



News Release

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Joanne M. Dietrich Tapped to Lead Family Division

Joanne M. Dietrich has been named assistant director of family practice for the New Jersey Judiciary, Judge Glenn A. Grant, acting administrative director of the courts, announced today. Dietrich succeeds Harry Cassidy, who recently retired.

“Joanne has gained extensive experience in family law, in private practice as well as in her previous role as chief of children in court and juvenile practice,” said Judge Grant. “She is an experienced and well-respected manager whose leadership will enable the division to continue its excellent work in providing programs and services to families in need of court services.”

Nearly 330,000 family-related matters involving divorce, domestic violence, juvenile delinquency, child support, foster-care placements, adoption, abuse and neglect, termination of parental rights, kinship/legal guardianship, custody and parenting time are heard in the state’s family courts each year.

As assistant director, Dietrich will work with the statewide Conference of Family Presiding Judges and the Conference of Family Division Managers to develop and implement policies, procedures, standards, case management systems and staff education programs to enhance the quality and effectiveness of the Judiciary’s services for families in court.

In addition to overseeing a staff of 44, Dietrich will serve as the designee of the administrative director on several inter-agency committees and will interact with judges, state and vicinage officials, the New Jersey Department of Human Services Division of Family Development, the Office of the Attorney General, the Office of the Public Defender, the Juvenile Justice Commission, and many statewide child advocacy groups.

“I want to thank my staff and my colleagues at the Judiciary for their continued support,” said Dietrich. “I believe our work is important to the families who rely on the courts to resolve their disputes, to rehabilitate at-risk youth, and to provide critical protection to children and to domestic violence victims whose safety may be at risk. I look forward to serving those families in this new role.”

A graduate of Montclair University (then Montclair State College) and the University of Dayton Law School, Dietrich began her legal career as a law clerk to Superior Court Judges David Schroth and Charles A. Delehey. She then became the managing partner at the Law Offices of Dietrich & Dietrich, where her practice included all areas of family law including divorce, child support and child custody, juvenile cases, annulments, adoptions and guardianship. She also handled personal injury cases, including insurance coverage issues and vehicle and property complaints. While in private practice, Dietrich volunteered as legal counsel to domestic violence victims and also served as a municipal public defender for Ewing, Mercer County.

Dietrich joined the Judiciary in 2002 as deputy counsel for the New Jersey Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection, where she handled civil litigation, including commercial, subrogation, bankruptcy and chancery matters as they related to claims against the fund by clients whose attorneys had been sanctioned for unethical behavior by the New Jersey Supreme Court.

In 2004, Dietrich was named chief of the children in court and juvenile practice areas within the family division. In this role she oversaw the work of staff assigned to the Judiciary's children in court, juvenile delinquency, family crisis and other family practice areas. She also oversaw the staff support of the Supreme Court Family Practice Committee and other family-related committees; worked with family division judges and staff in each vicinage to provide advice and assistance; developed new policies and procedures used to resolve cases in the family division and provided training necessary to implement those to judges and staff; and managed grant funds totaling more than \$1 million per grant cycle.

Dietrich lives in Ewing with her husband and two daughters.

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