

Supreme Court: Appoints new chief judges from Milwaukee, Waukesha, La Crosse

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The Wisconsin Supreme Court has appointed judges from La Crosse, Milwaukee and Waukesha counties to serve as new chief judges of their respective [judicial administrative districts](#), and the Court re-appointed a chief judge from Green County to another two-year term in that role.

First Judicial Administrative District

Milwaukee County Circuit Court Judge Carl Ashley will become Chief Judge of the First Judicial Administrative District on April 15, upon the resignation of current Chief Judge Mary Triggiano, Milwaukee County Circuit Court.

Ashley, who was first elected to the bench in 1999, currently serves in Family Court. He has been re-elected four times, and was on the April ballot for his fifth term. During his tenure, he has served in every division (Misdemeanor, Felony, Family Court, Large Claims Civil, and Children's Court), as well as the Adult Drug Treatment Court, Veterans Treatment Court, and Domestic Violence Court. Ashley is currently deputy chief judge and also held that position under former Chief Judge Maxine A. White, who now serves on the Court of Appeals.

Before taking the bench, Ashley worked in private practice, as an administrative law judge, and as a public defender. He is chair of the Supreme Court Planning and Policy Subcommittee on Effective Justice Strategies (EJS) and past chair of the Wisconsin State Bar Diversity and Inclusion Oversight Committee. He is the chair of the Milwaukee County Race, Equity, and Procedural Justice Committee.

Triggiano has served on the Milwaukee County Circuit Court since 2004 and as First District Chief Judge since 2020. She previously served as the Presiding Judge of Milwaukee County's Children's Court and its Domestic Violence Court. Triggiano will become the director of the Andrew Center for Restorative Justice at Marquette University Law School, the law school previously [announced](#).

The First District encompasses Milwaukee County.

Third Judicial Administrative District

Waukesha County Circuit Court Judge Paul Bugenhagen Jr. will become chief judge of the Third Judicial Administrative District, effective Aug. 1, 2023. Bugenhagen was first elected to the circuit court in 2015, and was re-elected in 2021. He currently serves in the Branch 10 Criminal/Traffic Division of the circuit court and previously served in the Family Court Division. Bugenhagen worked in private practice before taking the bench. He holds a bachelor's degree from Marquette University and a law degree from Thomas M. Cooley Law School.

Bugenhagen will replace outgoing Chief Judge Jennifer R. Dorow, Waukesha County Circuit Court, who will have completed the maximum of three consecutive two-year terms as chief judge on July 31, 2023. Dorow, who has been a Waukesha County Circuit Court judge since 2011, will remain on the circuit court bench, where she currently serves in the Criminal/Traffic Division. Dorow was appointed chief judge in 2017 and has served as chair of the Committee of Chief Judges since Aug. 1, 2022.

District Three includes Dodge, Jefferson, Ozaukee, Washington and Waukesha counties.

Fifth Judicial Administrative District

Chief Judge Thomas J. Vale, Green County Circuit Court, was re-appointed as chief judge of the Fifth Judicial Administrative District, effective Aug. 1, 2023. Vale was elected to the Green County Circuit Court in 2009 and re-elected in 2015 and 2021. He has been chief judge since 2020 and previously served as deputy chief judge.

Before joining the court, Vale worked in private practice, from 1981 to 2009. He holds a bachelor's degree from UW-Madison and a law degree from Drake University Law School. Vale is former deputy chief judge of the Fifth Judicial Administrative District.

The Fifth District includes Columbia, Dane, Green, Lafayette, Rock, and Sauk counties.

Seventh Judicial Administrative District

La Crosse County Circuit Court Judge Scott L. Horne will become chief judge of the Seventh Judicial Administrative District, effective Aug. 1. Horne was first elected to the bench in 2007 and was re-elected in 2013 and 2019. He is currently District Seven's deputy chief judge.

Horne served as La Crosse County District Attorney from 1985 to 2007 and as an assistant district attorney from 1981 to 1985. He is a member of the Criminal Jury Instructions Committee and previously served on the Judicial Education Committee and the Legislative Committee. Horne chairs the [Planning and Policy Advisory Committee's](#) Planning Subcommittee, which develops the biennial *Critical Issues Report* for the court system. Horne holds a law degree from UW Law School and a bachelor's degree from Cornell College.

Horne will replace current Chief Judge Robert P. VanDeHey, Grant County Circuit Court. VanDeHey, who is retiring from the bench July 31, was appointed to the bench in 1998; elected in 1999; and re-elected in 2005, 2011 and 2017. VanDeHey was first appointed chief judge in 2016 and will have completed the maximum of three consecutive two-year terms. Before joining the court, VanDeHey worked as an attorney in private practice from 1986 to 1998. He holds a bachelor's degree from UW-Madison and a law degree from the UW Law School.

District Seven includes Adams, Buffalo, Clark, Crawford, Grant, Iowa, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Pepin, Pierce, Richland, Trempealeau, and Vernon counties.

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.