



Press Release

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Alaska Court System Selects Next Chief Justice

Anchorage, Alaska, November 25, 2024 - The members of the Alaska Supreme Court have selected Justice Susan M. Carney to serve as Chief Justice commencing January 10, 2025. Justice Carney, who was appointed to the Supreme Court in 2016, follows Chief Justice Peter J. Maassen, who will be retiring on January 13, 2025.

Under Alaska's Constitution, the Chief Justice is selected from among the justices of the Supreme Court by majority vote of the justices. The Chief Justice serves as the administrative head of the judicial branch of government, presides over Supreme Court arguments and conferences, appoints presiding judges for Alaska's four judicial districts, and serves as the chair of the Alaska Judicial Council. A justice may serve more than one term as Chief Justice but not consecutively.

Justice Carney was appointed to the Alaska Supreme Court by Governor Bill Walker in May of 2016. She was born and raised in Worcester, Massachusetts, the oldest of David and Margaret Carney's five children. She was a student athlete in high school and at Harvard-Radcliffe College, where she earned an A.B. in History and Literature in 1983, and also competed on the women's soccer, basketball, and softball teams. She returned to Harvard and graduated from law school in 1987 after a year in Seattle as a research assistant. She came to Alaska as a law clerk for Justice Jay Rabinowitz in 1987, excited about seeing Fairbanks after her father's stories of his time during the Korean conflict at Big Delta Camp (now Fort Greeley). After her clerkship she was hired by then-Public Defender Dana Fabe, and worked as an assistant public defender for ten years in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Interior villages. In 1998, she moved to the Office of Public Advocacy where in addition to criminal defense and representing parents in child protection cases, she served as a guardian ad litem, represented respondents in guardianship cases, advised assistant public guardians and guardians ad litem, and supervised the Fairbanks office, as well as handling all of the North Slope cases. Shortly before her appointment to the Court she received the OPA litigator of the year award. Governor Walker cited her work throughout Alaska and her nearly thirty-year commitment to public service when he appointed her.

Throughout her years in Fairbanks, Justice Carney played and coached softball, basketball, and soccer. She volunteered at her children's schools, including twice escorting middle school groups on trips to Washington, D.C. She was a volunteer judge for many years for the "We the People" high school civics competition. She served on the Alaska Bar Association's Board of Governors from 2015 until her appointment and on the Supreme Court's Criminal Pattern Jury Instruction Committee from 2006-2016. She currently chairs the Child in Need of Aid Rules committee and co-chairs the Fairness, Diversity and Equality committee. She also serves as co-

chair and mentor for the Color of Justice youth program. She and her husband Peter Braveman have been married for thirty-four years and have two adult children.

About the Alaska Court System: The mission of the [Alaska Court System](#) is to provide an accessible and impartial forum for the just resolution of all cases that come before it, and to decide such cases in accordance with the law, expeditiously and with integrity.