



SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY
COUNTIES OF
ATLANTIC AND CAPE MAY
VICINAGE I

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Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage Celebrates National Adoption Day

Assignment Judge Julio L. Mendez has announced that the Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage will hold its annual National Adoption Day program on Thursday, Nov. 15 in Atlantic County and Friday, Nov. 16 in Cape May County. The vicinage will help place 33 children in their forever homes.

National Adoption Day is an annual event in which courts and communities in all 50 states join to finalize thousands of adoptions of children to celebrate families who adopt. This year's events in Atlantic and Cape May Counties will be co-hosted by the Superior Court and the New Jersey Division of Child Protection & Permanency (DCP&P). Supporting this event will be the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Atlantic and Cape May Counties and the surrogates from both counties.

In Atlantic County, adoptions will be conducted by Assignment Judge Julio Mendez and Atlantic County Family Judges Michael Blee and Nancy Ridgway beginning at 8:30 a.m. The celebration will begin at 10 a.m. in the jury assembly room in the east wing lobby on the first floor of the Atlantic County Civil Courts Building, 1201 Bacharach Blvd., Atlantic City. Gifts will be presented to the children. Speakers will include Judge Mendez, Atlantic County Surrogate James Curcio, DCP&P Area Office Director Charles Jones and casework supervisor Sheri Patouhas. A special unveiling of a mural painting in the family waiting area is planned. Artists Tyrone Hart and Lauren Berchtold volunteered to paint the mural, making the waiting area an inviting place for children. A mural banner, designed by Egg Harbor Township High School students, also will be presented and displayed.

The Cape May County adoption proceedings will begin at 9 a.m. at the Cape May County Courthouse, 9 Main St., Cape May Court House. Adoptions will be conducted by Judge Mendez and Cape May County Family Judge John C. Porto. A celebration for the families will be held in the Historical Courthouse. Among those joining the judges in offering remarks will be Director Jones and Cynthia Phillips of the Office of the Attorney General, who is an adoptive parent.

Information will be available at the events for those interested in learning more about the adoption process. For more information, go to www.nationaladoptionday.org/.

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Although adoptions are closed to the public, arrangements will be made for reporters to interview willing families after the proceedings. Contact Florine Alexander, Family Division Manager, at 609-594-3446 for more information.