

News Release



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Donna Westhoven Named Assistant Director for Criminal Practice Division

Donna Westhoven has been named the assistant director for the criminal practice division of the New Jersey Judiciary, Glenn A. Grant, administrative director of the courts, announced today.

Westhoven succeeds Susan E. Callaghan, who retires June 30 after 33 years with the Judiciary. Her appointment is effective July 2.

Westhoven will oversee a division that provides support to all local criminal division judges, managers and staff. It includes the Criminal Court Services Unit, the Pretrial Services Unit, and the Sentencing/Legal Unit. A key priority for Westhoven will be helping to oversee the daily operations of Criminal Justice Reform and developing strategies to address the pending caseload increase that resulted from the Covid-19 pandemic.

“Donna’s special talents and skills have enabled her to play a very important role in the Judiciary’s recovery court program,” Grant said. “I am confident she will bring that same level of competency and expertise to the criminal practice division.”

Since 2014, Westhoven has been chief of the adult recovery court program. Recovery court, previously known as drug court, requires close supervision of defendants during several phases of intensive drug and alcohol treatment and recovery while resolving related criminal charges. She previously served as the assistant criminal division manager and a court services supervisor in the Burlington Vicinage. She spent nearly three years in various roles in the vicinage’s criminal division, including drug court team leader and trial team leader, and another five years as a probation officer in the vicinage.

“It is an honor and privilege to be selected as the assistant director in criminal practice. I welcome this opportunity to continue to serve the Judiciary and public while working with talented staff, managers, and judges throughout the state and at the Administrative Office of the Courts,” Westhoven said.

Callaghan began her career as a court clerk in the Essex Vicinage and worked her way up to a senior leadership role, eventually becoming assistant criminal division manager in the Monmouth and Essex vicinages, and chief of the Court Services Unit at the Administrative Office of the Courts.

Trial Court Services Director Jennifer Perez said Westhoven is an effective collaborator and a strong leader, qualities that will serve her well in her new role as assistant director of criminal practice.

“Donna has worked hard over the years to further improve our recovery court program and support the efforts of our judges and managers in that area. Her extensive experience in the criminal courts managing both personnel and programs, as well as her work coordinating with criminal justice stakeholders, make her an ideal candidate for this position,” Perez said.

Westhoven began her career in the Judiciary in 1997 as a clerk typist in the Burlington Vicinage. A 1999 graduate of Thomas Edison State College, she holds a bachelor’s degree in psychology and earned a master’s degree in human services from Seton Hall University.

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