



SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 28, 2023

MEDIA CONTACT:

Brandy Tuzon Boyd, Public Information & Communication Officer
SSCPIO@saccourt.ca.gov or (916) 591-0050

Sacramento Superior Court Unanimously Elects Judge Awoniyi as Next Presiding Judge

Sacramento, CA — Judge Bunmi O. Awoniyi last week was unanimously elected by the bench to serve as the next Presiding Judge for the Sacramento Superior Court.

“Judge Awoniyi is an exceptional jurist and brings more than a decade of experience and leadership to this new role,” current Presiding Judge Michael G. Bowman said. “She is an excellent choice to lead the court forward and will work well with our justice partners and statewide leaders.”

Awoniyi’s two-year term starts Jan. 1, 2024 and will continue through Dec. 31, 2025. She becomes the first African American Presiding Judge for the unified Superior Court of Sacramento County.

“I want to thank my colleagues for the honor of the opportunity to serve their interests, the interests of our court family, and the constituents we have pledged to serve,” Judge Awoniyi said. “The Sacramento Superior Court is supported by an exemplary executive team and committed divisional directors – I look forward to continuing our good work.”

Awoniyi’s family immigrated from Nigeria to England, where she was born and raised. She attended the University of Essex School of Law in England, graduating with her Bachelor of Laws in 1986. In 1987, she received her Master of Laws from Leicester University School followed by her Juris Doctor from the Inns of the Court, School of Law in 1988.

Judge Awoniyi was called to the Bar of England and Wales as a Barrister at Law in 1988. After completing Pupilage, she served as a Crown Prosecutor in London. In 1990, Judge Awoniyi was a recipient of the Pegasus International Lawyer Scholarship

founded by The Honorable Lord Goff in 1987 in conjunction with the American Inns of Court and the English Inns of Court. As a recipient. Judge Awoniyi came to Sacramento, Calif.

Prior to her judicial appointment, Judge Awoniyi was certified by the California Board of Specialization as a Certified Family Law Specialist and maintained a family law practice in Sacramento for 18 years.

Awoniyi was appointed to the Sacramento Superior Court bench by Gov. Jerry Brown in 2012.

Since her appointment, Awoniyi has served rotations in Family Law, Criminal Domestic Violence, Criminal Trials and Master Calendar for all Criminal assignments. She also served as the Supervising Judge for Family Law and Probate for four years before being elected as the court's current Assistant Presiding Judge. In 2018, she was awarded Judge of the Year by the Wiley Manual Bar Association.

Awoniyi serves as faculty presenter for Center for Judicial Education and Research for judicial officers. She also teaches and mentors the next generation of lawyers as an adjunct professor at Lincoln Law School, where she teaches Family Law and Community Property. She has also held adjunct professor positions at McGeorge School of Law and UC Davis Extension College.

Judge Awoniyi sits on the court's Executive Committee and was appointed by the Chief Justice of California to the Judicial Council Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee and the Judicial Council Family Law Curriculum Committee.

In addition to her volunteerism in the legal community, Awoniyi is committed to serving vulnerable populations beyond the bench. She has volunteered in Nigeria, South Africa, Namibia, Ghana, Ethiopia, Uganda and Zimbabwe, serving women and indigents, coordinating medical support, visiting schools and orphanages, and providing family counseling and services to adolescent youth, single mothers, and domestic violence victims.

"I sincerely appreciate our outgoing Presiding Judge who has served our court tirelessly and selflessly these past two years," said Awoniyi. "To our justice partners, I look forward to continued collaboration as we advance our mutual objectives in serving our local community."

**PRESIDING JUDGES OF THE
SACRAMENTO SUPERIOR AND MUNICIPAL COURTS**

SACRAMENTO SUPERIOR & MUNICIPAL COURT	
1993	Roger K. Warren
1994-95	Ronald B. Robie
1996-97	William R. Ridgeway (Note: 1997 - Judge Thomas M. Cecil assumed unexpired term of Presiding Judge William R. Ridgeway due to his illness)
1998-99	Thomas M. Cecil *
2000-01	Richard K. Park
2002-03	Michael T. Garcia
2004-05	Michael G. Virga
2006-07	Roland L. Candee
2008-09	James M. Mize
2010-11	Steve White
2012-13	Laurie M. Earl
2014-15	Robert Hight
2016-17	Kevin R. Culhane
2018-19	David De Alba
2020-21	Russell L. Hom
2022-23	Michael G. Bowman
2024-25	Bunmi O. Awoniyi

SACRAMENTO MUNICIPAL COURT DISTRICT	
1965-66	James M. McDonnell
1967-68	Peter Mannino
1969	Robert N. Zarick
1970	Sheldon H. Grossfeld
1971	Arthur E. Eissinger
1972	John J. Boskovich
1973	Sheldon H. Grossfeld
1974	Michael J. Virga
1974-75	Lawrence W. Marvin, Jr.
1975-78	Edward J. Garcia
1978-80	Allen P. Fields
1980-81	Roger K. Warren
1982	John V. Stroud
1982-83	Edward J. Garcia
1983-84	Earl Warren, Jr.
1984-85	Lawrence W. Marvin, Jr.
1985-86	Rudolph R. Lonke
1986-88	Michael S. Ullman
1988-89	Alice A. Lytle
1989-90	John R. Lewis
1990-92	Gail D. Ohanesian

SACRAMENTO SUPERIOR COURT DISTRICT	
1961-62	William A. White
1963-64	Murle C. Shreck
1965-66	Irving H. Perluss
1967-68	Elvin Sheehy
1969-70	Gordon Schaber
1970-72	William H. Gallagher
1973-74	Lloyd A. Phillips, Jr.
1975-76	Joseph A. DeCristoforo
1977	Joseph G. Babich
1978-79	Frances Newell Carr
1980-81	Fred W. Marler, Jr.
1982-83	Michael J. Virga
1984-85	John M. Sapunor
1986-87	Eugene T. Gualco
1988-89	Cecily Bond
1990-91	James T. Ford
1992	Roger K. Warren