

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **SUPREME COURT FILLS SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT VACANCY**

The Supreme Court of Illinois announced Thursday the appointment of Associate Judge Jeffrey B. Ford to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Circuit Judge John G. Townsend in the Sixth Judicial Circuit.

Judge Ford, 54, is an experienced jurist, having served as an associate judge since 1985. He has extensive experience in a wide range of assignments ranging from family law and small claims to civil and criminal trials.

During his 20 years as an associate judge, he has presided over hundreds of jury trials including civil, and criminal misdemeanor and felony matters. He has presided in many more bench trials, numbering in the thousands, which consisted mostly of civil traffic and city ordinance matters.

Justice Rita B. Garman recommended Judge Ford's appointment to the Supreme Court following a review process by a special citizen's screening committee. Members of the committee found Judge Ford extremely well qualified and well qualified.

Judge Ford will sit as a resident Circuit judge in Champaign County. The appointment is effective August 1, 2005, and terminates December 4, 2006.

He received an undergraduate degree in psychology from the University of Illinois in 1973 and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. He received his law degree from the University of Illinois in 1976. Ever since, he has worked in the law in the Champaign area, starting as an assistant state's attorney in the Champaign County state's attorney's office for four years. During that time, he was lead prosecutor or served as the second chair in six murder trials.

He worked in private practice as an associate with the firm, McClellan & Langan in 1980 and with the firm, Meyer, Capel, Hirschfeld, Muncy, Jahn & Aldeen from 1981 to the time he was selected as an associate judge.

Judge Ford has been adjunct instructor at the University of Illinois Police Training Institute and a presenter at judicial and attorney education conferences, several of them involving DUI matters and seminars.

He has participated in numerous other professional endeavors: updating weekend bail bond procedures in the county; establishing parameters with the Champaign County Sheriff's Department for the Comprehensive Home Incarceration Program; establishing the protocol for video arraignments in Champaign County.

He has served as a member of the Illinois Department of Transportation's DUI Advisory Council since 1994; been a member of the Alcohol and Other Drug Network in Champaign County since 2001; and a member of the Board of Directors of the Illinois Association of Drug Court

Professionals since 2001.

He lives in the Champaign area with his wife Barbara and the couple's two children.

Justice Garman's screening committee consisted of seven persons, four non-lawyers and three lawyers, who reside in the Sixth Judicial Circuit. Sam Banks, chief executive officer of the Cunningham Children's Home in Urbana, served as its chairman.

In addition to Champaign County, the Sixth Judicial Circuit includes DeWitt, Douglas, Macon, Moultrie and Piatt counties.