



## Supreme Court of Illinois

July 25, 2025

### ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT APPOINTS HON. JAMES HACKETT TO FIFTH DISTRICT APPELLATE COURT

Justice David K. Overstreet and the Illinois Supreme Court have announced the recall and appointment of the Honorable James Hackett to the Fifth District Appellate Court.

Judge Hackett is being recalled and appointed to fill the vacancy created by the death of Justice Thomas Welch on July 7, 2025. The appointment is effective August 8, 2025, and will conclude on December 7, 2026.

“I am grateful to Judge James Hackett for accepting the appointment on the Fifth District Appellate Court following the death of our beloved Justice Thomas Welch earlier this month,” Justice Overstreet said. “Justice Welch was a wonderful servant to the citizens of the Fifth District for 45 years. I can think of no one better to honor filling this vacancy with than Judge Hackett. Judge Hackett nobly served as a judge in Madison County for 18 years. The citizens of the district will best be served by someone of his stature until they have the opportunity to elect their next appellate justice.”

Judge Hackett was first selected as an Associate Judge for the Third Judicial Circuit in Madison County in 1995 and served four successive 4-year terms. In 2013, he was appointed as a Circuit Judge in the Third Judicial Circuit before retiring from the bench to return to private practice in 2014. In addition to a long career in private practice, his previous experience includes serving as city attorney for the City of Edwardsville and as special public defender for Madison County.

“I am grateful to Justice Overstreet and the Illinois Supreme Court for this opportunity,” Judge Hackett said. “I look forward to returning to the bench and promise to do my best work.”

Judge Hackett earned his bachelor’s degree from St. Louis University and his *Juris Doctor* from the St. Louis University School of Law.

The Fifth Appellate District hears cases from across 48 counties in the southernmost part of 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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