



# Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia

# News

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## Three Judges Appointed to Mass Litigation Panel

For immediate release Dec. 12, 2024

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia Chief Justice Tim Armstead today announced the appointment of three circuit judges to the West Virginia Mass Litigation Panel.

Chief Justice Armstead, with approval of the full Supreme Court, has appointed Seventeenth Judicial Circuit (Monongalia County) Judge Perri Jo DeChristopher and Sixth Judicial Circuit (Cabell County) Judge-Elect Chad Lovejoy. The Chief Justice also reappointed retiring Fourteenth Judicial Circuit (Braxton, Clay, Gilmer and Webster Counties) Judge Jack Alsop, who will become a Senior Status Judge on Jan. 1, 2025.

Judge DeChristopher fills a vacancy left by the retirement of Ninth Judicial Circuit (Mercer County) Judge Derek Swope at the end of 2023. Judge Lovejoy replaces Twenty-First Judicial Circuit (Grant, Mineral and Tucker Counties) Judge Robert E. Ryan, whose term as a circuit judge ends on Dec. 31.

There is still one vacancy on the seven-member panel that will be filled in due time.

“I am excited about the appointment of the new judges that Chief Justice Armstead and the Court have made to the Mass Litigation Panel,” said Mass Litigation Panel Chief Judge Gregory L. Howard, Jr. “The depth and diversity of these judges will enhance the panel’s ability to face any challenge in the coming year.”

The Mass Litigation Panel was created in 1996 to develop and implement case management and trial methods for mass litigation and is governed by West Virginia Trial Court Rule 26. See [Mass Litigation Panel | West Virginia Judiciary](#) for more information.

The panel consists of seven active or senior status circuit court judges appointed by the Chief Justice with the approval of the Supreme Court. Each appointment is for a term of three years and appointees can serve successive terms.

The other members of the panel are Thirteenth Judicial Circuit (Kanawha County) Judge Stephanie Abraham and Fourth Judicial Circuit (Wirt and Wood Counties) Judge Jason A. Wharton.

Judge DeChristopher was appointed to the circuit court bench by Gov. Jim Justice and took office Jan. 27, 2023. She was elected in May 2024. She is a graduate of West Virginia University and West Virginia University College of Law. She is a former assistant prosecutor in Harrison and Monongalia Counties. She was elected Prosecuting Attorney of Monongalia County in 2016 and re-elected in 2020.

Judge-Elect Lovejoy was elected in May 2024 and will take office on Jan. 1, 2025. He is a graduate of West Virginia University and West Virginia University College of Law. He practiced law in Huntington (1997-2023), taught courses in the Legal Assisting Program at Marshall University Community and Technical College and has lectured on the use of technology in both the law office and courtroom. He served three terms in the West Virginia House of Delegates.

Judge Alsop is a graduate of West Virginia University and West Virginia University College of Law. He was a sole practitioner in Webster Springs (1977-1996) and served as the elected Webster County Prosecuting Attorney (1985-1989). He was chairman of the West Virginia Regional Jail and Correctional Facilities Authority (1989-1996). He was appointed to the bench in 1996, elected in 1998 and re-elected three times.

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