

NEWS RELEASE

Arizona Supreme Court
Administrative Office of the Courts

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Arizona Supreme Court Appoints New Presiding Disciplinary Judge

PHOENIX – The Arizona Supreme Court named Margaret Downie as Presiding Disciplinary Judge, effective May 17, 2021. The disciplinary judge presides over attorney discipline, reinstatement, and disability cases. Judge Downie is the second presiding disciplinary judge since the Court established the office in 2010.



Judge Downie brings extensive knowledge and experience to the position. Since 2017, Judge Downie has been the Executive Director of the Arizona Commission on Judicial Conduct, an independent state agency responsible for investigating complaints against justices and judges on the supreme court, court of appeals, superior court, justice of the peace courts, and municipal courts. Before leading the Commission on Judicial Conduct, Judge Downie served on the Arizona Court of Appeals, Division One for nine years, from 2008 to 2017.

Before her appointment to the Court of Appeals, Judge Downie served for 11 years with the Superior Court in Maricopa County, including two years as a court commissioner before being appointed as a trial judge. While on that bench, Judge Downie served as Civil Presiding Judge and Associate Presiding Judge. Her other work experience includes nine years with the State Bar of Arizona, including roles as Senior Bar Counsel and Chief Bar Counsel, and trial and appellate experience in the private sector with the law firm of Jennings, Strouss & Salmon.

Commenting on her appointment, Judge Downie stated, “I have been involved in the fields of legal and judicial ethics for more than 35 years and am honored that the Supreme Court has chosen me to serve as Arizona’s next Presiding Disciplinary Judge.” Chief Justice Robert Brutinel commented, “The Arizona Supreme Court is pleased to welcome Margaret Downie as the new Presiding Disciplinary Judge. Her experience as a trial and appellate judge and as Executive Director of the Commission on Judicial Conduct make her an ideal choice as the incoming Disciplinary Judge, as does her reputation for integrity and her prior work handling bar discipline cases. The judicial branch, the public and the bar will be well served by the new Presiding Disciplinary Judge.”

Judge Downie received her undergraduate degree from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, *magna cum laude*, and her law degree from Georgetown University, *magna cum laude*. She is a regular presenter for the Arizona Judicial Branch, the State Bar of Arizona, and others on topics including ethics, judicial demeanor, calendar management, appeals, social media, political activities, judicial writing, and professionalism. Judge Downie is actively involved in numerous professional boards and committees and has been recognized for her judicial and leadership roles, including a Judge of the Year Award from the American Board of Trial Advocacy, the Arizona Association of Defense Counsel Judicial Excellence Award, and the Arizona Women Lawyers Association Leadership Award.

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