



# **NEWS RELEASE**

**New York State  
Unified Court System**

**Hon. Joseph A. Zayas  
Chief Administrative Judge**

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## **Chief Administrative Judge Names Advisory Group to Address New York City Housing Court Challenges**

**NEW YORK CITY**—Chief Administrative Judge Joseph A. Zayas today announced the formation of the New York City Housing Court Practice and Policy Advisory Committee, a diverse group of judges, attorneys, advocates, and government officials charged with examining systemic challenges affecting the quality of justice in New York City’s high-volume Housing Court. The committee, chaired by New York City Housing Court Supervising Judge Jack Stoller and Bronx Housing Court Judge and Housing Court Judges Association President Christel Garland, will advise court leadership on operational enhancements and policy, legislative, and other reforms aimed at strengthening the Housing Court’s effectiveness, fairness, and accessibility.

The committee brings together a broad range of perspectives — including tenant and landlord advocates, academics, and representatives from New York City and New York State government and court support organizations — alongside judges and non-judicial court personnel. Its mandate is to identify and closely study persistent issues affecting the administration of justice across Housing Court in all five boroughs.

To fulfill this mission, the Advisory Committee will:

- Recommend procedural and operational improvements to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Housing Court
- Review and propose changes to statutes, court rules, administrative practices, and related policies within the Court’s jurisdiction
- Provide informed feedback on pending legislation and policy initiatives affecting housing law and practice in New York City

The committee will offer ongoing analysis, consultation, and policy guidance, reporting regularly to the court leadership on its activities and progress.

“The New York City Housing Court hears thousands of cases each year involving consequential issues that affect the stability, safety, and well-being of individuals, families, and entire communities across the City’s five boroughs,” said Chief Administrative Judge Zayas. “I look forward to the guidance of this newly established assemblage of experts, whose thoughtful and informed support will help ensure the Court’s optimal functioning in fulfilling its crucial mission.”

“The laws, policies, and conditions affecting housing in New York City are complex and continuously evolving,” said First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Norman St. George. “I am eager to work with Judges Stoller and Garland and the Advisory Committee members as we explore procedural and other innovations to best meet the justice needs of the individuals and families — many among our most vulnerable New Yorkers — who seek redress in New York City Housing Court.”

A membership roster of the New York City Housing Court Practice and Policy Advisory Committee is attached.

## **New York City Housing Court Practice and Policy Advisory Committee**

### Committee Roster:

- **Judicial Co-Chairs**
  - Hon. Jack Stoller, Citywide Supervising Judge of the Housing Part of the Civil Court of the City of New York
  - Hon. Christel Garland, President of the Housing Court Judges Association; Housing Court Judge, Bronx County
  
- **Counsel**
  - Peter Kempner, Assistant Deputy Counsel, Office of Court Administration
  
- **Tenant Representation**
  - Munonyedi Clifford, Attorney-in-Charge, City-wide Housing Practice, The Legal Aid Society
  - Rosalind Black, Citywide Housing Director, Legal Services NYC
  - Alfred Toussaint, Program Director, Housing Unit, CAMBA Legal Services
  - Jerome Frierson, Vice President of Legal Services, Bronx Works
  - Donna Chiu, Managing Attorney for Housing Administration, Mobilization for Justice Legal Services
  - Serge Joseph, Partner, Himmelstein Gribben & Joseph, LLP
  
- **Landlord Representation**
  - Ramona Goodman, Partner, Novick Edelstein, Pomerantz, P.C.
  - David Fonseca, Partner, Kucker, Marino, Winiarsky, & Bittens, LLP
  - Gregory T. Smith, Partner, Hertz, Cherson & Rosenthal, P.C.
  - Carlos Perez-Hall, Partner, Borah, Goldstein, Nahins & Goidel, P.C.
  - Laura Bellrose, New York City Housing Authority, Director and Chief of the Landlord and Tenant Division
  - Kenny Burgos, Chief Executive Officer, New York Apartment Association (NYAA)
  
- **New York City Government**
  - Masha Gindler, Civil Justice Coordinator, Office of Civil Justice, New York City Department of Social Services
  - Bruce Jordan, Rental Assistance Unit, New York City Department of Social Services
  - Martha Ann Weithman, Deputy General Counsel, New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, Code Enforcement
  
- **New York State Government**
  - Jooyeon Lee, Deputy Commissioner, Tenant Protection Unit, New York State Homes & Community Renewal

- Academic
  - Jennifer M. Fernandez, Associate Professor of Law, CUNY School of Law
  
- Court Support Organizations
  - Jenny Laurie, Executive Director, Housing Court Answers
  - Ignacio Jaureguilorda, Director of Civil Access to Justice Initiatives, Center for Justice Innovation
  
- NYS Unified Court System
  - Tanya Faye, Chief Clerk, New York City Civil Court, Citywide Administration
  - Beck Zucker, Special Counsel to Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Edwina G. Richardson, Office for Justice Initiatives, Division of Policy and Planning
  
- Judicial Leadership - Ex Officio
  - Hon. Edwina G. Richardson, Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Justice Initiatives
  - Hon. Adam Silvera, Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for the New York City Courts
  - Hon. Shahabuddeen A. Ally, Administrative Judge for the New York City Civil Court