

Court Information Release



United States District Court
Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division
219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604

Release Date:
June 30, 2023

Contact: Julie Hodek, Public Information Officer
United States District Court for
the Northern District of Illinois
219 S. Dearborn St., #2548
Chicago, IL 60604
312-435-5693

U.S. District Court selects Jeannice Williams Appenteng to serve as U.S. Magistrate Judge for the Northern District of Illinois

CHICAGO, Ill.- Chief Judge Rebecca Pallmeyer announced today that the U.S. District Court has selected Jeannice Williams Appenteng to be the next United States Magistrate Judge for the Northern District of Illinois. Ms. Appenteng's selection is contingent: she will fill the potential magistrate judge vacancy created upon the U.S. Senate's confirmation of Magistrate Judge Jeffrey I. Cummings as a U.S. District Judge. Upon her appointment, Judge-Designate Appenteng will be the first African American woman to serve as a Magistrate Judge in this district.

"We look forward to welcoming Ms. Appenteng to our Magistrate Judge Bench. Ms. Appenteng brings outstanding credentials, including expertise in handling highly complex civil and criminal litigation," said Chief Judge Pallmeyer. "Ms. Appenteng will be an excellent addition to our Court's magistrate judge bench, one of the hardest working and most dedicated in the nation. The Court also extends thanks to the many talented lawyers who applied for this position and to the Merit Selection Panel for their voluntary service in interviewing applicants and selecting finalists."

Since 2015, Ms. Appenteng has served as an Assistant United States Attorney in the Northern District of Illinois. Prior to joining the USAO, she served as law clerk to Hon. Sharon Johnson Coleman of this Court and to the Hon. James A. Beaty, Jr. of the Middle District of North Carolina. For approximately five years, she practiced litigation at Schiff Hardin LLP. Prior to law school, Ms. Appenteng worked for a non-profit organization assigned to a middle school in New Orleans whose target group was pre-teen, at-risk, Black males. Ms. Appenteng received her undergraduate degree from Georgetown University and her law degree from Tulane University School of Law.

The selection of a magistrate judge is governed by statute and by regulations adopted by the Judicial Conference of the United States. The Court had the assistance of a Merit Selection Panel, which screened and interviewed candidates and made a recommendation to the district judges of five applicants it found best qualified. The Panel, comprised of both attorneys and non-attorneys, was chaired by Ms. Eileen M. Letts. Members of the Panel included Mr. Theodore T. Chung, Hon. Jeremy C. Daniel, Hon. Grace. G. Dickler (Ret.), Mr. Joseph M. Gagliardo, Ms. Verneé Green, Ms. Nathalina Hudson, Ms. Spiridoula (Litza) Mavrothalasitis, Ms. Amanda Gabriela Penabad, Ms. Arabel Alva Rosales, Mr. Nigel F. Telman, Hon. Debra B. Walker, and Hon. Edward Washington, II (Ret.).

The magistrate judge position requires a minimum of five years as a member in good standing of the bar of the highest court of a state and at least five years of active practice of law. The term of office for a magistrate judge is eight years, with the opportunity of renewal of additional terms.

Magistrate judges perform a variety of duties for the court, including conducting preliminary proceedings in federal criminal cases and the trial and disposition of federal misdemeanor cases upon consent of the litigants. They conduct various pretrial matters and evidentiary proceedings upon referral from a district judge of the court and the trial and disposition of federal civil cases upon consent of the litigants.

On January 31, 2023, President Joe Biden nominated Magistrate Judge Cummings to serve as a district judge for the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. His nomination is pending before the U.S. Senate.

##