



# Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Chief Justice Flaherty Accepts Post to Lead Continuing Education Program for Jurists**

**HARRISBURG, December 19, 2001** — With the goal of implementing a mandatory continuing education program for Pennsylvania jurists, incoming Chief Justice of Pennsylvania Stephen A. Zappala announced today that Chief Justice John P. Flaherty has accepted the assignment to lead that effort and will continue to serve the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania as Chief Justice Emeritus in a non-adjudicatory role.

“Most trial and appellate jurists in Pennsylvania already participate in judicial education programs offered throughout the year by the Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges in cooperation with the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts,” said Zappala. “Additional opportunities for professional judicial development occur periodically, either through AOPC, the Pennsylvania Association of Court Management, or external providers such as the National Judicial College.

“Yet we need to ensure that the Commonwealth’s judges are offered quality continuing education in the belief that doing so best serves the public interest. Cases today are often complex, dealing with cutting edge issues in technology, family law, and many other areas that demand cutting edge professional development for jurists hearing them. Chief Justice Flaherty has long been involved in guiding our existing judicial education efforts. His new role will build on experience and interest he has had in this area by working with other judges and staff to further improve curriculum and increase the scope of the educational offerings. With the cooperation of our legal community and the assistance of the highly regarded law schools in Pennsylvania, it is hoped that we will be able to develop a program second to none.”

Flaherty will complete his service as the Commonwealth’s 54<sup>th</sup> chief justice at the end of 2001 and be succeeded by Zappala. Chief Justice of Pennsylvania since 1996, Flaherty is a graduate of Duquesne University and the University of Pittsburgh’s School of Law. He holds an honorary doctorate from Widener University.

In addition to his service on the Supreme Court since 1979, Flaherty served as a judge of the Allegheny County court of common pleas and as administrative judge of its civil division. He previously taught at Carnegie Mellon University, has lectured in Asia and the South Pacific, has co-authored nearly one thousand opinions and a number of professional articles, and was elected to the American Law Institute in 1993.

Flaherty will retain an office in Pittsburgh and be paid on the same basis as that of a senior jurist.

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