

Court Information Release



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

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After Distinguished Career, Judge Der-Yeghiayan to Retire

Chicago, Ill.-Chief Judge Rubén Castillo announced that United States District Judge Samuel Der-Yeghiayan will fully retire as of February 17, 2018. Judge Der-Yeghiayan was nominated by President George W. Bush on March 5, 2003; confirmed by the Senate on July 14, 2003; and received his commission on July 15, 2003.

Born in Aleppo, Syria, to Armenian parents, Judge Der-Yeghiayan was raised in Beirut, Lebanon. At the age of 19, he moved to the United States. Judge Der-Yeghiayan is the first immigrant of Armenian descent to be named federal judge in the United States.

“Judge Der-Yeghiayan has served this court with great energy and attention to active management of his assigned cases. A career public servant, Judge Der-Yeghiayan’s service and commitment to the impartial administration of justice have positively impacted this Court. On behalf of the Court, I wish him all the best in retirement,” said Chief Judge Castillo.

Judge Der-Yeghiayan received his undergraduate degree from Evangel University in 1975. In 1978, he earned his law degree from Franklin Pierce Law Center, now known University of New Hampshire School of Law. From 1978 until 2000, he served in various positions with the Chicago District of Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), including trial attorney from 1978 to 1982, district counsel from 1982 to 2000, and acting director from 1986 to 1987. In 2000, Judge Der-Yeghiayan was appointed an immigration judge in the Department of Justice Executive Office for Immigration Review where he served from 2000 until 2003. Judge Der-Yeghiayan and his wife, Becky, have been married for more than forty years and have two children.

Pursuant to the Local Rules and Internal Operation Procedures of the Court, the Clerk will randomly reassign Judge Der-Yeghiayan’s pending cases as he finishes his time on the bench.

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