



# Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

## News

Administrative Office  
1900 Kanawha Blvd., East  
Bldg. 1, Room E-316  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305  
(304) 340-2305 Jennifer Bundy  
(304) 340-2306 April Harless  
(304) 558-4219 / TTY  
(304) 558-1212 / FAX  
Web Site: [www.courtsvw.gov](http://www.courtsvw.gov)  
Twitter: [WVCourts](https://twitter.com/WVCourts)  
Flickr: [www.flickr.com/photos/courtsvw/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/courtsvw/)  
Email: [Jennifer.Bundy@courtsvw.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Bundy@courtsvw.gov)  
Email: [April.Harless@courtsvw.gov](mailto:April.Harless@courtsvw.gov)

### **Chief Justice appoints judges to Business Court Division, Mass Litigation Panel**

For immediate release Thursday, April 11, 2013

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Supreme Court Chief Justice Brent D. Benjamin has appointed new members to the Business Court Division and the Mass Litigation Panel.

Fifth Judicial Circuit (Calhoun, Jackson, Mason, and Roane Counties) Judge Thomas C. Evans, III, has been appointed to the Business Court Division to replace former Twenty-Second Judicial Circuit (Hampshire, Hardy, and Pendleton Counties) Judge Donald C. Cookman, who resigned from the bench in January to become a West Virginia Senator.

Judge Evans' term as a judge in the Business Court Division ends October 9, 2019.

The Business Court Division handles a specialized docket within the circuit courts that provides a process for efficiently managing and resolving litigation involving commercial issues and disputes between businesses. Details of its operation are set out in Trial Court Rule 29: [www.courtsvw.gov/lower-courts/business-court-division/index.html](http://www.courtsvw.gov/lower-courts/business-court-division/index.html)

Judge Evans joins Business Court Division Chairman Christopher C. Wilkes, a judge in the Twenty-Third Judicial Circuit (Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan Counties); Eleventh Judicial Circuit (Greenbrier and Pocahontas Counties) Judge James J. Rowe; and Twenty-Fourth Judicial Circuit (Wayne County) Judge James H. Young, Jr. The Business Court Division terms of Judge Wilkes and Judge Rowe also end on October 9, 2019. Judge Young's term ends on December 31, 2019.

Because of his appointment to the Business Court Division, Judge Evans resigned from the Mass Litigation Panel. He will be replaced there by Second Judicial Circuit (Marshall, Tyler and Wetzel Counties) Judge David W. Hummel, whose term will end June 30, 2015.

The Mass Litigation Panel provides a process for efficiently managing and resolving mass litigation. Mass Litigation involves two or more civil actions pending in one or more circuit courts involving common questions of law or fact in certain cases, including mass accidents or single catastrophic events in which a number of people are injured; personal injury mass torts; property damage mass torts; certain economic loss cases, or cases involving harm or injury allegedly caused to numerous claimants by multiple defendants as a result of alleged nuisances. Details of its operation are set out in

Trial Court Rule 26: [www.courts.wv.gov/lower-courts/mlp/overview.html](http://www.courts.wv.gov/lower-courts/mlp/overview.html).

The other members of the Mass Litigation Panel are Chairman Alan D. Moats, a judge in the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit (Barbour and Taylor Counties); Ninth Judicial Circuit (Mercer County) Judge Derek C. Swope; First Judicial Circuit (Brooke, Hancock, and Ohio Counties) Judge James P. Mazzone; Tenth Judicial Circuit (Raleigh County) Judge John A. Hutchison; Eighth Judicial Circuit (McDowell County) Judge Booker T. Stephens; and Twenty-Fifth Judicial Circuit (Boone and Lincoln Counties) Judge Jay M. Hoke.

The Mass Litigation Panel terms of Judge Hoke and Judge Stephens also end on June 30, 2015. The terms of Judge Swope and Judge Mazzone end on June 30, 2013. The terms of Judge Moats and Judge Hutchison end on June 30, 2014.

##