



PRESS RELEASE

**New York State
Unified Court System**

**Hon. Lawrence K. Marks
Chief Administrative Judge**

**Contact: Lucian Chalfen,
Public Information Director
Arlene Hackel, Deputy Director
(212) 428-2500**

www.nycourts.gov/press

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Hon. Vito C. Caruso Named Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Courts Outside New York City

New York – Chief Administrative Judge Lawrence K. Marks today announced the appointment of Hon. Vito C. Caruso as Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Courts Outside New York City. The appointment was made with the approval of Chief Judge Janet DiFiore and in consultation with the Presiding Justices of the Appellate Division of the Second, Third and Fourth Judicial Departments.

In his new capacity, Judge Caruso will manage the day-to-day operations of the trial-level courts in the 57 counties outside of New York City, which include some 700 State-paid judges and 5,500 non-judicial employees. He will work with local Administrative Judges in overseeing implementation of the court system's programs and initiatives and in optimizing allocation of personnel and other court resources in meeting the evolving justice needs of those served by the eight Judicial Districts outside New York City—an area spanning Long Island's Suffolk County to Western New York. Additionally, he will be responsible for oversight of New York's local Town and Village Courts.

Judge Caruso will succeed the Hon. Michael V. Cocco, who will be returning to the trial bench full-time after serving as Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for the past decade.

“Judge Caruso is widely recognized as an outstanding judge and administrator. He has served with distinction as Administrative Judge of the Fourth Judicial District, where he helped advance the core goals of the Chief Judge’s Excellence Initiative. His hardworking nature and strong commitment to public service will serve him well in this demanding post. I look forward to working with him in his new capacity,” said Chief Administrative Judge Lawrence K. Marks in making the announcement.

“I am extremely pleased to welcome Judge Caruso as our next Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Courts Outside New York City and have every confidence in his ability to successfully carry out the wide-ranging duties, and navigate the many challenges, of this critically important administrative assignment,” added Chief Judge Janet DiFiore.

Judge Caruso was first elected to State Supreme Court in 1994, then re-elected in 2008. Since 2004, he has served as Administrative Judge of the Fourth Judicial District in Northeastern New York, the largest geographic judicial district, covering more than a quarter of the State’s territory. Previously, he was a principal at the law firm of Wemple & Caruso and before that served as Counsel to the Town of Duanesburg, Counsel to the Minority of the New York State Assembly and Assistant County Attorney for Schenectady.

Judge Caruso received a bachelor’s degree from SUNY New Paltz and has the distinction of being one of the last lawyers certified and admitted to the practice of law after reading for the New York Bar. He is a member of the New York State Bar Association, Judicial Section, the Schenectady County Bar Association and the Association of Justices of the Supreme Court, a past district deputy of the New York State Elks Association, a former volunteer firefighter and the first recipient of the Pro Bono Distinguished Service Award of the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York.

Chief Judge DiFiore and Chief Administrative Judge Marks also lauded Judge Coccoma for his longstanding service as Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Courts Outside New York City.

Judge DiFiore said, “I commend Judge Coccoma for his perseverance and dedication over the past decade as steward of the courts outside New York City. During his tenure as Deputy Chief Administrative Judge, he worked tirelessly to help shepherd court reforms to increase operational efficiency and better respond to local needs. We are fortunate to continue to benefit from his vast judicial expertise as he transitions to a full-time trial calendar.”

“Judge Coccoma has done a superb job as Deputy Chief Administrative Judge as evidenced by the enormous success of the Chief Judge’s Excellence Initiative in dozens of counties around the State. We are immensely grateful for his many contributions to the court system, including his efforts as Administrative Judge of the Sixth Judicial District from 2008 until his appointment as Deputy Chief Administrative Judge. We wish him the best as he returns to the State Supreme Court bench on a full-time basis,” said Judge Marks.

Judge Caruso’s appointment will take effect July 1, 2019. His successor as Administrative Judge of the Fourth Judicial District will be named in the coming weeks.

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