



**U.S. Department of Justice**  
Executive Office for Immigration Review  
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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Executive Office for Immigration Review Swears in 12 Immigration Judges**

FALLS CHURCH, VA – The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) today announced the investiture of 12 new immigration judges. Chief Immigration Judge MaryBeth Keller presided over the investiture during a ceremony held Feb. 3, 2017, in the ceremonial courtroom of the E. Barrett Prettyman U.S. Courthouse, in Washington, D.C.

After a thorough application process, Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Victoria L. Argumendo, Steven D. Caley, Ila C. Deiss, Delia I. Gonzalez, Deborah K. Goodwin, Stephanie E. Gorman, Richard A. Jamadar, Julie Nelson, Emmett D. Soper, Jem C. Sponzo, Arwen Ann Swink, and Veronica S. Villegas to their new positions.

“On Jan. 8, 2017, we welcomed these 12 appointees to our growing immigration judge corps,” said Keller. “With this investment, EOIR has for the first time in its history exceeded 300 immigration judges. The agency recognizes that we must continue hiring immigration judges in order to address the pending caseload.”

Biographical information follows.

#### **Victoria L. Argumendo, Immigration Judge, San Francisco Immigration Court**

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Victoria L. Argumendo to begin hearings cases in February 2017. Judge Argumendo earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1995 from the University of Vermont and a Juris Doctor in 2000 from the Golden Gate University School of Law. From 2012 to January 2017, she was in private practice at Argumendo Garzon Law Group, in San Francisco. From 2010 through 2012, she was in private practice at Surowitz & Argumendo, in San Francisco. From 2002 through 2010, she was in private practice at the Law Office of Victoria L. Argumendo, in San Francisco. From 2001 through 2002, she was an associate attorney at the Law Offices of Walter R. Pineda, in Redwood City, Calif. From May 2001 to September 2001, she served as a contract attorney for the Law Office of Enrique Ramirez, in San Francisco. From February 2001 to May 2001, she served as a contract attorney for Minami, Lew & Tamaki. Judge Argumendo is a member of the State Bar of California.

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**Steven D. Caley, Immigration Judge, Aurora Immigration Court**

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Steven D. Caley to begin hearings cases in February 2017. Judge Caley earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1977 from Hanover College and a Juris Doctor in 1980 from the New York University School of Law. From 2012 to January 2017, he served as a senior attorney for GreenLaw, in Atlanta. From 2000 through 2012, he was a partner and senior associate for Weissman, Nowack, Curry & Wilco, in Atlanta. From 2005 through 2006, and previously from 1996 through 1999, he served as a special administrative law judge for the Office of State Administrative Hearings, in Atlanta. From 1998 through 2000, he served as regional director for Legal Aid Services of Oregon, in Portland, Ore. From 1990 through 1998, he served as director of litigation for the Atlanta Legal Aid Society Inc., in Atlanta. From 1980 through 1990, he served in various capacities for the Legal Services Corporation of Alabama, in Dothan, Ala., including as managing attorney, senior staff attorney, and staff attorney. From 2003 through 2007, he served on the faculty of the Georgia State University College of Law as an adjunct professor. Judge Caley is a member of the Alabama State Bar, Florida Bar, State Bar of Georgia, and Oregon State Bar.

**Ila C. Deiss, Immigration Judge, San Francisco Immigration Court**

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Ila C. Deiss to begin hearing cases in February 2017. Judge Deiss earned Bachelor of Arts degrees in 1991 from the University of California at Davis, a Master of Public Administration in 1996 from the Robert F. Wagner Graduate School for Public Service, and a Juris Doctor in 1999 from the City University of New York School of Law. From 2005 to January 2017, she served as an assistant U.S. attorney for the U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of California, Department of Justice (DOJ). From 2003 through 2005, she served as a staff attorney for the U. S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, DOJ. From 2001 through 2002, she served as a senior court counsel for the Supreme Court of the Republic of Palau. From April 2001 to August 2001, she served as a judicial law clerk for the Honorable Richard M. Berman, U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York. From 1999 through 2001, she served as a judicial law clerk for the Staff Attorney's Office, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, DOJ. Judge Deiss is a member of the Connecticut and New York state bars.

**Delia I. Gonzalez, Immigration Judge, Harlingen Immigration Court**

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Delia I. Gonzalez to begin hearing cases in February 2017. Judge Gonzalez earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1993 from the University of Houston and a Juris Doctor in 2001 from the Texas Southern University Thurgood Marshall School of Law. From 2006 through 2016, she served as an assistant chief counsel for the Office of the Chief Counsel, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security. From 2001 through 2006, she served as a trial attorney for the Antitrust Division, Department of Justice, entering on duty through the Attorney General's Honors Program. Judge Gonzalez is a member of the State Bar of Texas.

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**Deborah K. Goodwin, Immigration Judge, Miami Immigration Court**

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Deborah K. Goodwin to begin hearings cases in February 2017. Judge Goodwin earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1986 from Wilson College and a Juris Doctor in 2000 from the State University of New York at Buffalo School of Law. From 2015 to January 2017, she served as an associate legal advisor for the District Court Litigation Division, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in Washington, D.C. From 2007 through 2015, she served as an associate counsel for U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, DHS, in San Francisco. From 2002 through 2007, she served as an assistant chief counsel for ICE, DHS, in San Francisco. Judge Goodwin is a member of the Florida Bar.

**Stephanie E. Gorman, Immigration Judge, Houston Immigration Court**

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Stephanie E. Gorman to begin hearing cases in February 2017. Judge Gorman earned a Bachelor of Science degree in 1996 from California State University Sacramento, a Juris Doctor in 2002 from the Thomas Jefferson School of Law, and a Master of Laws degree in 2005 from the University of San Diego School of Law. From 2014 to January 2017, she served as an attorney and legal instructor for the Office of the Chief Counsel, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security (DHS). From 2008 through 2014, she served as an assistant chief counsel for the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, DHS. From 2009 through 2012, she also served as a special assistant U.S. attorney for the U.S. Attorney's Office, Middle District of Florida, Department of Justice (DOJ), in Orlando, Fla. From 2007 through 2008, she served as a federal law clerk for the Honorable M. James Lorenz, U.S. District Court for the Ninth Circuit, Southern District of California, DOJ, in San Diego. From March 2007 to September 2007, she served as a federal law clerk for the Honorable Roger T. Benitez, U.S. District Court for the Ninth Circuit, Southern District of California, in San Diego. From 2006 through 2007, she served as an assistant state attorney for the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, in Sarasota, Fla. From 2003 through 2006, she served in various capacities on the faculty of the Thomas Jefferson School of Law, including as visiting assistant professor of law and senior legal writing instructor and adjunct professor. From 2002 through 2004, she served as an associate attorney for the Law Office of Matthew P. Rocco, in Carlsbad, Fla. Judge Gorman is a member of the State Bar of California and the Florida Bar.

**Richard A. Jamadar, Immigration Judge, Houston Immigration Court**

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Richard A. Jamadar to begin hearing cases in February 2017. Judge Jamadar earned a Bachelor of Laws degree in 1987 from the University of the West Indies Faculty of Law and a Juris Doctor in 1996 from the Washington University School of Law. From 2004 to January 2017, he served as an assistant chief counsel for the Office of the Chief Counsel, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Orlando, Fla. During this time, from 2011 through 2013, he served as a special

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assistant U.S. attorney for the U.S. Attorney's Office, Middle District of Florida, Department of Justice, in Orlando, Fla. From 2003 through 2004, he served as a senior attorney for the Department of Children and Families, Tenth Judicial Circuit, in Bartow, Fla. From 1999 through 2002, he served as an assistant state attorney for the State Attorney's Office, Ninth Judicial Circuit, in Orlando, Fla. From 1996 through 1998, he served as an associate attorney for Polatsek and Scalfani, in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Judge Jamadar is a member of the Florida Bar.

**Julie Nelson, Immigration Judge, San Francisco Immigration Court**

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Julie Nelson to begin hearing cases in February 2017. Judge Nelson earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 2003 from Biola University and a Juris Doctor in 2006 from California Western School of Law. From December 2014 to January 2017, and previously from 2009 through May 2014, she served as an assistant chief counsel for the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security. From June 2014 to November 2014, she served as a law clerk for the Honorable Steven P. Logan, U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona, Department of Justice (DOJ). From 2008 through 2009, she served as an attorney advisor for the Los Angeles Immigration Court, Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR), DOJ. From 2007 through 2008, she served as a judicial law clerk for the San Diego Immigration Court, EOIR, DOJ, entering on duty through the Attorney General's Honors Program. From 2007 through 2009, she served on the faculty of Biola University as an adjunct professor. Judge Nelson is a member of State Bar of California.

**Emmett D. Soper, Immigration Judge, Arlington Immigration Court**

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Emmett D. Soper to begin hearing cases in February 2017. Judge Soper earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1998 from Carleton College and a Juris Doctor in 2005 from the University of Oregon School of Law. From 2012 to January 2017, he served as an associate general counsel for the Office of the General Counsel, Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR), Department of Justice (DOJ), in Falls Church, Va. From 2010 through 2012, he served as an attorney advisor for the Office of Legal Policy, DOJ, in Washington, D.C. From 2006 through 2010, he served as an attorney advisor for the Office of the Chief Immigration Judge, EOIR, DOJ, in Falls Church, Va. From 2005 through 2006, he served as a judicial law clerk for the Buffalo Immigration Court, EOIR, DOJ. Judge Soper is a member of the Oregon State Bar.

**Jem C. Sponzo, Immigration Judge, New York City Immigration Court**

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Jem C. Sponzo to begin hearings cases in February 2017. Judge Sponzo earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 2003 from Hamilton College and a Juris Doctor in 2006 from the University of Connecticut School of Law. From 2007 to January 2017, she served as a trial attorney for the Civil Division, Office of Immigration

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Litigation, Department of Justice (DOJ), in Washington, D.C. From January 2015 to July 2015, she also served as a clearance counsel for the Office of Presidential Personnel, White House. From 2006 through 2007, she served as a judicial law clerk for the New York City Immigration Court, Executive Office for Immigration Review, DOJ, entering on duty through the Attorney General's Honors Program. Judge Sponzo is a member of the New York State Bar.

**Arwen Ann Swink, Immigration Judge, San Francisco Immigration Court**

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Arwen Ann Swink to begin hearing cases in February 2017. Judge Swink earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 2002 from California State University San Marcos and a Juris Doctor in 2006 from the University of California Hastings College Of Law. Prior to this post, she served as a staff attorney in the motions unit of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, in San Francisco, beginning in 2010. From 2006 through 2010, she served as an associate attorney for the Law Office of Robert B. Jobe, in San Francisco. Judge Swink is a member of the State Bar of California.

**Veronica S. Villegas, Immigration Judge, Los Angeles Immigration Court**

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Veronica S. Villegas to begin hearing cases in February 2017. Judge Villegas earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1996 from California State University Fullerton and a Juris Doctor in 1999 from the Loyola Law School. From 2012 to January 2017, and previously from 2004 through 2005, she was in private practice at the Law Office of Veronica S. Villegas, in West Covina, Calif. From 2005 through 2012, she was a partner at Hill, Piibe & Villegas, in West Covina, Calif. From 2003 through 2004, she served as an assistant chief counsel for the Office of the Chief Counsel, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security. From 1999 through 2003, she served as an assistant district counsel for the former Office of the District Counsel, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Department of Justice. Judge Villegas is a member of the State Bar of California.

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