



# NEWS RELEASE

Arizona Supreme Court - Administrative Office of the Courts

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Judge Joseph C. Welty Appointed Presiding Judge for Maricopa County**

PHOENIX – The Arizona Supreme Court appointed Judge Joseph C. Welty to the post of Presiding Judge of the Judicial Branch in Maricopa County, the fourth largest trial court in the United States. The appointment is expected to take effect on August 29, 2019 – the date current Presiding Judge Janet Barton has announced for her retirement. Judge Barton has served as Maricopa County's Presiding Judge since July of 2015. The Presiding Judge has administrative authority over all courts, judicial officers, and court employees in Maricopa County.

Judge Welty has served the Superior Court in Maricopa County since his appointment to the bench in 2007, where he has overseen cases in the family, criminal, juvenile, and civil case types. In 2012, Judge Welty was appointed as the Presiding Criminal Department Judge in Maricopa County, where he oversaw the work of more than 50 judges and commissioners. This role likewise involved a justice system liaison function with law enforcement, prosecutors, and defense counsel, the Clerk of Court and addition to court staff. Judge Welty has served as Associate Presiding Judge of the Judicial Branch in Maricopa County since 2015, working closely with the Presiding Judge on matters of court management. Once his term takes effect, Judge Welty will serve as Presiding Judge until June 30, 2022.

"It's an honor to be selected as the next Presiding Judge for the fourth largest trial court in the Country," Judge Welty said. "The Judicial Branch in Maricopa County is known throughout the country as a center of innovation in justice. Couple that with the more than 3,000 dedicated judicial officers, administration and probation departments, and it's truly humbling to have the opportunity to lead the Branch in our constant pursuit of award-winning advancements in service to the citizens of Maricopa County."

Presiding Judges in Arizona take on extra duties and serve as the chief executive officer of the courts in the county, overseeing all aspects of court business, including financial management. The Presiding Judge oversees case assignments and helps set the court's strategic agenda. They also monitor the performance of the courts to ensure that cases are processed in a timely manner. Judge Welty will receive no additional compensation for his duties and responsibilities as Presiding Judge.

Before joining the Superior Court, Judge Welty served 16 years as an Assistant United States Attorney in Phoenix. In his federal practice, Judge Welty managed the work of numerous lawyers and office staff as both the head of the Violent Crime Section and as the Chief of the National Security Section.

Since joining the bench, Judge Welty has contributed in numerous court leadership and educational roles. Judge Welty chaired the Task Force that restyled the entire Criminal Rules of Procedure in 2017 and currently chairs the Task Force reviewing Criminal Rule 32 on postconviction relief. Judge Welty co-chaired the Supreme Court's New Judge Orientation program for General Jurisdiction Courts for three years, and has taught criminal law in that program for several years. Judge Welty's other committee work includes the Committee on Victims in the Court, the Capital Case Review Committee, the Commission on Technology, and the Committee on Superior Court.

Judge Welty graduated from Georgetown University Law Center and received his undergraduate degree from Loyola Marymount University.

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