



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Chief Counsel for Judicial Council and AOC

*Deborah Brown will begin her new role as head of the
AOC Legal Services Office on October 1*

SAN FRANCISCO— Deborah Brown, a managing attorney with the California [Administrative Office of the Courts](#) (AOC), will serve as the next chief counsel for the [Judicial Council](#) and the AOC, effective October 1. Retiring Chief Counsel Mary Roberts will assist in the transition and will serve as special counsel to the AOC Executive Office through December.

As chief counsel, Brown will lead the AOC's Legal Services Office. The office manages litigation and provides legal advice to courts and AOC divisions and offices. The office also provides primary staff support to the Judicial Council's Rules and Projects Committee and to several advisory committees and task forces, is responsible for legal review of the California Rules of Court and Judicial Council forms, and staffs other projects designed to improve court proceedings.

"We interviewed a number of fine internal and external candidates for the position," said Administrative Director of the Courts Steven Jahr. "Debbie's legal acumen, experience, and leadership skills make her eminently well-qualified to serve as chief counsel. I'm confident that under her leadership, our Legal Services Office will continue to provide exemplary service to the Judicial Council, the courts, and the AOC."

Brown began her AOC career in 1998 as an associate attorney, then attorney, serving as legal counsel to the Task Force on Trial Court Employees. She provided legal advice on the development of a personnel system for trial court employees and collaborated on drafting the Trial Court Employment Protection and Governance Act, in addition to managing AOC litigation matters. Following a period as supervising and then managing attorney of the Legal Opinion Unit, in 2005, she was promoted to the position of managing attorney for the Judicial Council Services Group of the AOC Legal Services Office (LSO).

As managing attorney for the Judicial Council Services Group, she has provided direct legal support and counsel to the council's Rules and Projects Committee and the Executive and Planning Committee. She has overseen legal support of council and Supreme Court advisory groups and the legal review and drafting of legislation, rules, forms, standards of judicial administration, and jury instructions. She has also overseen staff that provide subject matter expertise in a variety of areas, including civil practice and procedure, complex civil litigation,

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alternative dispute resolution, probate and mental health, traffic, judicial ethics, and jury instructions.

Before joining the AOC, Debbie worked for the law firm of Landels Ripley & Diamond, LLP, where her practice included employment and labor law counseling, training, and litigation. She also worked as a judicial law clerk for Magistrate Judge Brazil in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California. She received her law degree from Hastings College of the Law, where she graduated Order of the Coif, and holds a bachelor's degree in psychology and Spanish from the University of California at Santa Barbara, where she graduated Phi Beta Kappa.

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The Judicial Council is the policymaking body of the California courts, the largest court system in the nation. Under the leadership of the Chief Justice and in accordance with the California Constitution, the council is responsible for ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice. The Administrative Office of the Courts carries out the official actions of the council and promotes leadership and excellence in court administration.