



U.S. Department of Justice

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NEWS RELEASE

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Director of EOIR Appoints New Chief Immigration Judge

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) Director Kevin D. Rooney announced today that he has appointed David L. Neal as EOIR's Chief Immigration Judge. Prior to his appointment, Judge Neal had been acting in this capacity since April 2006. Before becoming Acting Chief Immigration Judge, Judge Neal served as an Assistant Chief Immigration Judge (ACIJ) from April 2005 to April 2006. He also served as an immigration judge at the Headquarters Immigration Court from June 2004 to April 2005.

Prior to his work within the Office of the Chief Immigration Judge, Judge Neal served as special counsel to the Director, EOIR, from January 2003 to June 2004. From October 2001 to January 2003, he served as chief counsel to the Senate Immigration Subcommittee. Judge Neal was an attorney advisor for the Board of Immigration Appeals (EOIR's appellate component) from November 1996 to October 2001.

Judge Neal practiced immigration law in Los Angeles from June 1993 to October 1996 and also served as the director of policy analysis for the American Immigration Lawyers Association from August 1990 to May 1993. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1981 from Wabash College, a Master of Divinity degree in 1984 from Harvard Divinity School, and a Juris Doctorate in 1989 from Columbia Law School. He is a member of the New York and District of Columbia Bars.

The Chief Immigration Judge provides overall program direction, articulates policies and procedures, and establishes priorities for more than 200 Immigration Judges located in 54 Immigration Courts nationwide.

Immigration Judges are responsible for conducting formal administrative proceedings to determine whether foreign-born individuals who are charged with violating immigration law should be removed from the United States or may be granted relief from removal. Immigration judges decide each case independently, and their decisions are final unless appealed or certified to the Board of Immigration Appeals.

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EOIR is responsible for adjudicating immigration cases. The office consists of three components: the Office of the Chief Immigration Judge, which is responsible for managing the numerous immigration courts located throughout the United States where immigration judges adjudicate individual cases; the Board of Immigration Appeals, which primarily conducts appellate reviews of immigration judge decisions; and the Office of the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer, which adjudicates immigration-related employment cases. EOIR is committed to providing the fair, expeditious and uniform application of the nation's immigration laws in all cases. Information about EOIR immigration proceedings is available on EOIR's Web site at <http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/press/subject.htm>.