

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON FOR PIERCE COUNTY

PRESS RELEASE

December 8, 2022

RE: RETIREMENT OF JUDGE JAMES R. ORLANDO

Pierce County Superior Court is announcing the retirement of Judge James R. Orlando after more than 22 years serving the citizens of Pierce County. Judge Orlando's last day will be December 30, 2022.

Judge James R. Orlando was born in Seattle, Washington in 1957. He has been a lifelong resident of the Pacific Northwest and was a Pierce County Superior Court Judge, Department 1, from 2000 to 2022.

In 1967, Judge Orlando's family moved to Gig Harbor where he graduated from Peninsula High School in 1976. He attended Willamette University in Salem, Oregon before transferring to the UW in Seattle. During college he married his wife, Kristen; they have two adult sons and are blessed with 6 grandchildren. Family has always been Judge Orlando's priority.



After graduating with a BA in Economics and Political Science, Judge Orlando attended the University of Puget Sound School of Law. He began his career as an associate at the law firm of Rovai, McGoffin. In 1986, he became a partner in the firm, known then as Rovai, Miller, Foley and Orlando. In 1993, he opened a solo practice in Fircrest handling business and estate law, personal injury, and family law. He also served as the Municipal Court Judge for Fife and Fircrest, and as a District Court Pro Tem Judge. In 1995, Judge Orlando was selected to serve as a Pierce County Superior Court Commissioner. During his five years as a commissioner, he was named Outstanding Court Commissioner (1997-1999) and rated Exceptionally Well Qualified by the TPCBA. In July of 2000, Judge Orlando ran unopposed for Pierce County Superior Court Department #1, which was being vacated by Judge Arthur Verharen. After being elected to begin in January of 2001, Governor Locke appointed Judge Orlando to complete Judge Verharen's term from September to December 2000.

Over the course of 27 years on the bench, Judge Orlando received many accolades and awards, including the "2010 Judge of the Year" award from the Washington State Association for Justice which is presented to "A judge, who through the exercise of outstanding judicial ruling or leadership, promotes our civil justice system to serve people". His professional affiliations include the Superior Court Judge's Association Ethics and Criminal Law Committees, past chair; chair of the Presiding Judge Committee for the Board for Court Education; the Pierce County Superior Court Guardian ad Litem Committee; the Governor's Juvenile Advisory Committee; and the Washington State Partnership Council for Juvenile Justice. He also served on the Comprehensive Health Education Foundation board, one of the nation's leading health and

prevention education organizations with a focus on at-risk youth and their families. Aware of the plight of America's youth, Judge Orlando is passionate about programs that provide education and assistance to young people. He was also a member of the American Inns of Court.

Judge Orlando is a longtime resident and active community member of Fircrest. He served on the volunteer fire department from 1989 to 1995 and cherishes the time he spent coming to the aid of his community. He is also a longtime member of the Christopher Columbus Society.

While some choose to become a Judge because it is the next thing to *be*, Judge Orlando chose to enter the arena because it was the next thing to *do*. He saw an opportunity to make a difference in lives, the community and in Washington State. He has always been a man who served his community and worked for greater good. When asked to sum up his experiences, he said, "I take pride in making a positive impact in people's lives. One of the greatest complements I receive is to see someone years later and be thanked for what was done in their case." Judge Orlando especially loves to hear from families where he presided over adoptions or successful reunifications.

Superior Court Presiding Judge Phil Sorensen had the following to say about Judge Orlando. "Judge Jim Orlando's career has been marked by his commitment to service. Service in the community, to the justice system, to youth and to his family. In addition to being a work horse trial judge, handling complex criminal and civil matters as a matter of routine, he has used his position to identify, frame and influence a variety of issues that are important to the citizens of the state of Washington. He has consistently provided needed perspective and advice to members of our bench. We will miss our colleague and friend."

Heading into retirement, Judge Orlando looks forward to traveling. In addition, he enjoys boating and plans to spend many days, weeks, and even months on his boat, the Ava Mia. As Judge Orlando says, "Everything is better on the water."

About Pierce County Superior Court:

Pierce County Superior Court is the second largest Superior Court in the State of Washington and is proud to serve the citizens and visitors of Pierce County. The Court is staffed with 23 Judges and 10 Commissioners. There are three sites where court is held; the County-City Building at 930 Tacoma Ave S., Tacoma, Remann Hall Juvenile Court at 5501 6th Ave., Tacoma, and Western State Hospital currently located near the County City Building campus. For more information, please visit our website at <https://www.piercecountywa.gov/122/Superior-Court>.

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