



UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

PRESS RELEASE

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Date: March 19, 2021

**MARGO A. ROCCONI APPOINTED AS UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE
FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

The United States District Court for the Central District of California announces the appointment of Margo A. Rocconi as a United States Magistrate Judge. Judge Rocconi, who was sworn in on March 19, 2021, will sit in Los Angeles, the Court's Western Division. Judge Rocconi succeeds former Magistrate Judge Patrick J. Walsh.

Before her appointment as a Magistrate Judge, Judge Rocconi served for over 25 years with distinction as a Deputy Federal Public Defender in the Central District of California. She was the first lawyer hired to staff the Central District's Capital Habeas Unit in 1995, which opened in 1996 and is now the second largest Capital Habeas Unit in the country. Judge Rocconi became a supervising deputy in 2006. For the past six years, she served as Chief of the Capital Habeas Unit. Her experience includes capital and non-capital habeas litigation and appeals, and some criminal trial work. She also chaired the Capital Habeas Attorney Panel Advisory Committee. She served as the training chief for the Capital Habeas Unit and the panel, and has trained lawyers nationally, most recently on the effects of Proposition 66, capital clemency, litigation under execution warrant, and mediation and settlement of capital cases. Before joining the Federal Public Defender's Office, Judge Rocconi worked in a civil law firm. Prior to that, she worked in Washington, D.C. as a Justice William J. Brennan, Jr. Scholar on the retired Justice's private legal archive, known as The Brennan Papers.

In addition to her work for the Federal Public Defender's Office, Judge Rocconi served as an Adjunct Professor of Law at Loyola Law School teaching a Death Penalty Clinic encompassing all aspects of capital habeas litigation. In January 2018, California Supreme Court Chief Justice Cantil-Sakauye appointed her to the 22-member Proposition 66 Rules Working Group, which was tasked with the impartial creation of proposed court rules implementing a voter initiative regarding the death penalty. She also co-founded a national Diversity and Inclusion Task Force for Public Defender offices with Capital Habeas Units and co-founded the California Capital Clemency Working Group. She is a member of the Los Angeles Criminal Justice American Inns of Court as a Master of the Bench, the Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles, and the Federal Bar Association. She is also a member of the Italian American Lawyers Association and is bilingual. Judge Rocconi has volunteered as an advisor and judge for Cathedral High School's academic decathlon and mock trial teams.

Judge Rocconi received a Bachelor of Arts degree, *cum laude*, from the University of California at Santa Barbara, a Juris Doctor from Pepperdine University School of Law, and a Master of Laws from Georgetown University School of Law.

Including the position now occupied by Judge Rocconi, the Central District of California has 24 authorized full-time Magistrate Judges and one part-time position. The Central District of California is comprised of the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo. The District serves approximately 19.6 million people – nearly half the population of the State of California.

**KIRY K. GRAY
DISTRICT COURT EXECUTIVE / CLERK OF COURT**