

THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

PRESS RELEASE

**JUDGE MITCHELL S. GOLDBERG BECOMES CHIEF JUDGE
OF THE EASTERN DISTRICT**

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George Wylesol, Clerk of Court
George_Wylesol@paed.uscourts.gov

PHILADELPHIA, PA – The Honorable Mitchell S. Goldberg became Chief Judge of the United States District Court in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania on March 5, 2024. Judge Goldberg has served as a federal judge for over fifteen years and follows the Honorable Juan R. Sánchez as the 16th Chief Judge of this district. One of thirteen original federal judicial districts created by the Federal Judiciary Act of 1789, the Eastern District encompasses Philadelphia, Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lancaster, Lehigh, Montgomery, and Northampton counties.

Former Chief Judge Juan R. Sánchez stated, “Judge Mitchell S. Goldberg is a thoughtful jurist who is deeply dedicated to the ideals of fairness and equality for all embedded in our Constitution. Judge Goldberg has been a trusted member of our court leadership. As Chair of the court’s Magistrate Judge Utilization Committee, he worked to create a more inclusive role for our magistrate judges in court governance and a more balanced distribution of work through initiatives such as the random assignment protocol for consent cases. He was also instrumental in the court’s adoption of a direct assignment procedure for social security appeals. At the national level, Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr. appointed him to serve as a member of the Judicial Conference Committee on Defender Services, which oversees the provision of legal representation to indigent defendants in criminal cases, in 2022. The Chief Justice also appointed him to serve on the Ad Hoc Committee to Review the Criminal Justice Act

(the “Cardone Committee”), which recommended over thirty reforms to improve the guarantee of independent defense counsel in criminal cases, the vast majority of which were adopted. As a colleague, Judge Goldberg is good-natured, collegial, reliable, and humble. I am confident he will be an outstanding Chief Judge.”

Judge Goldberg’s colleague, Judge L. Felipe Restrepo of the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit concurred. “Judge Mitchell Goldberg has always maintained a sense of humility and a sincere unassuming presence regardless of his position. His humility and affable demeanor will serve him well as the new Chief Judge of the EDPA. All of us who value the importance of the judiciary and the rule of law owe him a debt of gratitude for his service and are very fortunate that Judge Goldberg will assume the role of Chief Judge - we wish him well.”

Former Chief Judge Harvey Bartle added, “Judge Mitchell Goldberg, whom I have known during his over 15 years on this court, is well liked and highly respected by his colleagues and the bar. He is conscientious and extremely dedicated to his work. There is no doubt that he will be an outstanding Chief Judge.”

Judge Cynthia M. Rufe commented, “Judge Goldberg has earned the reputation for clear legal analyses and fairness. He is efficient, maintains a current docket, and with his intellect and management skills has successfully concluded multi-district litigation cases which serves the federal court system nation-wide.”

Judge Goldberg was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He received his Juris Doctor from Temple University Beasley School of Law in 1986 where he was a member of Temple’s first trial team. Judge Goldberg served as an Assistant District Attorney for the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania District Attorney’s Office from 1986 to 1989 before entering private practice at the firm of Cozen O’Connor. He was an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania in the United States Attorney’s Office from 1997 to 2003. Judge Goldberg was

appointed to serve as a Judge of Bucks County Court of Common Pleas in Bucks County, Pennsylvania from 2003 to 2008. He also served as an Adjunct Professor at Temple University Beasley School of Law from 2002 to 2006.

On July 24, 2008, Judge Goldberg was appointed to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania to fill the seat vacated by Judge John Padova, Sr. Judge Goldberg was confirmed by the Senate on September 26, 2008 and commissioned on October 31, 2008.

Chief Judge Goldberg praised Judge Juan R. Sánchez for his service as Chief Judge. “Chief Judge Juan Sánchez has accomplished a great deal as the leader of our court, but I would highlight his work towards attaining better diversity in the court system, particularly in our jury pool, his integration and utilization of our talented magistrate judges and his tireless outreach to the public regarding the importance of the judicial branch. And he did much of this through the pandemic while also maintaining a rigorous and complicated docket. Judge Sánchez’s energy and work ethic will be hard to match. On behalf of all the judges on our court, we thank him for his leadership and exemplary public service.”

The Honorable Juan R. Sánchez was appointed to the federal bench in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania in 2004 and has served as Chief Judge for the past five and a half years. During his tenure as Chief Judge, Judge Sánchez steered the court through numerous challenges, including a protracted government shutdown in 2018-2019 and deep budget cuts that impacted staffing levels. Most notably, he navigated the court through the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring that the court remained open and operational throughout while also protecting the health and safety of the court’s workforce and all those entering court facilities.

As Chief Judge, Judge Sánchez also worked with court leadership and the Clerk of Court on numerous initiatives to improve and modernize the court. During his tenure, the court continued its efforts to improve juror diversity and worked to increase diversity in other areas.

Judge Sánchez promoted diversity in law clerk hiring, organizing a “Pathways to a Federal Clerkship” event for local law students, and increased the diversity of the merit selection panels that assist the court in the magistrate judge selection process. The court also made significant improvements to its magistrate judge utilization practices by adopting procedures for the direct assignment of social security appeals to magistrate judges and for the random assignment of civil consent cases, and by expanding the role of magistrate judges in court governance and other areas. The court prioritized security, reestablishing its Court and Facility Security Committees and implementing other security initiatives such as new procedures for possessing and using cameras and personal electronic devices in EDPA courthouses. It revamped its pro se law clerk program, expanded the use of electronic filing for attorneys and pro se litigants, and introduced virtual arbitration hearings. And it invested in technology upgrades, including initiatives to make wireless internet access available to the bar throughout EDPA courthouses and to upgrade courtroom technology in a cost-effective manner by increasing the court’s in-house capacity to handle this task.

The Eastern District of Pennsylvania is headquartered at the James A. Byrne Courthouse in Philadelphia and has three divisional courthouses in Allentown, Reading, and Easton with a courthouse staff of over one hundred fifty employees. The Chief Judge oversees the administration of the district which includes the offices of the Clerk of Court, Probation, Pre-Trial Services, and Bankruptcy. The district has twenty active judges, eight senior judges, as well as eight magistrate judges, and three bankruptcy judges.