



**U.S. Department of Justice**  
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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **EOIR Swears In Two Immigration Judges** *New Judges To Serve In Hartford and Lancaster Immigration Courts*

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) Director Kevin A. Ohlson announced that two immigration judges were sworn in today during an investiture ceremony at EOIR Headquarters in Falls Church, Va.

Chief Immigration Judge David L. Neal administered the oath of office to Philip Verrillo, Hartford Immigration Court, and Scott D. Laurent, Lancaster (CA) Immigration Court.

The judges have been appointed by the Attorney General after completing a rigorous application, evaluation, and interview process with EOIR. They join the ranks of more than 200 immigration judges located in more than 50 immigration courts nationwide.

Immigration judges conduct administrative courtroom proceedings to determine whether foreign-born individuals — who are charged by the Department of Homeland Security with violating immigration law — should be removed from the United States or may be granted relief from removal to remain in the country. Immigration judges decide cases independently and on a case-by-case basis. Their decisions are final unless appealed to the Board of Immigration Appeals. In Fiscal Year 2007, immigration judges completed more than 270,000 proceedings.

Biographical information for the new immigration judges follows.

#### **Hartford Immigration Court**

##### **Philip Verrillo, Immigration Judge**

Judge Verrillo was appointed as an immigration judge in August 2008. He received a bachelor of arts degree in 1991 from Central Connecticut State University and a juris doctorate in 1995 from the New England School of Law. From February 2001 to August 2008, he served as both the Assistant and Court Administrator for the Immigration Court in Hartford, Conn. From December 2000 to January 2001, Judge Verrillo was a special deputy assistant State's Attorney in Rocky Hill, Conn. From February 1996 to May 2000, he was in private practice. From January 2001 to spring 2005, Judge Verrillo was an adjunct faculty member of New England College of Finance. He is a member of the Connecticut Bar.

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## **Lancaster Immigration Court**

### **Scott D. Laurent, Immigration Judge**

Judge Laurent was appointed as an immigration judge in August 2008. He received a bachelor of arts degree in 1986 from the University of Missouri and a juris doctorate in 1989 from the University of Missouri, School of Law. From June 1996 to August 2008, Judge Laurent served in various positions with the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the former Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), most recently as lead attorney in the Assistant Chief Counsel's office where he supervised the litigation unit at the San Pedro Detention Center. From February 1995 to May 1996, he worked as an attorney in private practice. From October 1991 to February 1995, Judge Laurent entered on duty through the Attorney General's Honors Program as an attorney with the former INS. From September 1989 to May 1991, he worked as a judicial clerk with the Honorable Edith L. Messina, 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court, Independence, Mo. He is a member of the Missouri Bar.

— EOIR —

*EOIR, an agency within the Department of Justice, interprets and adjudicates immigration cases according to U.S. immigration laws under delegated authority from the Attorney General. Immigration judges, within EOIR's Office of the Chief Immigration Judge, conduct administrative court proceedings. They determine whether foreign-born individuals — who are charged by the Department of Homeland Security with violating immigration law — should be removed from the United States or may be granted relief from removal to remain in the country. EOIR's Board of Immigration Appeals primarily reviews appeals of immigration judge decisions. EOIR's Office of the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer adjudicates immigration-related employment cases. EOIR is committed to ensuring fairness in all cases.*