

SUPREME COURT OF NEW JERSEY

Vicinage 15 (Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem Counties) is at present temporarily unable to maintain full operations in all of its Municipal Courts due to judge unavailability. Without the temporary designation of additional judges, upcoming sessions in some of the vicinage's Municipal Courts will need to be cancelled, delaying the resolution of cases and thereby resulting in harm to the parties and the community.

While N.J.S.A. 2B:12-5 and 2B:12-6 provide options to address temporary judicial shortages in the Municipal Courts, those statutory provisions anticipate the availability of options within the affected vicinage. Those options do not immediately exist within Vicinage 15.

Accordingly, under the general authority provided in N.J. Const. Art. VI, Sec. VII, and in the interest of justice, **IT IS ORDERED** that the following Municipal Court judges currently serving in various municipalities in Vicinage 1 (Atlantic/Cape May), in addition to those assignments, also are temporarily assigned to the Municipal Courts in Vicinage 15 consistent with the provisions of the September 29, 2022 Vicinage 15 cross-assignment order issued by the Assignment Judge:

Hon. Louis J. Belasco, Jr.

Hon. Thomas D. Keywood

Hon. Billie J. Moore

Hon. Vincent J. Morrison

Hon. Marion R. Ragusa

These judges may be designated by the Assignment Judge or the Vicinage Municipal Court Presiding Judge to temporarily fill an emergent need in any Vicinage 15 Municipal Court when no Vicinage 15 Municipal Court judge is available.

Consistent with the existing requirements for compensating backup Municipal Court judges, for any Municipal Court session handled by any of the judges temporarily assigned to the vicinage by this order, that municipality shall be responsible to compensate the judge on a per diem basis.

The provisions of this Order shall be in effect immediately through May 30, 2023. Absent further unexpected circumstances, the Court does not anticipate extending the provisions of this Order beyond that end date.



Chief Justice

Dated: March 22, 2023