



Supreme Court of Illinois

September 9, 2025

JUSTICE P. SCOTT NEVILLE, JR. SELECTED AS NEXT CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT

Will Be Second Black Chief Justice

The Illinois Supreme Court has selected Justice P. Scott Neville, Jr. as the 123rd Chief Justice. He will be the second Black Chief Justice in Illinois history, following the late Justice Charles E. Freeman, who served from 1997 to 1999.

His three-year term begins on October 26, 2025, succeeding Chief Justice Mary Jane Theis, who has led the Court since 2022.

Chief Justice Neville embraces Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s belief that the moral arc of the universe bends toward justice. Guided by this principle, he envisions a judiciary that effectuates the arc by displaying fairness and setting a goal of excellence.

Public trust in the courts "requires justice that is accessible, procedures that are understandable, and support services that meet the needs of litigants," Chief Justice Neville said. "I will also work to make the Illinois courts a national model, safeguarding the constitutional promise of equal justice without regard to who a person is, where they live, or what resources they have so all litigants are seen and heard."

A lifelong champion for equal justice, Chief Justice Neville began his legal career as the first Black law clerk for a Cook County Appellate Justice. He practiced civil rights and appellate law, and prosecuted the historic 1992 Chicago Ward "Re-Map" case with two well-known attorneys, former Appellate Court Justice R. Eugene Pincham and former President Barack Obama.

Chief Justice Neville became a Cook County Circuit Court Judge in 1999, an Appellate Court Justice in 2004, and an Illinois Supreme Court justice in 2018, when he was appointed to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Justice Freeman.

In 2020, after less than two years on the Supreme Court, the Appellate Lawyers Association observed that "Justice P. Scott Neville has already left his mark on the Illinois Supreme Court." He views himself as a public servant, elected to uphold his oath and the constitutional rights and democratic values which have endured and shaped our courts across generations.

As Chief Justice his duties include overseeing the administration of the Illinois courts and more than 900 judges, supervising appointments to Supreme Court committees, leading the Illinois Judicial Conference, and presenting the Court's annual budget to the General Assembly. An installation ceremony marking Justice Neville's selection as Chief Justice will take place on October 24 in Chicago.

Chief Justice Neville received his Bachelor of Arts at Culver-Stockton College and his *juris doctorate* at the Washington University School of Law. He and his wife, Sharon J. Neville, live in Chicago and have two adult stepdaughters.

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