



# MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

*John Nevin, Communications Director*

Ph: 517-373-0129 Twitter: @MISupremeCourt FB: facebook.com/misupremecourt

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Supreme Court Takes Next Steps to Develop Strategic Plan** *Appoints Members of Michigan Judicial Council*

LANSING, MI, June 24, 2021 – The Michigan Supreme Court today announced the [appointment](#) of 29 individuals (see p. 2 for names or visit [courts.mi.gov/JudicialCouncil](https://courts.mi.gov/JudicialCouncil) for biographies) to the newly-created Michigan Judicial Council (MJC). The Court chose from nearly 200 diverse and talented applicants to serve on the MJC, which is charged with developing a strategic plan for the judicial branch of government. The applicants who were not chosen will be asked to support the work of the MJC through various committees.

“Michigan’s judiciary is at the center of the most dramatic and meaningful changes in how people interact with government to make our justice system more accessible, equitable, engaged, and efficient,” said Chief Justice Bridget M. McCormack. “We met the challenge of the pandemic and have responded with a forward-looking agenda to make Michigan a national leader. The Judicial Council will play a critical role in consulting the public, bringing together a wide range of viewpoints, and developing a path forward.”

Created by the addition of [Michigan Court Rule 8.128](#), the [MJC](#) is expected to convene in July 2021, and embark on a strategic planning process that will include visioning, analyzing trends, reviewing outreach data, and developing strategic goals and long-term strategies for advancing judicial branch reform and improvements.

“Serious discussions are occurring every day regarding mental health, racial equity, access to justice, pretrial practices, the use of money bail, and equitable models for trial court funding,” Chief Justice McCormack added. “These conversations are crucial, but strategic planning for Michigan’s judiciary is essential to coordinate these programs, set priorities, collect standardized data, and provide guidance across jurisdictions statewide.”

The MJC begins its work with many ongoing initiatives already underway, emphasizing the need for coordination and collaboration across the judiciary and among stakeholders:

- [Justice for All Task Force](#): Committed to providing all Michigan residents access to our civil justice system.
- [Diversity and Inclusion Committee](#): Assists SCAO with recruiting and hiring a diverse workforce and expanding diversity and inclusion training throughout the judiciary.
- [Michigan Joint Task Force on Jail and Pretrial Incarceration](#): Collecting data, developing recommendations, and implementing reforms to safely reduce county jail populations via non-jail alternatives.
- [MiFILE](#): Developing a statewide electronic filing system for filing and serving court documents online.
- [MI-Resolve](#): Online dispute resolution tool available to users across Michigan to resolve certain disputes.

- [Trial Court Funding Commission](#): Advancing recommendations to create a stable court funding system, uniform assessments, centralized collections, a uniform employment system, and providing for all the technology needs of the trial courts.
- [Virtual Courtrooms](#): By purchasing Zoom licenses for every judge in Michigan early in 2019, SCAO was able to give trial courts the tools they needed to continue service during the COVID-19 pandemic. SCAO established a virtual courtroom directory on its website that enabled the public to observe court proceedings statewide. To date, Michigan judges have held nearly three million hours of virtual court hearings via Zoom and trial court YouTube videos have been viewed more than 35 million times.
- [Problem-Solving Courts \(PSCs\)](#): Michigan's 199 drug and sobriety, mental health, and veterans treatment courts have an impressive record of reducing recidivism and making a positive difference in the lives of thousands of state residents and their families.

POSITION	NAME	COUNTY
Chief Justice	Hon. Bridget McCormack	Washtenaw
MSC Justice	Hon. Elizabeth Clement	Ingham
State Court Administrator	Tom Boyd	Ingham
COA Chief Judge	Hon. Christopher Murray	Wayne
MDJA	Hon. Demetria Brue	Wayne
MDJA	Hon. Michelle Friedman Appel	Oakland
MJA	Hon. Jon Van Allsburg	Ottawa
MJA	Hon. Martha Anderson	Oakland
MPJA	Hon. John Tomlinson	St. Clair
MPJA	Hon. Susan Dobrich	Cass
ABJM	Hon. Herman Marable, Jr.	Genesee
ABJM	Hon. Kameshia Gant	Oakland
JFA	Angela Tripp	Washtenaw
Tribal State Federal Judicial Forum	Hon. Melissa Pope	Oakland
At-Large Judge	Hon. Mary Barglind	Dickinson
At-Large Judge	Hon. Aaron Gauthier	Cheboygan
At-Large Judge	Hon. William Baillargeon	Allegan
At-Large Judge	Hon. Helal Farhat	Wayne
Court Administrator	Valerie Robbins	Mecosta
Court Administrator	Zenell Brown	Wayne
Court Administrator	Ines Straube	Barry
Court Administrator	James McGrail	Macomb
County Clerk	Lindsay Oswald	St. Joseph
County Clerk	Justin Roebuck	Ottawa
Attorney	Tom Cranmer	Oakland
Attorney	James Heath	Wayne
Attorney	Marilena David-Martin	Wayne
Public	Dr. Sheryl Kubiak	Oakland
Public	Tamara Brubaker-Salcedo	Kent