



**MINNESOTA
JUDICIAL
BRANCH**

First Judicial District

Mission: To provide justice through a system that assures equal access for the fair and timely resolution of cases and controversies.

Hon. Kathryn D. Messerich
Chief Judge
(651) 438-4352

Brian E. Jones
Judicial District
Administrator
(651) 438-8230

[First Judicial District Public Website](#)

The First Judicial District has 36 judges and more than 250 staff that handle over 120,000 cases annually in the counties of Carver, Dakota, Goodhue, Le Sueur, McLeod, Scott and Sibley.

The First Edition

A Newsletter about the First Judicial District of the State of Minnesota

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SUMMER 2019

Dakota County District Court to Offer Convenient Traffic Ticket Resolution Service

Beginning July 1, 2019, people with traffic tickets issued in Dakota County can resolve most minor offenses without a court hearing. A new Violations Bureau is being added to the Dakota County Courts customer service program, giving people an opportunity to meet with a hearing officer at any of the 3 Dakota County Court locations.

Violations related to driver's license suspensions, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance, as well as payable violations involving parking, and minor traffic offenses may be conveniently resolved with a hearing officer at the Violations Bureau. Those who wish to speak with a hearing officer about their citation, may call the court and request an appointment.

The Violations Bureau will not handle any offenses that require a court appearance such as DWI, theft and disorderly conduct.



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Traffic Ticket Resolution Service
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The service will be offered in three locations during the following hours:

Western Service Center 14955 Galaxie Avenue Apple Valley, MN 55124 Mondays & Tuesdays 8 a.m. to 4 p.m	Northern Service Center 1 Mendota Road West St. Paul, MN 55118 Wednesdays & Thursdays 8 a.m. to 4 p.m	Government Center 1560 Highway 55 Hastings, MN 55033 Fridays 8 a.m. to 4 p.m
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Those unable to reach a settlement agreement with the hearing officer have the right to request a hearing before a judge.

Dakota County is located south of the Twin Cities metropolitan area and includes the

cities of Apple Valley, Burnsville, Coates, Eagan, Farmington, Hampton, Hastings, Inver Grove Heights, Lakeville, Lilydale, Mendota, Mendota Heights, Miesville, New Trier, Northfield, Randolph, Rosemount,

South St. Paul, Sunfish Lake, Vermillion, and West St. Paul.

For more information, please visit the Dakota County section of the Minnesota Judicial Branch Web site at www.mncourts.gov

The Honorable Kathryn Davis Messerich Re-Elected to Second Term as First Judicial District Chief Judge

The Honorable David L. Knutson re-elected to serve as Assistant Chief Judge

The [Honorable Kathryn Davis Messerich](#)



has been re-elected to a second, consecutive two-year term as chief judge of Minnesota's First Judicial District. The position is filled by an election conducted

by district judges who serve in the First Judicial District. Her new term as chief judge will begin on July 1, 2019.

Chief Judge Messerich was appointed to serve on the First Judicial District bench in April 2004. Her first term as chief judge began on July 1, 2017. Before serving as a judge, she spent 17 years in private

practice as a civil trial lawyer. She graduated with her juris doctorate degree from William Mitchell College of Law, earned a Master of Science degree in maternal child nursing from the University of Minnesota, and has a bachelor of science degree in nursing from Northern Michigan University. Chief Judge Messerich's chambers are located

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Judge Messerich Re-Elected Chief Judge
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in the Dakota County Judicial Center in Hastings.

“I am pleased to have the support of my colleagues to continue serving as chief judge,” said Chief Judge Messerich. “It has been an honor to work with my fellow judges, staff, and judicial partners within the District over the past two years. I look forward to continuing the work, modernization, and advancements we have undertaken to better serve the people of the First Judicial District.”



The [Honorable David L. Knutson](#) was also re-elected to serve his second, consecutive two-year term as assistant chief judge in the First Judicial District.



His new term as assistant chief judge will begin on July 1, 2019. Assistant Chief Judge Knutson joined the bench in June 2004. Prior to joining the bench he spent 18 years in private practice. He also served in the Minnesota State Senate for 12 years where he represented the communities of Apple Valley, Burnsville, Lakeville, and Rosemount. Seven of his years as a Senator he served as an

assistant minority leader for his legislative caucus. Assistant Chief Judge Knutson is chambered in the Dakota County Judicial Center in Hastings.

According to state statute, the chief judge of a judicial district exercises general administrative authority over the courts within the district, including assigning judges to serve in locations throughout the district. The chief judge of each judicial district also serves as a member of the administrative policy-making authority for the Minnesota Judicial Branch, the Minnesota Judicial Council. No judge may serve as chief judge or assistant chief judge for more than two consecutive two-year terms.

Bridget McCauley Nason and the Dakota County Bar Association Receive First Judicial District Amicus Curiae Award

The First Judicial District awarded its ninth annual Amicus Curiae Award to Bridget McCauley Nason and the Dakota County Bar Association on May 10, 2019. The Amicus Curiae Award, meaning Friend of the Court, is an annual recognition of persons who have provided exceptional service, leadership or other contributions to assist the courts in the

First Judicial District discharge their constitutional responsibility for the administration of justice.

Ms. Nason is an attorney with the law firm of LeVander, Gillen & Miller, PA. Ms. Nason received the Amicus Curie Award as a result of her substantial efforts to assist the First Judicial District in advancing the

administration of justice.

Ms. Nason volunteers her time and effort in the First Judicial District Dakota County Domestic Violence Coordinated Community Response Workgroup (CCRW), the CCRW Gun Surrender Taskforce, the Dakota County Criminal Partner Work Group (CCPW) and

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*First Judicial District Amicus Curiae Award
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she is actively involved in efforts to eliminate bias through her work with the First Judicial District Equal Justice Committee.

Ms. Nason has been instrumental in the CCRW Gun Surrender Taskforce providing legal research and analysis for the group on issues of gun surrender in OFP cases, child protection, criminal–stalking, criminal–domestic abuse, and pretrial release. She has worked within this group to develop and make recommendations on court processing in both the civil and criminal areas.

Additionally, she is actively working with Judge Jamie Cork, local law enforcement, and 360 Communities to obtain a grant to address firearm surrender in Dakota County.

Ms. Nason has also worked with the First Judicial District Equal Justice Committee on community outreach and has been active with the CCPW providing feedback and involvement to improve processing of criminal cases in Dakota County. In 2019, Ms. Nason will continue her work in the overall administration of justice by serving on the Minnesota Commission on Judicial Selection.

In her practice, Ms. Nason represents cities of all sizes, providing legal advice to city staff and councils on all aspects of municipal legal matters. Committed to serving the community, Ms. Nason serves on the board of directors of the Minnesota Women

Lawyers Foundation, the West St. Paul–Mendota Heights Rotary Club, and the Dakota County Bar Association.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Dakota County Bar Association. In recognition of this achievement, the First Judicial District honors the Bar Association by also awarding it the First Judicial District Amicus Curiae Award.

In 1967, attorneys practicing in Dakota County commenced a legal action challenging the procedure for selecting juror lists, which were developed at the time by the County Board. Because the population of Dakota was over 100,000 the attorneys sought to have the lists developed by the District Court Bench, as provided by statute. Although the Supreme Court ultimately denied the challenge, this action resulted in the attorneys organizing the Bar Association. It was incorporated in 1969, with attorneys from both sides of the litigation being incorporators.

The Dakota County Bar Association is recognized for the many contributions it has made to the bench and bar for half a century. It sponsors annual continuing legal education courses, conducts plebiscites in the event of a contested judicial election, and organizes fundraising with Dakota County Legal Aid being the primary beneficiary of annual donations. Additionally, it provides a network

of communication between court administration and Bar Association members with regard to notices of events, job postings, and other court business.

The LeVander, Gillen & Miller law firm was given special recognition for providing decades of administrative support to the Bar Association, which continues to this day. This support from the law firm has been essential in the ongoing success of the Bar Association.

Patrick Cotter, current Dakota County Bar Association President, stated “Dakota County has a rich history in Minnesota law and politics and the Bar Association has been an integral part of that history for the last half-century. We look forward to continuing to grow it and to evolve to meet the needs of our membership and the greater legal community.”

The Dakota County Bar Association currently has 128 enrolled members.

Past recipients of the Amicus Curiae Award are: Liz Reppe, Dana McKenzie, Merlyn Meinerts, Mary Freyberg, the law firm of Lindquist & Vennum, Sharon Freiling, Karissa Richardson, Dan Beeson, Wayne Jagow, Lloyd Moosbrugger, Bob Morris, Jerome Wickert, Mary Stapleton, Chuck Brill, Manual Roman, Molly Trieschman, and Fredrikson & Byron Law Firm.



Governor Walz Announces Appointment to Fill First Judicial District Vacancy

On June 26, 2019, Governor Tim Walz and Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan announced the appointment of Patrick Goggins as District Court Judge in Minnesota’s First Judicial District. Mr. Goggins will be replacing the Honorable Martha Simonett and will be chambered at Le Center in Le Sueur County.



Patrick Goggins

in the Le Sueur County Drug Court. He will serve the people of the First Judicial District well.”

“I was impressed with Patrick’s commitment to community and fairness,” said Lieutenant Governor Flanagan. “His legal

experience is well-rounded, and he is well prepared to take on this judicial appointment.”

Minnesota’s First Judicial District consists of Carver, Dakota, Goodhue, Le Sueur, McLeod, Scott and Sibley Counties.

“I am honored to appoint Patrick Goggins as a District Court Judge in the First Judicial District,” said Governor Walz. “He displays a deep understanding of the legal issues facing his community, particularly from his experience working

About Patrick Goggins

Patrick Goggins is a partner at Wornson Goggins law firm in New Prague. In addition to his law practice, he is also Defense Counsel at Le Sueur County Drug Court, and previously was an attorney at the First Judicial District Public Defender’s Office, and a law clerk in the Dakota County Attorney’s Office. Mr. Goggins is a former member of the St. Wenceslaus Grade School Board, former president of the New Prague Chamber of Commerce and the Eighth District Bar Association.

He received his B.A. from St. Norbert College and his J.D. from William Mitchell College of Law.

Judge Cork Named to 2019 Toll Fellowship Program by Council of State Governments



Honorable Jamie L. Cork

Dakota County District Court Judge [Jamie L. Cork](#) has been named to the [Council of State Governments](#)



[\(CSG\) 2019 Henry Toll Fellowship Program](#) for the Midwestern Region. She will be one of 48 state leaders from all three branches of state governments from across the nation.

The Henry Toll Fellowship Program is one of the nation’s premier leadership development programs for state government officials. As a part of the program, Judge Cork will attend an intensive six-day “leadership boot camp” designed to promote personal development, networking, and leadership growth.

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*Judge Cork Named to Toll Fellowship Program
(Continued from page 5)*

“I am honored to join this esteemed class,” said Judge Cork. “I look forward to the opportunity to connect with other state officials from all three branches of government throughout the country and to grow as a leader.”

Judge Cork was appointed to the bench in

August 2016 and re-elected in 2018. She earned her juris doctorate from Hamline University School of Law in Saint Paul, a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from Mount Senario College in Ladysmith, Wisconsin, and an Associate of Arts in Police Science from Fox Valley Technical College in Appleton, Wisconsin. Before joining the

bench, Judge Cork worked for 20 years in the Hennepin County Attorney’s Office, as an adjunct professor at Hamline University and University of St. Thomas schools of law, and as a law enforcement officer and corrections officer in Wisconsin. Judge Cork is chambered in the Dakota County Judicial Center in Hastings.

Dakota County and Minnesota Tribal Communities 2019 Flag Presentation Ceremonies

In acknowledgment of the sovereignty of the tribal nations and in support of the State-Tribal Court Forum, the Minnesota State Tribal Agreement, the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and the Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act, and through several flag presentation ceremonies, Dakota County District Court is honored to accept the gift of six tribal flags that will be flown at the point of entry at the Dakota County Judicial Center in Hastings Minnesota. On March 28th and June 25th of this year, through formal flag presentation

ceremonies, Dakota County District Court was presented with tribal flags from the Upper Sioux Community, Lower Sioux Indian Community, Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, Prairie Island Indian Community, Red Lake Nation, and Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. The courts hope to hold events in the fall to obtain the remaining five tribal community flags. The recent flag presentation ceremony held on June 25th was hosted at the Dakota County District Court Jury Assembly Room. There were close to

150 people in attendance. The ceremony commenced with an introduction by Judge Robert A. Blaeser, a former Hennepin County District Court Judge and former Chief Judge of the White Earth Bank of Ojibwe Tribal Courts. Veterans from both the tribal communities and the Dakota County Sheriff’s Office entered the jury assembly room carrying the United States flag, the Minnesota flag, and the four tribal community flags in a breathtaking procession while several songs were led by Prairie Island Drum represented by

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2019 Tribal Flag Presentation
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Arthur Lockwood and a prayer led by Leonard Wabasha, a Lower Sioux Indian Community member.

Throughout the one hour ceremony, several speakers shared their remarks on the significance of the event and what it means for the tribal communities to have a presence at the courthouse. Among the many speakers, Liz Workman, chair of the Dakota County Board of Commissioners, spoke about the ongoing efforts and opportunities the county engages in for tribal community recognition. Other

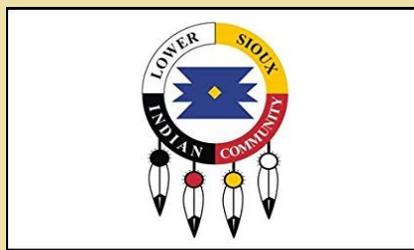


communities, Judge Jamie Cork, Dakota County-First Judicial District Judge, accepted the flags on behalf of the county. The ceremony came to a close with a traditional native buffet presented by Native Food Perspectives. A historic event for Dakota County,

speakers included Chief Judge Kathryn Messerich, First Judicial District; Shelly Buck, President of Prairie Island Indian Community; and Terri Yellowhammer, American Indian Community Relations Development Manager. As the flags were officially presented by the tribal

for the District Court, and for those in attendance.

Integrating any of the tribal community flags into a local court house is considered historic. Dakota County hopes to be honored with all eleven Minnesota tribal community flags, if this



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2019 Tribal Flag Presentation
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goal is achieved it will be even more historic as Dakota County will be the only courthouse in Minnesota to display all eleven flags at the courthouse point of entry. It will be an honor to welcome

court visitors with all thirteen flags representing the state court system.

The district courts strive to recognize the purpose of ICWA and its representation in the court system. Every day, American Indian families are served throughout the court system and it is an honor to be able to have the tribal flags flown at the courthouse. ICWA is a federal law enacted in 1978 to rectify the removal of Indian children from their homes, often done without regard to their native heritage.



Minnesota's counterpart to ICWA is the Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act.

American Board of Trial Advocates Honors Two First Judicial District Judges as Trial Judges of the Year



The American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA) has selected both First Judicial District Chief Judge Kathryn Davis Messerich

and First Judicial District Judge Jerome B. Abrams to receive its 2019 Trial Judge of the Year Award. The judges were honored at ABOTA's Annual Meeting on July 11.

ABOTA is an organization of experienced and ethical trial lawyers whose mission is to preserve the right to a civil jury trial guaranteed by the 7th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and to elevate the standards of integrity, honor, ethics, civility, and courtesy in the legal profession.

"I am humbled by this honor and thrilled to have received it at the same time as my colleague, Judge Abrams," said Chief Judge Messerich.

Judge Abrams has served in a number of capacities in ABOTA on a local and national basis. Both judges were members of ABOTA when they were appointed to the bench.

Chief Judge Messerich was appointed to serve on the First Judicial District bench in

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*Trial Court Judges of the Year
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2004. Her first term as chief judge began on July 1, 2017, and her second term will begin on July 1, 2019. Before serving as a judge, she spent 17 years in private practice as a civil trial lawyer. She graduated with her juris doctorate degree from William Mitchell College of Law, earned a Master of Science degree in maternal child nursing from the University of Minnesota, and has a bachelor of science degree in nursing from Northern Michigan University. Chief Judge Messerich

has served on the Minnesota District Judge Association Civil Jury Instruction Guide Committee since 2004, and has chaired the committee since 2012. She also has previously served as Chair of the Minnesota General Rules of Practice for District Courts Committee. Chief Judge Messerich's chambers are located in the Dakota County Judicial Center in Hastings.

Judge Abrams was appointed to serve on the First Judicial District bench in 2007. Before

serving as a judge, he spent 26 years in private practice. He graduated with his juris doctorate degree from William Mitchell College of Law, and earned a bachelor of arts degree from Beloit College. Judge Abrams serves on the Board of Directors for the [National Center for State Courts](#). He has made more than 70 continuing education presentations to judge and lawyers. Judge Abrams' chambers are also located in the Dakota County Judicial Center in Hastings.



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