

# News Release



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## **Jill L. Houck Named Trial Court Administrator for Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage**

Assignment Judge Michael J. Blee of the Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage announced today the appointment of Jill L. Houck as trial court administrator, effective Oct. 1.

Houck succeeds Howard H. Berchtold Jr., who will retire after 41 years with the Judiciary, the last 16 as trial court administrator.

“Trial Court Administrator Howard Berchtold’s more than four decades of service in the Judiciary is exemplified by his leadership and commitment to judicial administration and case management not only for the residents of Atlantic and Cape May counties but also for consumers of court services throughout our state. His contributions to our system have been instrumental in implementing some of the most important Judiciary initiatives over the past 20 years. He leaves a very proud legacy of accomplishment for others to follow,” said Glenn A. Grant, administrative director of the courts.

Under New Jersey court rules, the administrative director of the courts appoints the trial court administrator in each vicinage. Director Grant said he named Houck on the strong recommendation of Judge Blee.

Houck has served as the vicinage’s assistant trial court administrator and the operations division manager since 2018. She served as the criminal division manager the previous three years. Houck began her career with the Judiciary in 2005 as a probation officer in Cumberland County, where she also worked as a team leader in the criminal division for six years before being named assistant criminal division manager in the Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage in 2012.

“Ms. Houck has been very involved in the management of the vicinage. With her great talent and energy, she is well positioned to build on the accomplishments of her predecessors,” Director Grant said.

Houck earned a bachelor's degree from John Jay College of Criminal Justice and her master's degree from John Jay Graduate School. Last month, she became a fellow of the Institute for Court Management (ICM) after completing the Court Executive Development Program of the National Center for State Courts (NCSC). She earned the ICM's Class of 2022 Award of Merit for completing the most outstanding court improvement project of the graduating class.

"I look forward to working with Assignment Judge Blee and continuing the vicinage's outstanding work in the areas of access and fairness, community outreach, and equal justice for the residents of Atlantic and Cape May counties," Houck said.

The trial court administrator is the highest ranking staff executive in the vicinage in charge of all court operations, including financial management, human resources, and case flow management.

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