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**MAYOR ADAMS ANNOUNCES 10 JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS AND  
REAPPOINTMENTS TO CRIMINAL AND FAMILY COURTS**

**NEW YORK** – New York City Mayor Eric Adams today announced 10 judicial appointments and reappointments, including seven appointments to Criminal Court and three reappointments to Family Court.

“Ensuring our judicial system operates efficiently, equitably, and fairly is critical to providing New Yorkers with the safety they need and the justice they deserve,” said **Mayor Adams**.

“These new appointees to Criminal and Family Courts represent the best of the best, and we thank them for their dedication to serving our city.”

“These appointments will immediately help our court system continue to reduce the enormous backlog of cases that swelled during the height of the pandemic,” said **City Hall Chief Counsel Brendan McGuire**. “The Mayor’s Advisory Committee on the Judiciary reviewed hundreds of applicants and selected these appointees after a rigorous screening process to identify the best candidates. We thank these judges for their service.”

*Mayor Adams appointed the following judges to Criminal Court:*

**Judge Sara Litman** was a former Kings County assistant district attorney where she started in the Red Zone Trial Bureau before eventually becoming a senior assistant district attorney in the Sex Crimes Bureau. She subsequently joined the New York State Unified Court System as a principal law clerk in Supreme Court in Kings, New York, and Bronx Counties. She last served as a principal court attorney in Supreme Court, Kings County, Law Department.

**Judge Michael Ryan** has served with the Kings County District Attorney’s Office since the start of his legal career, up until his appointment to the bench. During his tenure, he was assigned to various bureaus and has held several titles, including but not limited to serving as a deputy bureau chief of the Early Case Assessment, Rackets, and Criminal Court Bureaus; and as bureau chief of the Human Trafficking Bureau and Investigations Division. For the last eight years, he was chief of the Criminal Courts Unit.

**Judge Dale Fong-Frederick** most recently presided as a court attorney-referee in Kings County Surrogate's Court. He began his legal career with The Legal Aid Society, Criminal Defense Division in Queens County, serving as a staff attorney and later as a senior staff attorney. He subsequently became a staff attorney with the New York County Defender Services and principal law clerk to a Criminal Court judge briefly before returning to The Legal Aid Society. During his second tenure with The Legal Aid Society, he served the Kings County Criminal Defense Division and Harlem Housing Rights Unit. Judge Fong-Frederick then established his own solo practice before joining the New York State Unified Court System, where he served in various capacities, including as principal law clerk in Kings County Supreme and Criminal Courts.

**Judge Germaine Auguste** was first appointed as an interim Civil Court judge in August 2021 and has been serving in Criminal Court. Judge Auguste previously served with The Legal Aid Society, Criminal Defense Practice in Queens for 30 years. She served as a supervising attorney for over 10 years prior to her appointment to the bench.

**Judge Simiyon Haniff** was first appointed as an interim Civil Court judge in December 2021 and has been serving in Criminal Court. Judge Haniff began his legal career with the Queens County District Attorney's Office, serving in the Intake, Domestic Violence, Appeals and Trial Bureaus. He then went on to form two partnerships and opened his own practice. He subsequently returned to the Queens County District Attorney's Office and served as an assistant district attorney in the Criminal Court and Domestic Violence Bureaus. Prior to his appointment, he served as supervising attorney of the Criminal Court Bureau's Part AP-2.

**Judge Vidya Pappachan** was first appointed as an interim Civil Court judge in December 2021 and has been serving in Criminal Court. She previously served as a court attorney to the Honorable Josh E. Hanshaft, who was assigned to New York County, Criminal Court; and briefly to Kings County, Family Court. After receiving her law degree, Judge Pappachan began her career with The Legal Aid Society, Criminal Defense Practice as a staff attorney.

**Judge Rachel Pauley** was first appointed as an interim Civil Court judge in December 2021 and has been serving in Criminal Court. Judge Pauley began her legal career in the Domestic Violence Bureau at the Kings County District Attorney's Office and as a commercial litigation associate for a private firm. She then moved on to become principal court attorney to two justices presiding in the Supreme Court, Criminal Term. Thereafter, she held the title of confidential assistant for legal matters at the Office of the New York State Attorney General and Special Investigative Counsel and director of training at the Office of the New York State Inspector General. Prior to her appointment, she served as director of government programs, Social Justice Initiatives and as a lecturer-in-law at Columbia Law School until her appointment to the bench.

*Mayor Adams reappointed the following judges to Family Court:*

**Judge Peter Passidomo** was first appointed as a Family Court judge in December 2008. Judge Passidomo was a former court attorney and a support magistrate with the New York State Unified Court System in Family Court. He then served as chief court attorney and as chief

Family Court magistrate. Prior to his appointment to the bench, he served as the chief clerk to the administrative judge of New York City Family Court.

**Judge Gilbert Taylor** is currently serving as the supervising judge of Queens County Family Court. He was first appointed as a Family Court judge in March 2016. Early in his legal career, Judge Taylor served with the New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS) as agency attorney supervisor of the Queens Family Court Litigation Unit before going on to serve as the attorney-in-charge and executive director of the Law Guardian Program at The Children's Rights Society, Inc. He later returned to ACS serving in various titles, ultimately as executive deputy commissioner of Child Protection, and briefly as the acting commissioner. He then joined the New York City Department of Homeless Services as commissioner. Prior to his appointment, he served as senior advisor for homeless initiatives to the deputy mayor.

**Judge Amanda White** is currently serving as the supervising judge of Kings County Family Court. She was first appointed as an Interim Civil Court judge in January 2011, then as a Family Court judge in December 2011. Judge White served with The Legal Aid Society, Juvenile Rights Division for nearly two decades in the Bronx, Queens, and Manhattan. Prior to her initial appointment she was serving as the attorney-in-charge of the Bronx Office.

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