



MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Justice Bridget M. McCormack Elected Chief Justice

Agenda Focuses on Access to Justice, Independence, Community Engagement, and Efficiency

LANSING, MI, January 9, 2019 – The Michigan Supreme Court today unanimously elected Justice Bridget M. McCormack to serve a two-year term as Chief Justice. She succeeds Chief Justice Stephen J. Markman and is the sixth woman to serve as Chief Justice. McCormack was first elected to the Court in 2012 following her service on the faculty of the University of Michigan Law School.

“Michigan’s courts must be accessible to all, engaged with the communities they serve, independent of political pressure, and efficient in making the best use of public resources,” said Chief Justice McCormack. “My goal is to build on past achievements while redoubling our efforts to help Michigan’s judiciary become more responsive to the public we serve.”

Chief Justice McCormack also announced that Justice David F. Viviano will serve as Chief Justice Pro Tem. In this newly-created post, Viviano will focus on court technology and administrative reforms to improve service and responsiveness to the public.

Chief Justice McCormack highlighted several key initiatives that will help Michigan courts be more accessible, engaged, independent, and efficient:

- Implementing technology to increase access, improve service, and make the judiciary more efficient, including statewide e-filing, online dispute resolution, and easy-to-use web-based tools to support self-represented litigants.
- Reform of pretrial practices so that bail decisions guard individual rights, protect public safety, and reduce the cost of incarceration.
- Problem-solving courts that emphasize treatment, rigorous monitoring, and community support to help defendants tackle problems such as substance abuse, dramatically reducing repeat offenses and making neighborhoods safer.

“While I was the Chief Justice, Justice McCormack worked very closely with me and no one was more committed to reforming the judiciary to become more service-focused,” said retired Chief Justice Robert P. Young, Jr. “She is an energetic and inspired leader. I look forward to watching her move Michigan’s judiciary forward to better serve its people.”

McCormack concluded: “I am grateful to former Chief Justice Markman for his leadership. He worked diligently for the people who rely on our courts, and we are all thankful for his service.”

The Court chooses a Chief Justice every two years. Chief Justice McCormack is the 67th Chief Justice since Michigan became a state in 1836. Her election today marks the first time in state history that the Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, and Chief Justice are all women. Michigan is the only state in the nation with women in all four leadership posts.

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