

Infographic for Immediate Release

March 13, 2020

Women in the Pennsylvania judiciary

HARRISBURG — In recognition of National Women’s History Month, March is an ideal time to look at the history of women in the Pennsylvania judiciary as well as those women currently serving.

It has been 90 years since the first woman, **Sara M. Soffel** (Allegheny), served as a judge in Pennsylvania. Today, **31 percent** of Pennsylvania’s active judges are women.

In fact, there are currently three women serving on the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. The majority of the judges now serving on the Superior Court (**73 percent**) and Commonwealth Court (**67 percent**) are women, and the president judge of Commonwealth Court is a woman. Additionally, 13 women currently serve as president judges in the Courts of Common Pleas.

The infographic below highlights data about women on the bench. [Download a high-resolution version](#) of the graphic.

Women on the Bench in Pennsylvania



As of February 2020 . . .

31% of Pennsylvania's active judges are women

There are three women serving on the seven-member Pennsylvania Supreme Court:



Justice
Debra Todd

Justice
Christine Donohue

Justice
Sallie Updyke Mundy

Women on the bench in other PA courts:



33% Common Pleas Judges
147 women / 301 men / 10 vacancies



26% Magisterial District Judges
128 women / 370 men / 14 vacancies



31% Philadelphia Municipal Court
8 women / 18 men / 1 vacancy



The majority of Superior and Commonwealth Court judges are women:

Superior Court

11 women



4 men

Commonwealth Court

6 women



3 men

The president judges of Commonwealth Court and the Court of Judicial Discipline are women:

Hon. Mary Hannah Leavitt
Hon. Doris Carson Williams

13 women serve as president judges in Courts of Common Pleas.

Hon. Maureen Belirne, Bradford
Hon. Nancy Butts, Lycoming
Hon. Kim Berkeley Clark, Allegheny
Hon. Elizabeth Doyle, Blair
Hon. Janine Edwards, Wayne
Hon. Katherine Emery, Washington
Hon. Idee Fox, Philadelphia
Hon. Rita Donovan Hathaway, Westmoreland
Hon. Kathy Morrow, Juniata/Perry
Hon. Pamela Ruest, Centre
Hon. Sara Seidle-Patton, Clarion
Hon. Maureen Skerda, Forest/Warren
Hon. Margherita Patti Worthington, Monroe

Hon. Sara M. Soffel was the first woman appointed as a judge in Pennsylvania (Allegheny County).

Hon. Juanita Kidd Stout was the first elected African American female judge in the nation – and the first African American woman to serve on any state Supreme Court (Philadelphia County).

**Data compiled February 2020.



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