



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

May 21, 2025

CONTACT:

Karissa Hand, karissa.hand@mass.gov, 617-725-4025

Governor Healey Nominates Five Attorneys to District Court

Governor Healey has now nominated over 70 judges across Massachusetts

BOSTON – Governor Maura Healey today nominated Patrick Burke, Brian Doxtader, Ed Karcasinas, Suzanne McDonough and Liza Williamson to serve as Associate Justices of the District Court. The nominees will now be considered by the Governor’s Council for confirmation.

“All five of these distinguished attorneys will bring decades of experience and a proven dedication to upholding the rule of law,” said **Governor Healey**. “I’m grateful to the Governor’s Council for their hard work to review all of the judicial nominations we have put before them and look forward to our continued partnership.”

“I am excited to work with the Governor’s Council to advance these nominees, who have shown a true dedication to the law and justice,” said **Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll**.

The District Court Department hears a wide range of criminal, civil, housing, juvenile, mental health, and other types of cases. District Court criminal jurisdiction extends to all felonies punishable by a sentence up to five years, and many other specific felonies with greater potential penalties, all misdemeanors, and all violations of city and town ordinances and by-laws. In civil matters, the District Court hears cases in which the damages are not likely to be more than \$50,000 and small claims cases up to \$7,000. The District Court is located in 62 courts across the state.

Governor Healey has already nominated 13 attorneys to the District Court: [Heath Antonio](#), [Leo Fama](#), [Francis V. Kenneally](#), [Courtney C. Linnehan](#), [Marjorie P. Tynes](#), [Sarah Kennedy](#), [Edward Krippendorf](#), [Frederick DeCubellis](#), [Gregory Teran](#), [Amanda Ward](#), [Stuart Hurowitz](#) and [Polly Phillips](#).

For more information about the District Court, visit their [homepage](#).

About the Nominees:

[Patrick Burke](#) is an experienced trial attorney with nearly thirty years of experience representing clients throughout Massachusetts' courts. He has been a Trial Attorney and Partner at Burke Levy, PC since 2017 where he represents clients in criminal matters in the Superior, District and Juvenile Courts while also representing clients in the Probate and Family Court. Prior to that work, Attorney Burke was a Partner at LoConto, Burke and Madaio, PC and focused primarily on criminal defense. He also previously served as an Assistant District Attorney in the Worcester County District Attorney's Office where he prosecuted both felony and misdemeanor cases in District Court. During his career of primarily courtroom work, he tried hundreds of jury cases to verdict. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Massachusetts Amherst and a Juris Doctor from the Massachusetts School of Law. He lives in Westborough.

[Brian Doxtader](#) has served as the First Assistant Clerk Magistrate in the West Roxbury Division of the Boston Municipal Court since April 2024 and prior to that he had served as an Assistant Clerk Magistrate for nearly a decade. In these roles, he has been responsible for conducting small claims hearings, civil motor vehicle hearings and show cause hearings, and for reviewing search warrants and criminal complaints for probable cause. Prior to that, he served as an Assistant District Attorney in the Middlesex District Attorney where he was the Lowell Regional District Court Supervisor, responsible for overseeing the administration and management of attorneys in the Lowell District Court, Lowell Juvenile Court and the Ayer District Court. As an Assistant District Attorney, he also prosecuted a wide range of criminal cases in the District Court and the Superior Court. Attorney Doxtader holds a Bachelor of Art from the University of Notre Dame and a Juris Doctor from Boston College Law School. He lives in West Roxbury.

[Ed Karcasinas](#) has served as the First Assistant District Attorney for the Middle District for nearly two decades. He is responsible for assisting with investigations and prosecutions of serious felony cases and supervising more than 150 employees. He is also the primary liaison for New England Organ Bank, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, and other state agencies on behalf of the Office of the District Attorney. Attorney Karcasinas also serves as an Adjunct Faculty Member at the Clark University where he has taught on the criminal justice system since 2006. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Maine, Orono, and a Juris Doctorate from the New England School of Law. He lives in Holden.

[Suzanne McDonough](#) has served as Deputy Legal Counsel of the Administrative Office of the District Court since 2022. She advises the Chief Justice, Justices and Clerk Magistrates of the District Court on legal, ethical, and policy issues, and has developed curriculum, training materials and legal bulletins to support clerks and judges on best practices. She is a staff member of the District Court Criminal Proceedings Committee, the Domestic Violence Committee, the New Judges Orientation Committee and several others. Previously, Attorney McDonough worked as an attorney in private practice as a member of McDonough Law Offices, where she defended private and indigent clients in criminal matters in trial and appellate matters in courts across Massachusetts. Before

starting her own practice, Attorney McDonough served as an Assistant District Attorney in the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office for over twelve years. She first served in the District Court and later moved to prosecuting murder, rape, child sexual assault, arson, drug and other major felony cases in the Superior Court, where she helped lead the Family Protection Unit. Attorney McDonough later worked in the Appeals Unit where she argued before the Massachusetts Appeals Court and Supreme Judicial Court. She holds a Bachelor of Arts from Boston College and Juris Doctor from Boston College Law School. She lives in Marshfield.

[Liza Williamson](#) has served as the Clerk Magistrate of the Edgartown District Court for over twenty years where she presides over small claims trials, issues search warrants, conducts bail hearings, and serves as the administrative head for the Court. Prior to this work, Attorney Williamson had a private general law practice that focused on civil and criminal defense matters in the Superior, District and Juvenile Courts. Attorney Williamson also previously served as an Assistant District Attorney in the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office and the Middlesex County District Attorney's Office where she prosecuted felony and misdemeanor cases in the Superior, District, and Juvenile Courts. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and a Juris Doctor from Suffolk University Law School. She lives in West Tisbury.

###