

May 3, 2021

After 30 years of dedicated service to the Court, Matthew R. MacAvoy retired as Chief U.S. Probation Officer for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania on April 30, 2021. Chief MacAvoy holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from East Stroudsburg University and a Master of Science degree in Administration of Justice from West Chester University. He previously served as an Adult Probation and Parole Officer in Chester County from 1988 until 1991, when he was appointed as a Federal Probation Officer. Chief MacAvoy supervised and monitored cases throughout his career, many of which involved individuals suffering from drug addiction and mental health issues. In 1997, he was promoted to the position of drug and alcohol treatment specialist, and in 2002, he became a Supervisory U.S. Probation Officer. As a supervisor, he was responsible for assigning and reviewing all unit work and overseeing the Supervision to Aid Reentry (STAR) program, an initiative to reduce recidivism in the City of Philadelphia. After serving as a supervisor for nine years, in 2011, Chief MacAvoy became the Senior Deputy Chief U.S. Probation Officer, a position in which he served as the right-hand person to the Chief U.S. Probation Officer. He was ultimately promoted to the position of Chief U.S. Probation Officer in 2015, and he was responsible for an office of approximately 90 staff members for the past six years. He managed the federal sentencing, probation, supervised release, and parole services for this district with distinction and provided exemplary leadership in the face of many challenges, including a government shutdown and the pandemic.

Jana Gifford Law succeeded Mr. MacAvoy as Chief U.S. Probation Officer, effective May 1, 2021. Ms. Law is the first woman to lead the U.S. Probation Office in our district.

Juan R. Sánchez
Chief Judge