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Five Superior Court Judges to Join Appellate Division

Five Superior Court judges will be elevated to the Appellate Division effective August 1, New Jersey Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz announced today.

The Appellate Division of the Superior Court is New Jersey's intermediate Appellate Court. The 35 Appellate Division judges hear appeals from decisions of the Trial Courts, the Tax Court and state administrative agencies. The Appellate Division decides approximately 7,000 appeals and 7,500 motions each year.

Judge Joseph A. Falcone, Essex Vicinage assignment judge, was first appointed to the bench in 1986 by Gov. Thomas H. Kean. Judge Falcone has served as the presiding judge in the Criminal Divisions of both the Essex and Passaic Vicinages. He was made assignment judge of the Passaic Vicinage in 1996 and took over as assignment judge in the Essex Vicinage in 1999. Before his appointment to the bench, Judge Falcone worked in the Passaic County prosecutor's office and served for six years as the Passaic County prosecutor. Prior to that he worked in private practice. He began his law career as law secretary to Appellate Division Judge Mark A. Sullivan, who later became a justice on the New Jersey Supreme Court. Judge Falcone has a B.A. from Rutgers University, New Brunswick and a J.D. from Rutgers University School of Law, Camden. He resides in Wayne with his wife Beverly and his daughter Larissa.

Judge Jane Grall currently serves as the presiding judge of the Family Division in the Mercer Vicinage. Appointed to the bench in 1997 by Gov. Christine Todd Whitman, she has served in both the Civil and Family Divisions of Superior Court. Prior to her appointment, Judge Grall was the assistant attorney general in charge of legislative affairs and, before that, legal affairs. Judge Grall holds a B.A. from Trinity College in Washington, D.C. and a J.D. from Rutgers University School of Law, Camden. After law school she served as a law clerk to Appellate Division Judge Robert A. Matthews. She and her husband, Edward Neafsy, live in Avon-by-the-Sea.

Judge Ronald B. Graves currently sits in the Civil Division in the Morris/Sussex Vicinage, a position he has held since 1998. Previously he served in the Family and Criminal Divisions of the Morris/Sussex Vicinage. He was first appointed by Gov. Thomas H. Kean in 1983. After working in the Sussex County prosecutor's office, Judge Graves worked in private practice until his judicial appointment. He holds a B.A. from Rutgers University, New Brunswick and a J.D. from Rutgers University School of Law, Newark. After law school he clerked for Judge James M. Barry. A Newton resident, he and his wife, Virginia, have three children: John, a senior at the University of Delaware; Katie, a sophomore at the University of Scranton; and Meghan, who will be attending Johnson and Wales University in the fall.

Judge John S. Holston Jr., who currently sits in the Family Division in the Cumberland/Gloucester/Salem Vicinage, has been on the bench since his 1984 appointment by Gov. Thomas H. Kean. He also has served in the Criminal and Civil Divisions in that vicinage. Prior to his judgeship, he was a partner with the law firm of Holston, Holston and MacDonald as well as a municipal judge for Woodbury, Swedesboro, and Woolwich. He holds a B.A. from Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania and a J.D. from Rutgers University School of Law, Camden. He served as a law clerk

to Judge William Kramer and Judge John J. Kitchen. He and his wife, Nancy, reside in Woodbury. They have two daughters: Heidi, who works for the American Red Cross, and Kari, who teaches fourth grade in Florence. Their son, John III (Chip), will graduate from Dickinson College this spring.

Judge Joseph L. Yannotti has served in the Civil Division of the Bergen Vicinage since he was appointed by Gov. Christine Todd Whitman in 1999. At the time of his appointment he was serving as a deputy director of the Division of Law in the Department of Law and Public Safety. Has also has held the position of assistant attorney general in charge of appeals; section chief overseeing the banking, insurance and public securities section; and deputy attorney general within the division. He earned a B.A. from Syracuse University and a J.D. from Syracuse University College of Law.

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