice from 2002 to 2003 and again from 2008 to 2011. He was an assistant district attorney in Kenosha County from 2003 to 2008. Rossell is a graduate of UW-Whitewater and UW Law School.

Rossell serves on the Judicial Education Committee and the Wisconsin Judicial Committee on Child Welfare, which is part of the Children’s Court Improvement Program (CCIP). The CCIP committee serves as a resource for judges and others on best practices to improve outcomes for children and families involved with the court system.

Rossell’s appointment as chief judge is for the balance of Torhorst’s current term,

which expires July 31, 2018.

Torhorst was first elected to the Racine County bench in 1991 and was re-elected in 1997, 2003, 2009 and 2015. He was appointed as a chief judge in 2014.

Torhorst worked in private practice from 1966 to 1991 and as city attorney of Burlington from 1976 to 1991. He has served on the Planning and Policy Advisory Committee (PPAC) and the Uniform Bond Committee of the Wisconsin Judicial Conference. He holds a bachelor's of science degree from UW-Madison and a law degree from UW Law School.

The Supreme Court appoints circuit court judges as needed to serve as chief administrative judge in each of the state's 10 judicial administrative districts. Chief judges may be appointed to a maximum of three consecutive two-year terms.

Working as a team with a deputy chief judge and a professional court administrator, a chief judge manages the flow of cases and meets several times a year with other chief judges as a committee to work on administrative issues of statewide importance. With the exception of the First Judicial Administrative District, where the chief judge is a full-time administrator, chief judges and their deputies maintain court calendars in addition to handling administrative matters.