Supreme Court of Illinois

November 10, 2026

ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT ASSIGNS HON. HEINZ RUDOLF TO FIFTH DISTRICT APPELLATE COURT

Justice David K. Overstreet and the Illinois Supreme Court have announced the assignment of Twentieth Judicial Circuit Court Judge Heinz M. Rudolf to the Fifth District Appellate Court.

Judge Rudolf is being assigned to fill the vacancy created by the election of Judge Amy Sholar to the Fifth District Appellate Court where she will fill the late Justice Thomas Welch's seat. The assignment of Judge Rudolf is effective December 7, 2026, and will continue until further order of the Court.

Judge Rudolf was first appointed to the judiciary in 2006 as an Associate Judge in the Twentieth Judicial Circuit and was reappointed in 2011 and 2015. He was elected in 2018 as an at-large Circuit Judge where he presides over major civil cases. Prior to joining the bench, Judge Rudolf worked as an associate for the law firm Becker, Paulson, Hoerner and Thompson, P.C., concentrating on civil defense litigation. He also served as an Assistant Public Defender and Assistant State's Attorney in St. Clair County and was an elected member of the St. Clair County Board from 2002 to 2006.

Judge Rudolf has served as a member of the Illinois Judicial Conference Committee on Education and was appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court to serve on the Illinois Judicial College Strategic Planning Committee. His honors include the Illinois Judges Association's Presidential Service Award in 2023, the Richard A. Hudlin Award in 2025, which is presented to an attorney who best reflects a commitment to service and charity in St. Clair County, and the Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis' Justice Award in 2026.

Judge Rudolf earned a bachelor's degree and a Ph.D. in Public Policy Analysis and Administration from Saint Louis University, as well as his *Juris Doctor* and a Master of Arts in Public Administration through a joint degree program from the Saint Louis University School of Law and Graduate School.

The Fifth Appellate District hears cases from across 48 counties in southern Illinois, including: Alexander, Bond, Champaign, Christian, Clark, Clay, Clinton, Coles, Crawford, Cumberland, DeWitt, Douglas, Edgar, Edwards, Effingham, Fayette, Franklin, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Johnson, Lawrence, Macon, Madison, Marion, Massac, Monroe, Montgomery, Moultrie, Perry, Piatt, Pope, Pulaski, Randolph, Richland, St. Clair, Saline, Shelby, Union, Vermilion, Wabash, Washington, Wayne, White, and Williamson.

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