

Illinois Supreme Court Justices



ANNE M. BURKE
Chief Justice
1st District

Chief Justice Anne M. Burke was born in Chicago. Justice Burke is the founder of the Chicago Special Olympics. She received her B.A. from DePaul University and her J.D. from IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law. She is the recipient of 13 honorary degrees.

Justice Burke was admitted to the U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois in 1983 and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit in 1985, and she was certified for the Trial Bar, U.S. District Court in 1987. That same year, she was appointed to the Illinois Court of Claims and was reappointed to the court in 1991. She was appointed special counsel to former Gov. Jim Edgar for Child Welfare Services in 1994.

Justice Burke was appointed to the Appellate Court in 1995 and elected to the court in 1996. She was appointed to the Illinois Supreme Court, 1st District, in 2006 and elected to the court in 2008. Justice Burke was retained for a second 10-year term to the court in 2018. She was sworn in as chief justice on Oct. 26, 2019.



MARY JANE THEIS
1st District

Mary Jane Theis was born in Chicago and received her bachelor's from Loyola University Chicago. She received her J.D. from the University of San Francisco School of Law and served as an assistant public defender in Cook County from 1974 to 1983.

Justice Theis was appointed an associate judge in the Circuit Court of Cook County in 1983. In 1988, she was elected to the Circuit Court, where she was assigned to the Criminal and Chancery Divisions until 1993. She was appointed to the Appellate Court, 1st District, in 1993 and elected to the court in 1994, serving as presiding judge for 17 years. She was appointed to the Illinois Supreme Court in 2010 and elected to the court in 2012.

Justice Theis has served as president of the Appellate Lawyers Association and the Illinois Judges Association. Additionally, she was a president and founding member of the Illinois Judges Foundation. She has taught at numerous judicial education programs, conferences and seminars, and is the recipient of various prestigious awards.



P. SCOTT NEVILLE, JR.
1st District

P. Scott Neville, Jr. was born in Chicago and attended Forrestville Elementary School and DuSable High School in Bronzeville, an area now referred to by African American historian Timuel Black as "sacred ground." He received his B.A. from Culver-Stockton College and his J.D. from Washington University's School of Law.

Justice Neville was a co-founder of the Alliance of Bar Associations and has served as president of the Cook County Bar Association, chair of the Illinois Judicial Council and chair of the 1st District Appellate Court's Executive Committee. He has received numerous awards — including the Vanguard and John Paul Stevens awards from the Chicago Bar Association,

the Presidential Award from the Illinois State Bar Association and the Distinguished Alumni Award from Washington University's School of Law — and in 2020 was named Judge of the Year by the American Board of Trial Advocates.

Justice Neville was sworn in on June 15, 2018, as the second African American justice to serve on the Illinois Supreme Court in its 200-year history. He was elected to the court in 2020.

MICHAEL J. BURKE
2nd District

Michael J. Burke was born in 1958 in Chicago. He received his B.S. from Northern Illinois University and his J.D. from The John Marshall Law School.

Justice Burke served as an assistant state’s attorney in DuPage County and was appointed associate judge in the 18th Judicial Circuit in 1992. He was appointed as a circuit judge in 2001 and elected to that position in 2002. In 2008, he was assigned to sit on the Appellate Court, 2nd District, and was ultimately elected to a seat on that court in 2014. He served as the presiding justice from 2012 to 2014. In March 2020, he was appointed to the Illinois Supreme Court.

Justice Burke is a past director of the Illinois Judges Foundation. He has been appointed to several Supreme Court committees, including previously serving as chair of the Judicial Performance Evaluation Committee. Justice Burke has presented at numerous judicial conferences and has written articles for legal publications.



ROBERT L. CARTER
3rd District

Justice Carter resides in Ottawa. He served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam and was awarded the Army Commendation Medal. He received both his A.B. and J.D. from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana and his M.A. in administration from Sangamon State University. He was law clerk to Illinois Supreme Court Justice Howard C. Ryan before engaging in general private practice from 1975 to 1979.

In 1979, Justice Carter became associate circuit judge in the 13th Judicial Circuit and was elected circuit judge in 1988. He became chief judge in 1993, holding that post until he was assigned to the Appellate Court, 3rd District, in 2006. In December 2020, Justice Carter was appointed to the Illinois Supreme Court, where he will serve until Dec. 5, 2022.

Justice Carter was chair of the Conference of Chief Judges and president and board member of the Illinois Judges Association. He was a member of the Judicial Mentor Training Committee and chairman of the Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee on Family Violence. He has frequently lectured at judicial education programs, conferences and seminars.





RITA B. GARMAN
4th District

Rita B. Garman is a native of Oswego. She received her B.S. in economics from the University of Illinois in 1965 and her J.D. from the University of Iowa College of Law in 1968.

Justice Garman began practicing law at the Vermilion County Legal Aid Society in Danville. Later, she became an assistant state's attorney. In 1973, she entered private practice in Danville.

In 1974, Justice Garman was appointed associate circuit judge for the 5th Judicial Circuit. After 12 years in this position, she was elected circuit judge, and from 1987 to 1995, she served as the presiding judge for Vermilion County. She was assigned in 1995 and elected in 1996 to the Appellate Court, 4th District.

Justice Garman was appointed to the Illinois Supreme Court in 2001 and elected in 2002. In 2012, she was retained for a second term. She served as chief justice of the court from October 2013 to October 2016.

She has received numerous awards, including the Harold Sullivan Award for Judicial Excellence from the Illinois Judges Association in 2011 and the Spirit of Lincoln Award from the Abraham Lincoln Association in 2014.



DAVID K. OVERSTREET
5th District

Justice David K. Overstreet was born in 1966 in Mt. Vernon. He received his B.S. from Lipscomb University and J.D. from the University of Tennessee. He practiced law with Miller, Tracy, Braun & Wilson, Ltd of Monticello, Illinois, from 1991 to 1992; with the Law Offices of Peter G. Angelos of Knoxville, Tennessee, from 1992 to 1995; and with Mitchell, Neubauer, Shaw & Hanson, P.C., Neubauer, Hanson & Overstreet, P.C., and Neubauer & Overstreet, P.C. of Mt. Vernon, Illinois, from 1995 until his appointment to the bench in 2007.

Justice Overstreet was appointed circuit judge in the 2nd Judicial Circuit in 2007, elected in 2008 and retained in 2014. He was assigned

to the Appellate Court, 5th District, in 2017 and elected in 2018. Justice Overstreet was elected to the Illinois Supreme Court in 2020.