



# News Release

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## **Chief Justice Names Judge Marlene Lynch Ford Assignment Judge of Ocean Vicinage**

Chief Justice Stuart Rabner has announced that Superior Court Judge Marlene Lynch Ford will lead the Ocean Vicinage, effective July 1. She will succeed Assignment Judge Vincent J. Grasso, who is retiring after 26 years on the bench, eight as assignment judge.

“We congratulate Judge Grasso on his many years of outstanding service to the Judiciary and the public. He has led the Ocean Vicinage with distinction,” said Chief Justice Rabner. “Judge Ford brings a wealth of experience to the position in light of her exemplary service in all three branches of government. Under her leadership, I am confident that the dedicated judges and staff in the vicinage will continue to dispense justice in a fair and efficient manner that is accessible to all.”

Judge Ford was appointed to the bench by Gov. James Florio and took the oath of office on Oct. 16, 1992. She first served in the family division of the Ocean Vicinage before moving to the civil division in 1996. She served in the civil division until 2006, when she was named presiding judge of the family division.

In June 2007, Judge Ford was appointed Ocean County Prosecutor by Gov. Jon Corzine. In 2013, Gov. Chris Christie appointed her once again to the Superior Court. She has served in the family division of the Burlington Vicinage since the time of her appointment.

Judge Ford graduated magna cum laude from Georgian Court College and earned her law degree from Seton Hall Law School, where she received the Women’s Law Forum Award. She began her legal career in private practice while also serving as the municipal prosecutor for Jackson Township. She was elected for two terms to represent the 10<sup>th</sup> Legislative District in the New Jersey General Assembly and worked as general counsel to the Assembly Democratic delegation. She also worked as general counsel to H. Hovnanian Industries. In 1992, she was honored by *New Jersey Monthly* magazine as one of New Jersey’s “heroes” for her role in expanding the rights of people to fair housing and employment, regardless of their sexual orientation.

While on the bench, Judge Ford has served on a number of Judiciary committees, including chair of the committee on outside activities of Judiciary employees and chair of the model civil jury charge committee.

“I want to thank the chief justice for placing his confidence in me,” said Judge Ford. “I am so proud of the work of our judges and staff in the Judiciary. I am committed to ensuring that they maintain the highest level of fairness and quality service that the public expects and deserves from their government.”

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