



Catherine C. Henry

Born: 1969, in Edison, New Jersey

Federal Judicial Service:

Judge, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania
Nominated by Joseph R. Biden, Jr. on June 4, 2024, to a seat vacated by Edward G. Smith.
Confirmed by the Senate on December 3, 2024, and received commission on December 6, 2024.

Education:

Drew University, B.A., 1991
District of Columbia School of Law (now University of the District of Columbia Clarke School of Law), J.D., 1995

Professional Career:

Staff Attorney, Feminist Majority Foundation, Arlington, Virginia: 1995-1996
Assistant Defender, Defender Association of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: 1996-2002
Federal Community Defender Office, Eastern District of Pennsylvania: 2002-2024; Assistant Federal Defender: 2002-2008; Senior Litigator: 2008-2024
Adjunct Professor, University of Pennsylvania Carey School of Law: 2009-

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Judicial Biography

Judge Henry graduated from Drew University in 1991 and received her J.D. from the University of the District of Columbia Daniel A. Clarke School of Law in 1995.

She took the oath of office as a United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania on December 12, 2024, following nearly three decades of service as a career public defender. She brings to the bench a depth of professional experience, including civil and criminal constitutional advocacy. She has made nearly 1400 appearances in this district and taken numerous trials to verdict.

Judge Henry began her career advancing gender equality as a staff attorney at the Feminist Majority Foundation. She then arrived in Philadelphia to begin three decades defending indigent clients, first at the Defender Association of Philadelphia and later at the Federal Community Defender Office. Over her 24 years in the federal courthouse, she litigated many complex criminal cases, including over 30 trials to verdict. Since 2008, she was the office's Senior Litigator, a role in which she continued trial practice while also mentoring junior attorneys and leading training in trial advocacy, sentencing strategy, and federal criminal procedure.

Judge Henry's service extends beyond the courtroom. She taught Trial Advocacy at the University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School and Temple University Beasley School of Law, and served as an instructor in Temple's LL.M. program and federal criminal clinic. Nationally recognized for her legal insight, she regularly trained federal defenders and Criminal Justice Act attorneys, and she was appointed chair of the Public Defenders Committee of the American College of Trial Lawyers in 2023. She served as the volunteer Defender representative for the STAR Program, a reentry initiative aiding formerly incarcerated individuals in their return to society – a role that reflects her enduring commitment to justice with compassion.

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. nominated Judge Henry on June 4, 2024, to fill the seat of the late Judge Edward G. Smith. The United States Senate confirmed her nomination on December 3, 2024. She received her commission on December 6, 2024.