



Supreme Court of Illinois

October 30, 2026

ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT ASSIGNS HON. JUDITH C. RICE TO FIRST DISTRICT APPELLATE COURT

The Illinois Supreme Court announced today the assignment of Cook County Circuit Court Judge Judith C. Rice to the First District Appellate Court.

Judge Rice is being assigned to fill a vacancy created by the retirement of Justice LeRoy K. Martin, Jr. The assignment is effective November 6, 2026, until December 7, 2026. Judge Rice is running unopposed in the November 2026 election.

Judge Rice first joined the bench in 2014 after winning the election in the Circuit Court of Cook County, 7th Subcircuit. She was appointed as Acting Presiding Judge of the Domestic Violence Division in 2021 by Chief Judge Timothy C. Evans and in 2024 she became Presiding Judge. In this role, she led domestic violence judges and staff to implement the expansion of access and services within the Domestic Violence Division.

Judge Rice has a long history of public service, predating her role as a judge. After starting her career in the Cook County State's Attorney Office, she started working for the City of Chicago in 1989 as Assistant Corporation Counsel (ACC) for the city. She would go on to become managing Deputy Director and then Director of the Department of Revenue from 1993 to 1995.

Judge Rice served as Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Water from 1996 to 1999, and as Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Transportation from 1999 to 2000, becoming the first female head of both Departments. She was appointed as Chicago's City Treasurer in 2000, winning the election in 2003 and ultimately serving until 2006 when she became a Deputy Mayor. After leaving City employment, Judge Rice became Vice President and Director of Government Relations at BMO Harris Bank, and later promoted to Senior Vice President, Head of Community Affairs and Economic Development.

Judge Rice earned her bachelor's degree, *cum laude*, from Loyola University Chicago and her *Juris Doctor* from the University of Illinois Chicago School of Law (formerly known as the John Marshall Law School). Her professional affiliations include the Chicago Bar Association, the Cook County Bar Association, the Women's Bar Association, the Black Women Lawyers' Association of Greater Chicago and, the Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago.

(FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: James Brunner, Public Information Officer of the Illinois Supreme Court at 217.208.3354 or jbrunner@illinoiscourts.gov.)