



News Release

FROM: Chambers of the Chief Judge
19th Judicial Circuit
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Waukegan, Illinois

ERIC KALATA SELECTED AS NEW ASSOCIATE JUDGE OF LAKE COUNTY

Lake County Chief Judge Daniel B. Shanes is pleased to announce that the Circuit Judges have selected Eric J. Kalata as Lake County's newest Associate Judge. This opening is the result of the retirement of Associate Judge George D. Strickland, effective on October 31, 2025. Mr. Kalata was selected from a group of 18 outstanding individuals who applied for the vacancy.

Mr. Kalata most recently served as Chief of the Training Division of the Lake County State's Attorney's office, where he was responsible for developing and mentoring prosecutors. He joined the office in 1997 and has handled a broad range of prosecutions, earning a reputation for fairness, professionalism, and integrity. An experienced trial attorney, he has tried hundreds of cases to verdict. "Eric Kalata has demonstrated unwavering dedication to the pursuit of justice," said Chief Judge Shanes. "His extensive experience forms a cornerstone of his respected career in public service. His thoughtful approach to complex issues and commitment to public service make him an outstanding addition to our judiciary," Shanes added.

Mr. Kalata received his Bachelor of Arts from Lake Forest College in 1992. He earned his Juris Doctor from Chicago-Kent College of Law in 1996 and was admitted to practice law in Illinois that year. Mr. Kalata is a member of the Jefferson Inn-American Inns of Court and the Lake County Bar Association.

"I am honored by this opportunity to continue serving the people of Lake County in a new capacity," said Mr. Kalata. "I remain deeply committed to upholding the law and promoting fairness and integrity in every proceeding." Chief Judge Shanes will administer the formal oath of office to Mr. Kalata in November, followed by an investiture ceremony at a later date.

Lake County sits in the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit and is the third largest Circuit Court in Illinois. The court is comprised of 41 total judges: 16 Circuit Judges and 25 Associate Judges.

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