Superior Court of California
County of Santa Clara

CONTACT
JESSICA KELLOGG
Communications Program Manager
media@scscourt.org
(408) 882-2802 desk
(408) 334-9236 cell

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Superior Court of California, County of Santa Clara Announces Presiding Judge and Assistant Presiding Judge for 2023-2024

SAN JOSÉ, CA (September 30, 2022): Today the Judges of the Superior Court of California, County of Santa Clara held their biennial election in accordance with internal policy to select a Presiding Judge and Assistant Presiding Judge.

Honorable Beth McGowen was elected Presiding Judge and Honorable Julie A. Emede Assistant Presiding Judge of the Santa Clara Superior Court. Judge McGowen and Judge Emede will begin their two-year terms on January 1, 2023.

Judge McGowen is the current Assistant Presiding Judge and will relieve Honorable Theodore C. Zayner upon the completion of his two-year term as Presiding Judge on December 31, 2022.

"I am excited for the future of our court and community as we continue to move forward beyond the pandemic under the leadership of Judges McGowen and Emede," shared current Presiding Judge Zayner. "We are truly honored to be led by these two experienced and accomplished judicial leaders."

The Presiding Judge upholds the authority and duties prescribed in the California Rules of Court. The Assistant Presiding Judge is assigned duties as the Presiding Judge deems necessary and acts as the Presiding Judge in their absence.

Beth McGowen – Presiding Judge-Elect

Judge McGowen was appointed to the Bench in 2009. Her judicial career has included assignments in Criminal, Juvenile Justice, Domestic Violence, Civil, Appellate and as an all-purpose Family Court Judge. She is currently the Assistant Presiding Judge, after serving as the Supervising Judge of the Civil Division. She served on the South County Mayor's Gang Task Force and several Court Committees, including the Strategic Planning Committee, the Domestic Violence Committee, the Education Committee, and Chair of the Court's Personnel Committee. She currently sits on the Judicial Council's Advisory Committee for

Civil and Small Claims matters. Judge Beth McGowen began her legal career at McCutchen, Doyle, Brown & Enersen as an associate and later became a partner. She is a past member of the Board of Directors for the Silicon Valley Law Foundation and past president of the Santa Clara County Bar Association's Women Lawyers Committee. She received her juris doctor from the University of California - Hastings College of the Law.

Julie A. Emede – Assistant Presiding Judge-Elect

Judge Emede was appointed to the Santa Clara County Superior Court bench in December 2009, and is currently serving in the Appellate / Provisional Remedies Division. Before her most recent assignment, she served in Probate Court for three years, in Family Court for over five years (including as the Supervising Judge for three years), and in the dedicated Criminal Family Violence Court for almost three years (including as the Supervising Judge for two years). Prior to her appointment to the bench, she was a family law attorney, where she handled all aspects of family law cases including marital/domestic partnership dissolutions, adoptions, guardianships, and court-appointed representation of children. Judge Emede has been a presenter at various judicial and continuing legal education seminars, and previously taught Community Property and Family Law at Santa Clara University School of Law. She received her undergraduate degree from Michigan State University and her juris doctor from the (soon to be renamed) University of California - Hastings College of the Law.

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