

Governor Phil Murphy

Murphy Administration Celebrates Fewest Judicial Vacancies in Over 20 Years

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More Than Half of Sitting Superior Court Judges Have Been Appointed by Governor Murphy

17 Out of 21 Counties Have Zero Judicial Vacancies

Zero Vacancies in the Division of Workers' Compensation and Only Three Vacancies in the Office of Administrative Law

TRENTON – Yesterday, the New Jersey Senate confirmed 16 Superior Court judges, bringing the total number of confirmed judges nominated by Governor Murphy since January 2018 to 245. These confirmations reduced judicial vacancies to 11, the lowest number of judicial vacancies in more than two decades.

“Since taking office, we have been laser-focused on appointing high-quality nominees to the Superior Court from across the legal profession,” **said Governor Murphy**. “Our Administration is proud to leave the Judiciary nearly fully staffed, ensuring that more New Jerseyans get the justice they deserve in a timely manner. I am grateful to the Senate, and in particular Senate President Nick Scutari and Senate Judiciary Committee Chair Brian Stack, for their partnership over the years in filling the judicial vacancies that surged during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Out of the State’s 463 Superior Court seats, more than half have been initially appointed by Governor Murphy. The Murphy Administration has also reappointed hundreds of sitting Superior Court judges, resulting in a total of 458 appointments and reappointments – touching nearly all of the Superior Court seats statewide. The prior gubernatorial administration had a total of 418 appointments and reappointments.

A number of nominations made by Governor Murphy mark historic firsts for representation for women and minority groups within the New Jersey Judiciary. By nominating highly-qualified judges from a diverse array of ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds, the Governor has worked to ensure the Superior Court reflects the nine-and-a-half million residents of the Garden State.

The number of judicial vacancies peaked at 78 in the spring of 2022 following the COVID-19 pandemic. Today, 17 out of New Jersey’s 21 counties have zero vacancies. The remaining 11 vacancies exist across Bergen, Camden, Passaic, and Union Counties.

Beyond the Superior Court, there are currently zero vacancies in the Division of Workers’ Compensation and three vacancies remaining in the Office of Administrative Law.

“I believe that New Jersey has the best Judiciary in the country,” **said Senate President Nicholas Scutari**. “The Senate has been working in partnership with Governor Murphy to maintain high standards of excellence in selecting and confirming highly-qualified judges. We take our responsibility of advice and consent seriously as we succeeded in filling a record number of vacancies so that our courts will operate effectively.”

“Reducing judicial vacancies to the lowest level in more than two decades is an important step forward for New Jersey’s justice system,” **said Senate Republican Leader Anthony M. Bucco**. “However, the process can’t stop here. This progress started out extremely slow with the last few years of sustained effort, and we cannot take it for granted. Our courts function best when vacancies are the exception, not the rule, and the new administration must prioritize timely, qualified confirmations with the goal of a fully staffed judiciary so justice is delivered across the Garden State without delay.”

“These confirmations mark meaningful progress toward strengthening New Jersey’s court system and ensuring timely access to justice for residents across the state,” **said Senate Judiciary Committee Chair Brian Stack**. “Reducing vacancies on the bench has been imperative and remains a top priority of the Senate to ensure our courts function efficiently, fairly, and without unnecessary delay.”

“A fully staffed judiciary is essential to fairness, efficiency, and public trust in our justice system,” **said Senator Troy Singleton, Vice Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee**. “By working collaboratively to confirm highly qualified judges, we have helped ensure that New Jersey residents can have their cases heard without unnecessary delay. This progress reflects a shared commitment to strengthening our courts and ensuring they reflect the diversity, integrity, and excellence the people of our state deserve.”

“Filling 245 judicial vacancies is a significant milestone and a testament to the collaborative efforts to strengthen our judiciary,” **said Senator Kristin Corrado, Ranking Member of the Senate Judiciary Committee**. “While this progress is encouraging, there is still important work ahead. Vacancies still remain and it is critical that we sustain this momentum so every courtroom across New Jersey is fully staffed. I remain committed to working with my colleagues to close the remaining gaps and uphold the integrity and efficiency of our justice system.”

Governor Phil Murphy

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