



MINNESOTA
JUDICIAL
BRANCH

First Judicial District

Mission: To provide justice through a system that assures equal access for the fair and timely resolution of cases and controversies.

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[First Judicial District Public Website](#)

The First District has 36 judges and more than 250 staff with a district average of 95,000 case filings annually in Carver, Dakota, Goodhue, Le Sueur, McLeod, Scott, and Sibley counties

The First Edition

A Newsletter about the First Judicial District of the State of Minnesota

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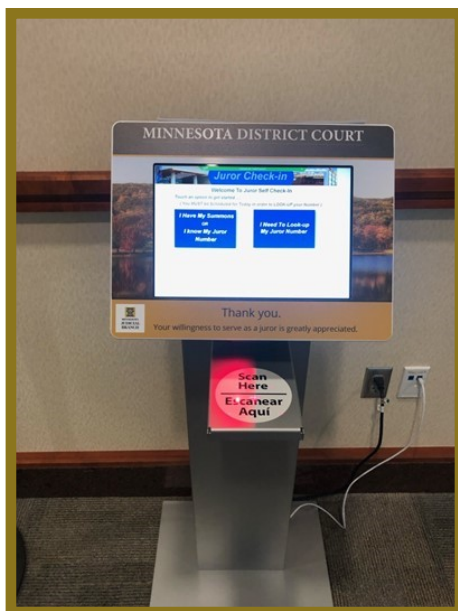
WINTER 2024

First Judicial District Installs Check-In Kiosks to Improve Juror Experience

All jury assembly rooms in the First District are now equipped with kiosks, which will improve the juror check-in process. The kiosks are standalone devices that allow reporting jurors to check-in themselves when they arrive to the courthouse.

The kiosks provide a very quick, simple, and streamlined approach for jurors to check-in for jury duty. They guide jurors through the check-in process, record daily attendance, and facilitate optional juror mileage entry. This speeds up juror processing and management, thus creating a positive experience for jurors.

The kiosks also benefit court administration staff who are able to spend more time welcoming jurors, giving extra attention to those who need assistance, and providing an opportunity to focus on other critical tasks during the process.



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Judicial Council Approves Sibley-Le Sueur County Treatment Court

The Minnesota Judicial Council recently approved a proposal to establish a new hybrid Drug-DWI Court that will serve both Sibley and Le Sueur Counties.

Le Sueur County has operated a [hybrid Drug-DWI Court](#) since 2015. The approval of this new court will expand that court to also cover Sibley County.

The new joint treatment court is expected to have a combined capacity of 30 participants: 10 in Sibley Coun-

ty and 20 in Le Sueur County. The program will target high-risk/high-need individuals who have drug or drug-related crimes, as well as those who have a history with addiction and have gone through treatment and other forms of help without success.

"The joint treatment court collaboration with Le Sueur County will have a significant and positive impact on the Sibley County community," said Sibley County District Court Judge Amber Donley. "The combined court will

provide individualized and proven solutions to those struggling with addiction. Our goal is to reduce recidivism, lower incarceration costs, and create better outcomes for offenders struggling with addiction. A special thank you to the Le Sueur and Sibley County leaders and treatment court members for all the cooperation and hard work."

The joint program is expected to launch sometime in February-March 2024.

Governor Walz Appoints Krista Marks to Fill First Judicial District Vacancy



Krista Marks

On December 15, 2023, Governor Tim Walz and Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan announced the appointment of Krista Marks as District Court Judge in Minnesota's First Judicial District. Marks will replace the Honorable Arlene M. Asencio Perkio and will be chambered in Hastings in Dakota County.

"I am honored to appoint Krista Marks to the First Judicial District," said Governor Walz. "As a longtime public defender, she is committed to serving Minnesotans and dedicated

to fair and just outcomes. I am confident that she will bring an important perspective to the Dakota County bench."

"Krista Marks will be an extraordinary judge for Dakota County," said Lieutenant Governor Flanagan. "Her lived experience is powerful, and she is deeply rooted in community. She has dedicated her career to pursuing justice for those on the margins, and I am confident that her fair and compassionate approach to the law will benefit those who need it the most."



Governor Walz Appoints Krista Marks to Fill First Judicial District Vacancy

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Minnesota's First Judicial District consists of Carver, Dakota, Goodhue, Le Sueur, McLeod, Scott, and Sibley Counties.

Marks is an assistant public defender in the Fourth Judicial District Public Defender's Office in Hennepin County. She was previously a staff attorney and expungement program director at the Neighborhood Justice Cen-

ter, where her work centered around community advocacy. Marks's community involvement includes volunteering at her son's school and at Neighbors, Inc., a local nonprofit that provides food, clothing, and other services to those in need in her community. She earned her B.A. from the University of St. Thomas and her J.D. from William Mitchell College of Law.

For more information about the judicial selection process, please visit the [Governor's Judicial Appointments webpage](#).



New Laws, Rules, and Policies Take Effect January 1, 2024

Extreme Risk Protection Order

A family or household member, a chief law enforcement officer, a city or county attorney, or a guardian may request an Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) from the court, which prohibits a respondent from purchasing or possessing a firearm while the order is in effect. [Read more about extreme risk protection orders.](#)

Sign and Release Warrant

The court is required in certain cases to issue a Sign and Release Warrant for a defendant, which does not authorize arrest.

Law enforcement will serve and clear these warrants by providing the defendant a new court date. [Read more about sign and release warrants.](#)

Minnesota Pre-Trial Risk Assessment

Minnesota's Pre-Trial Assessment Form and Tool has been revised. [Read more about the MNPAT-R.](#)

Cameras in the Courtroom

The Minnesota Supreme Court has amended the rules governing audio

and visual coverage of criminal proceedings.

[Read the Court's Order](#), the [Notice of Coverage and Victim/Witness forms](#), and download [Form CRM903 Agreement to Visual of Audio Coverage](#).



Judge Mark Vandelist Named 2023 Distinguished Jurist *Award is the Academy of Certified Trial Lawyers' highest*



Judge Mark Vandelist

The Academy of Certified Trial Lawyers of Minnesota named Judge Mark Vandelist its 2023 Distinguished Jurist in a ceremony on November 10, 2023, in St. Paul.

The award honors recently retired judges who performed at the highest level of jurisprudence by respecting the constitutional requirement for a trial by jury, conducting themselves in a manner that generated respect for the judicial process, appreciating the work of trial lawyers, and fostering civility in the courtroom.

"ACTLM was pleased to recognize Judge Mark Vandelist as the 2023

Distinguished Jurist," said ACTLM Executive Director Kristi Paulson. "We recognized him for his skills, knowledge, and dedication to the civil trial process; for his long-standing commitment to the jury system; and for his ethics, civility, and professionalism in the practice and on the bench."

Attorney Roger Kramer, who chaired this year's ACTLM award committee, said the vote for Vandelist was unanimous. The committee not only was impressed with Vandelist's intellect, civility, and communications skills, but also his humility.

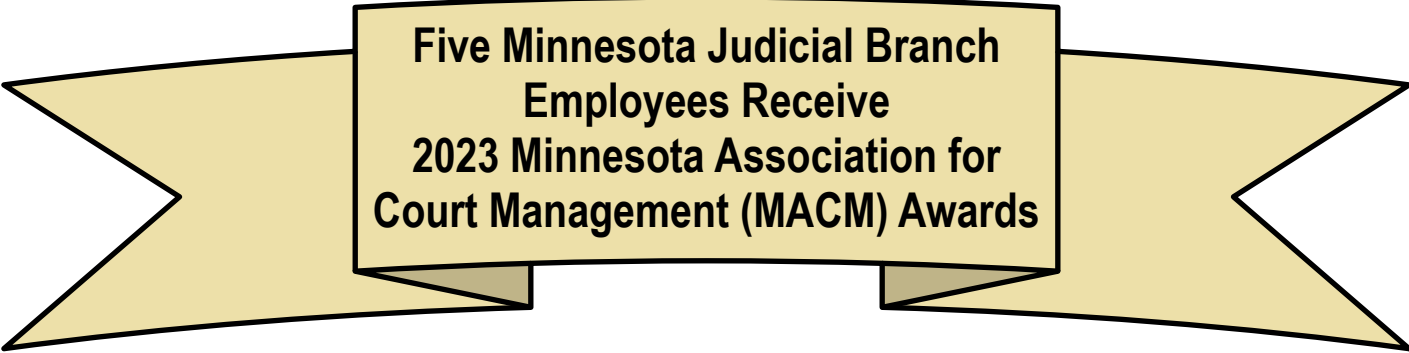
"I've known Mark for almost 30 years – he's just a really good guy," Kramer said. "Everyone gives him the highest marks."

Vandelist, who recently retired from his position as a judge in the First Judicial District in Scott County, said the award is a profound honor and a moving conclusion to his career.

"To be honored by ACTLM, who represent best civil trial lawyers in the state – it just means so much," he said. "I am blown away that I'm even considered in the same breath with those who have previously won this award."

Judge Vandelist was appointed to the bench by Gov. Mark Dayton in December 2013. He received his undergraduate degree from American University in Washington, D.C., and his J.D. from Mitchell Hamline School of Law.





Five Minnesota Judicial Branch Employees Receive 2023 Minnesota Association for Court Management (MACM) Awards

The Minnesota Association for Court Management announced the recipients of its 2023 awards at its annual conference in September.

Early Career Excellence Award – Lindsay Listul Multi-County Court Administrator, Eighth Judicial District

Lindsay Listul, Multi-County Court Administrator in the Eighth Judicial District, received the 2023 Early Career Excellence Award. The award recognizes a person who demonstrates achievement in the courts by obtaining a high level of knowledge in a short amount of time, is a quick learner, and a valuable resource to others. The recipient is dependable and consistent while working to achieve success in their local court, district, or for the Judicial Branch and demonstrates outstanding leadership by considering stakeholders when making decisions.

Listul, after only three years as a court operations associate, was appointed as the multi-county court administrator in 2021, mid-pandemic. In less than two years she has become a seasoned and effective court administrator. Three of four of her counties are two-staff-person offices. With careful planning, ingenuity, and dedication to promoting a quality court workplace environment, she was able to offer a hybrid work opportunity to all her staff. She has established an inclusive and open atmosphere in her counties and communicates frequently both with the Bench and with her employees. Listul came into this position with no prior management experience, and she has excelled as a manager. She has been with the Branch since 2017 and a Court Administrator since 2021.

Champion of Change – Katie Bloch Multi-County Court Administrator, Eighth Judicial District

Katie Bloch, Multi-County Court Administrator in the Eighth Judicial District, was honored as the 2023 Champion of Change. The recipient of this award fosters collaboration to promote innovation by embracing opportunities to utilize technology and other resources to increase efficiencies and productivity in the workplace.

Bloch is a true champion of change. She shares her vision and passion for projects with staff, the bench, colleagues, and justice partners. She prioritizes communication, collaboration, and transparency which lends her well when leading a change initiative. When change is anticipated, she considers the impact the change has on various individuals and agen-



*Five Minnesota Judicial Branch Employees Receive
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cies and then communicates early and often. She explains the vision, outlines the steps to implement the change, collects input, listens to concerns, explains processes, and answers questions. Once the change is put into place, she follows up with everyone and solicits feedback. Bloch has worked for the Branch since 2007.

Distinguished Service

Award – Kelly Iverson

Multi-County Court Administrator, Fifth Judicial District

Kelly Iverson, Court Administrator in the Fifth Judicial District, received the 2023 Distinguished Service Award. The award recognizes individuals who have a record of outstanding service to the community and the courts and demonstrates leadership by improving the administration of justice and delivery of public service through the application of modern management techniques.

Iverson is a passionate, dedicated leader whose knowledge and experience are valued and sought after within her district and across the

state. She makes collaboration a core part of her role and always keeps what is best for the entire Fifth Judicial District at the forefront of her work. In addition to her role as Court Administrator, she has served on various state and district teams focused on improving the customer experience, enhancing the court's operations and financial oversight, improving the quality of data, and supporting staff training and skills development. Her career with the courts spans decades and is one of progressively responsible leadership, a commitment to excellence in customer service, and a dedication to accuracy in the court record. She has left an indelible leadership footprint and a legacy that will carry on in those that she has mentored, coached, and shaped. Iverson was hired as a Senior Court Clerk in 1989.

Lifetime Achievement Award – Lori Hunstad Court Administrator, First Judicial District

Lori Hunstad, Court Administrator for the First Judicial District, received the 2023 Lifetime Achieve-

ment Award. The award honors a recipient's many contributions to the court management profession and their years of service to the Judicial Branch.

Hunstad was recognized for her dedication to the Judicial Branch and the citizens of Minnesota. She is an exceptional employee and manager. Combining that with her years of service to the Branch, she is the epitome of a Lifetime Achievement award recipient. She has demonstrated forward-thinking leadership, meaningful mentorship, unwavering dedication, and optimistic encouragement to everyone she encounters. She leads with confidence, sincerity, and integrity through days of controlled chaos. She holds her team to a high standard yet is respected for her fairness. She is a leader in change and encourages her entire team to innovate and adapt to our ever-changing environment.

In her tenure with the Minnesota Judicial Branch, she has exemplified what relationship building looks like. She has built many long-lasting, respectful, and meaningful relationships with co-workers, judge teams,



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and justice partners. The business relationships she has built with the Dakota Juvenile and Criminal Justice partners have had a significant impact on successful collaborative operations during her career. Hunstad has worked for the Branch for 44 years.

**Coach/Mentor of the Year –
Jonathan Harms
Court Operations Manager,
Fourth Judicial District**

Jonathan Harms, Court Operations Manager for the Fourth Judicial District, was awarded the 2023 Coach/Mentor of the Year award. The

award recognizes an individual who fosters trust while encouraging others to achieve their goals without thought of reciprocation. The recipient of the award shares their skills and knowledge with others and provides excellent coaching in the ongoing development and enrichment of others.

Harms encourages people around him to work harder, trust in themselves, and strive for more. Tapping on their strengths and developing and improving upon their weaknesses. He empowers his team and his leaders to be their best selves, en-

couraging others to achieve their goals. He is someone who has inspired and encouraged others to strive for more; he is someone whom people look up to as a role model and coach. Harms enhances people around him by being a trusted adviser, promoting an open work environment, and coaching in leadership development and problem-solving. He sets high standards for success and realistic expectations. He is passionate about helping others achieve their goals by serving as a mentor in both professional and personal lives. Harms has served the Branch for 30 years.



Congratulations!

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