



# Press Release

Alaska Court System, 303 K Street, Anchorage, AK 99501

Contacts: Rebecca Koford, Public Information Officer, [rkoford@akcourts.gov](mailto:rkoford@akcourts.gov)

## PRESIDING JUDGES APPOINTED FOR 2024

**Anchorage, Alaska, December 4, 2023** – Chief Justice Peter J. Maassen of the Alaska Supreme Court announces the re-appointment of three of the four presiding judges: Superior Court Judge Amy Mead for the First Judicial District; Superior Court Judge Paul A. Roetman for the Second Judicial District; and Superior Court Judge Thomas A. Matthews for the Third Judicial District. The Chief Justice is appointing Superior Court Judge Brent E. Bennett for the Fourth Judicial District.

The chief justice annually appoints a presiding judge for each of the four judicial districts. The appointments are for a calendar year, and incumbents are eligible for reappointment. In addition to regular judicial duties, the presiding judge has the administrative responsibility to review the trial court's operations in the district to assure adherence to statewide court system objectives and policies. The presiding judge works also with the district's area court administrator to ensure efficient administration of the district's courts including hearing and trial schedules and staffing needs.

Judge Amy Mead was appointed to the superior court in Juneau in 2018. She earned her undergraduate degree from Boston University and law degree from Tulane Law School. Originally from the East Coast, she moved to Alaska in 1996 to serve as a superior court law clerk in Ketchikan. She went on to practice law as an assistant district attorney, an assistant attorney general, and in private practice, working in all areas of law. In 2010 Judge Mead joined the City and Borough of Juneau's Law Department and was appointed a few years later to serve as the CBJ's Municipal Attorney, continuing in that position until her appointment to the bench. Judge Mead was appointed to the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct as an attorney member in 2012, serving in that capacity until 2018. She was reappointed to the Commission as a judicial member in 2022. The First District covers Angoon, Haines, Hoonah, Juneau, Kake, Ketchikan, Petersburg, Prince of Wales, Sitka, Skagway, Wrangell, and Yakutat.

Judge Paul A. Roetman moved to Alaska in 1972 and has lived in Kotzebue for 17 years. He was appointed to the superior court in 2010. He earned a B.A. in economics from the University of Alaska-Anchorage, and received his law degree from Regent University School of Law. Prior to law school he worked out of Valdez as a commercial fisherman and as Executive Director of the Prince William Sound Economic Development Council. After law school, he worked for a civil law firm, the Alaska Legislature, and as a prosecutor for the State of Alaska. Judge Roetman currently serves as Chair of the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct, and is a member of the Three-Judge Sentencing Panel and the Statewide Security and Emergency

Preparedness Committee. The Second District covers Kotzebue, Nome, Unalakleet, Utqiagvik, and over 20 villages.

Judge Thomas A. Matthews was appointed to the Anchorage Superior Court by Governor Bill Walker in 2018. He received his undergraduate degree from UC Berkeley in 1981, and his law degree from the Northwestern School of Law at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon in 1985. Judge Matthews enjoyed a long career in private practice focusing primarily on civil litigation and representation of small businesses. Matthews has served for more than 25 years on the Ethics Committee of the Alaska Bar Association. He also served as a member of the Civil Pattern Jury Instruction Committee and serves as a mentor judge to newer judges. He also established and runs a bi-weekly meeting for civil judges around the Third Judicial District. Judge Matthews is grateful for the opportunity to serve the people of Alaska, and is excited for the opportunity to expand his responsibility to address the needs of the entire Third Judicial District. The Third District covers Anchorage, Cordova, Dillingham, Glennallen, Homer, Kenai, Kodiak, Naknek, Palmer, Sand Point, Seward, St. Paul, Unalaska, and Valdez.

Judge Brent E. Bennett was appointed to the superior court in Fairbanks in 2019. He earned his B.A. in politics & government and pre-law from Ohio Wesleyan University and his law degree from University of Cincinnati College of Law. He moved to Alaska in 2006 and practiced law as an assistant public defender and assistant public advocate. He has been a member of the Criminal Pattern Jury Instructions Committee as an attorney member. He currently serves as a member of the Civil Rules Committee, the Judicial Conference Planning Committee, and as an alternate to the Statewide Three Judge Sentencing Panel. The Fourth Judicial District spans from the Canadian border on the east to the Bering Sea on the west, and includes Fairbanks, Tok, Delta Junction, Galena, Nenana, and Fort Yukon in the east and Bethel, Hooper Bay, Aniak, and Emmonak in the west.

**About the Alaska Court System:** The mission of the [Alaska Court System](#) is to provide an accessible and impartial forum for the just resolution of all cases that come before it, and to decide such cases in accordance with the law, expeditiously and with integrity.