

The Honorable Stan Whitaker is the New Chief Judge of the Second Judicial District Court

The Honorable Stan Whitaker is the new Chief Judge of the Second Judicial District Court, following a unanimous vote by his colleagues on the bench.

Judge Whitaker began his term as Chief Judge on January 1, 2019, succeeding the Honorable Nan Nash, retired from the bench on December 31, 2018.

“It was not easy for me to decide to leave a place where I have worked with exceptionally dedicated and hardworking people for more than 25 years,” Judge Nash said. “I am tremendously proud of the Court’s commitment to the rule of law and the initiatives this Court has undertaken during my tenure as Chief Judge. I know the Second Judicial District Court will be in good hands under Judge Whitaker’s leadership.”

Judge Whitaker serves in the Second Judicial District Court’s Criminal Division. As Chief Judge, he has administrative authority over all court operations.

“The Court’s staff has had an excellent relationship with Judge Whitaker over the years. He has demonstrated his commitment to making this court the best it can be, both as a place to work, and as an institution that serves the public,” said Court Executive Officer James Noel. “We look forward to working with Judge Whitaker as our new Chief Judge.”



Stan Whitaker, new Chief Judge of the Second Judicial District Court

A Distinguished Legal Career

Judge Whitaker is a graduate of Albuquerque’s Sandia High School, where he met his wife of 39 years, Barbara. The Whitakers have two adult daughters.

A multisport athlete in high school, Judge Whitaker attended the University of Kansas on a track scholarship. After graduating from college, he taught for several years at Albuquerque public schools. However, his involvement, while in college, in a lawsuit against the NCAA over the amount and types of financial aid student athletes could receive had sparked his interest in the law. Ultimately, he left teaching in favor of law school.

Judge Whitaker earned his law degree from the University of New Mexico School of Law in 1989. He was a civil litigator with two different Albuquerque law firms before going to work in the Family Crimes Unit of the Bernalillo County District Attorney’s Office, where he prosecuted child abuse cases.

Judge Whitaker first came to the Second Judicial District Court as a Domestic Violence Commissioner in the Family Court Division. He left the court to work as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of New Mexico.

He returned to District Court in 2006, accepting an appointment as a Family Court Judge. A year later, he moved to the Criminal Division.

“I am honored to be elected Chief Judge of a court with the quality of judges and staff we have in the Second Judicial District,” Judge Whitaker said. “It is obvious to me every day that I walk into the courthouse that everyone here is truly dedicated to public service and maintaining the public’s confidence in the judiciary.”

“Judge Nash demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the independence of the judiciary, procedural fairness and access to justice. I hope to build upon her legacy by promoting the full and fair administration of justice and in preserving the integrity of the Court.”