



# 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) 558-1212 FAX  
Web Site: [www.courtswv.gov](http://www.courtswv.gov)  
Facebook: [wvjudiciary](https://www.facebook.com/wvjudiciary)  
Twitter: [WVCourts](https://twitter.com/WVCourts)  
SmugMug:  
<https://www.courtswv.gov>  
Email: [Jennifer.Bundy@courtswv.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Bundy@courtswv.gov)  
Email: [April.Harless@courtswv.gov](mailto:April.Harless@courtswv.gov)

### **Justice Evan Jenkins to be Chief Justice in 2021, Justice John Hutchison to be Chief Justice in 2022**

For immediate release Friday, November 20, 2020

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Justice Evan Jenkins will be Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia beginning January 1, 2021.

The Court also has designated Justice John Hutchison to serve as Chief Justice in 2022. Justice Hutchison will serve as Acting Chief Justice in 2021 whenever Chief Justice Jenkins is unable to participate in a case before the Court.

“I am truly humbled to be chosen Chief Justice by the other members of the Court, and it will be my honor to lead the judicial branch in service to the citizens of West Virginia in the coming year,” Justice Jenkins said. “I will continue Chief Justice Tim Armstead’s excellent work to ensure the courts of the state remain open and accessible during this unprecedented pandemic and Justice Walker’s leadership in 2019 to champion the reforms that were so desperately needed at our state’s highest Court.

“I also hope to build upon the Court’s efforts to make the judicial system more open and transparent,” Justice Jenkins said. “The Rule of Law upon which our country is founded depends on the public’s confidence in their government institutions. We have done much in the last two years to restore confidence in our Supreme Court, and we will continue to work hard every day to earn the public’s trust.”

Justice Hutchison said, “It has been a joy and the greatest honor of my life to serve on the Supreme Court. I have spent most of my adult life in public service and I look forward to serving the state in a new way, as Chief Justice, in 2022.”

Chief Justice Armstead’s term as Chief Justice ends December 31, 2020. “It has been a challenging year to serve as Chief Justice,” Chief Justice Armstead said. “I appreciate very much my fellow justices’ friendship and cooperation and that of our dedicated court staff as well as judges throughout the state. We have truly worked as a team. Our court system is made up of talented, resourceful and dedicated professionals who have proven they are up to the challenge.”

Justice Jenkins was appointed to the Supreme Court by Governor Jim Justice on August 25, 2018, and took the oath of office on October 1. Justice Jenkins was elected on November 6, 2018, to fill the seat vacated by the retirement of Justice Robin Davis until the end of that term on December 31, 2024.

At the time of his appointment to the bench, Justice Jenkins was a member of the United States House of Representatives, to which he was elected in 2014 and re-elected in 2016, to represent the citizens of West

Virginia's Third Congressional District. For four years he served on the House Appropriations Committee and most recently as the Vice-Chairman of the Commerce, Justice and Science Sub-Committee.

He previously served three terms in the West Virginia House of Delegates, being elected in 1994, 1996, and 1998, representing Cabell and Wayne counties, followed by being elected to three terms in the West Virginia Senate, in 2002, 2006, and 2010.

Before his election to Congress, he was executive director of the West Virginia State Medical Association, general counsel of the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce, and taught business law at Marshall University. Justice Jenkins was admitted to the practice of law in West Virginia in 1988 and began his legal career as an associate attorney with the Huntington law firm of Jenkins Fenstermaker, PLLC.

Justice Jenkins is a native of Huntington. He has a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Florida and a law degree from the Cumberland School of Law at Samford University. Justice Jenkins and his wife, Elizabeth, live in Huntington where they raised two sons and a daughter. His prior community service has included leadership positions in many community organizations and he was a founder and initial board president of Lily's Place, a nationally recognized facility that cares for newborn infants suffering from drug exposure during pregnancy.

Justice Hutchison was appointed to the Supreme Court in December 2018 by Governor Jim Justice and was elected in June 2020 to a term ending December 31, 2024.

He previously was appointed to the bench in the Tenth Judicial Circuit (Raleigh County) by then-Governor Gaston Caperton in 1995, and he was elected to that seat in 1996 and re-elected in 2000, 2008 and 2016. As a circuit judge, Justice Hutchison was a member of the Supreme Court's Mass Litigation Panel and was a judicial representative on the Commission to Study Residential Placement of Children. He was appointed several times to sit on the Supreme Court when a Justice has been recused. He also served as treasurer, secretary, vice president, and president of the West Virginia Judicial Association and was chairman and vice-chairman of the association's legislative and pensions committees.

He was born and raised in Beckley. He has a 1972 bachelor's degree in history and political science from Davis and Elkins College and a 1980 law degree from West Virginia University College of Law.

He was assistant basketball coach at Davis and Elkins College (1972 to 1974) and was dorm director and assistant basketball coach at Concord University (1975 to 1977). After law school, he practiced law in Raleigh County for ten years with Gorman, Sheatsley and Hutchison. In 1991 he opened the Nationwide Insurance West Virginia Trial Division Office and served as its managing trial attorney for four years. From 1974 to 1975 he also taught and coached in Raleigh County Schools. During holiday and summer breaks from school he worked as a construction laborer, a carpenter's helper, and a framing carpenter, and one summer he worked as a steelworker on the bridge construction over the New River in Hinton, West Virginia.

Justice Hutchison was a registered official with the Secondary School Activities Commission in soccer and baseball for approximately fifteen years and also has served on the board of directors at the Beckley-Raleigh County YMCA.

He is married to Victoria Lagowski Hutchison and they have two children and two grandchildren.