

## Court Information Release



United States District Court  
Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division  
219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604

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the Northern District of Illinois  
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### **Senate Confirms Judges Iain D. Johnston and Judge Franklin U. Valderrama as U.S. District Judges**

This afternoon the U.S. Senate confirmed Judge Iain D. Johnston and Judge Franklin U. Valderrama as U.S. District Judges for the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.

“Our court is delighted to welcome these distinguished jurists to our district court bench. Both Judge Johnston and Judge Valderrama bring significant judicial experience that will benefit the people of the Northern District of Illinois,” said Chief Judge Rebecca R. Pallmeyer.

Judge Johnston currently serves as U.S. Magistrate Judge on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois in the court’s Western Division in Rockford. Before joining the bench in 2013, Judge Johnston was a unit supervisor for the Office of the Illinois Attorney General and in private practice with Altheimer & Gray, Holland & Knight LLP, and Johnston Greene LLC. Judge Johnston earned his undergraduate degree from Rockford College. Upon graduation from UIC John Marshall Law School, Judge Johnston served as a law clerk to Judge Philip G. Reinhard of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. Judge Johnston also serves as an adjunct professor at UIC John Marshall Law School.

On February 5, 2020, the President announced his intent to nominate Judge Johnston to serve as a United States District Judge, and on February 12, 2020, his nomination was sent to the Senate. When he receives his judicial commission, Judge Johnston will fill the seat vacated by Judge Frederick J. Kapala, who took senior status on May 10, 2019.

Judge Valderrama currently serves as a Chancellor, a judge in the Chancery Division of the Circuit Court of Cook County. Prior to joining the bench in 2007, Judge Valderrama was a partner at Sanchez, Daniels & Hoffman LLP, where his practice focused on civil litigation. Judge Valderrama has also served as an adjunct professor at UIC John Marshall Law school. Judge Valderrama earned his undergraduate from the University of Illinois at Chicago and his law degree from the DePaul University College of Law.

On February 5, 2020, the President announced his intent to nominate Judge Valderrama to serve as a United States District Judge, and on February 12, 2020, his nomination was sent to

the Senate. Upon receipt of his judicial commission, Judge Valderrama will fill the seat vacated by former Judge Rubén Castillo, who retired from the court on September 27, 2019. Judge Valderrama believes he will be the first Panamanian-American to serve as an Article III judge.

Illinois' two U.S. Senators, Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth, have worked together to recommend qualified individuals for federal judgeships to the President.

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