

Court Information Release



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After distinguished career on federal bench, Judge Kapala to assume senior status

Chicago, Ill.- Today, District Judge Frederick J. Kapala notified President Donald J. Trump that he intends to assume senior status effective May 10, 2019. Judge Kapala has served as a federal district judge since May 10, 2007, occupying the one District Court Judgeship in the Western Division at the Stanley J. Roszkowski U.S. Courthouse in Rockford.

“I want to thank Judge Kapala for his commitment and service to this Court and the people of the Northern District of Illinois,” said Chief Judge Rubén Castillo. “Judge Kapala has served as an Associate Judge, Circuit Court Judge, Appellate Court Judge, and then as a United States District Court Judge, demonstrating his commitment to the Rule of Law. His service to the citizens of this Court’s Western Division has simply been outstanding.”

On January 9, 2007, Judge Kapala was nominated by President George W. Bush to serve as a U.S. District Court Judge. Born in Rockford, Illinois, Judge Kapala received his undergraduate degree from Marquette University and his law degree from University of Illinois College of Law. He served in the United States Army Reserve, in both active and reserve duty, from 1970 to 1980, attaining the rank of Captain. From 1976 until 1977, he was Assistant States Attorney, Winnebago County, Illinois. He worked in private practice from 1977 until 1982. While in private practice, he was appointed Special Assistant Attorney General, prosecuting consumer fraud cases in Northern Illinois. He served as an Associate Judge, State of Illinois, from 1982 until 1994, and as an Illinois Circuit Court Judge, Seventeenth Judicial Circuit, from 1994 until 2001. From 2001 to 2007, he served as an Illinois Appellate Court Judge, Second District.

Beginning at age 65, a judge may retire at his or her current salary or take senior status after performing 15 years of active service as an Article III judge, with one less year of service required for each additional year of age. Senior judges, who essentially provide volunteer service to the courts, typically handle about 15 percent of the federal courts’ workload annually.

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