



U.S. Department of Justice
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FACT SHEET

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OFFICE OF THE CHIEF IMMIGRATION JUDGE

The Office of the Chief Immigration Judge (OCIJ) is headed by the Chief Immigration Judge who establishes operating policies for the immigration courts and oversees policy implementation in each of those courts. OCIJ supervises and directs the activities of the immigration courts, which handle more than 300,000 immigration matters annually. OCIJ provides overall program direction, articulates policies and procedures, and establishes priorities for more than 200 immigration judges located in more than 50 immigration courts throughout the nation.

Immigration judges are responsible for conducting judicial proceedings and act independently in their decision-making capacity; their decisions are administratively final, unless appealed or certified to the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA). The judges conduct hearings concerning the removal of illegal aliens throughout the United States. Through its Criminal Alien Institutional Hearing Program, OCIJ currently has programs coordinated and in place in all 50 states, including Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, selected municipalities, and Federal Bureau of Prisons facilities to adjudicate the immigration status of alien inmates incarcerated by Federal, State, and municipal correctional authorities as a result of convictions for criminal offenses.

◆ **Biographical Information**

Michael C. McGoings, Acting Chief Immigration Judge

Michael C. McGoings was appointed as acting Chief Immigration Judge in February 2009. He received a bachelor of arts degree in 1965 from Morgan State University, a master of science degree in 1967 from the University of Illinois, and a juris doctorate in 1973 from The Catholic University of America. From March 1995 to February 2009, Mr. McGoings served as an Assistant Chief Immigration Judge (ACIJ). From 1994 to 1995, he was an associate general counsel serving as Chief of the Enforcement Legal Program and from 1991 to 1994, he was an associate general counsel for the Employer Sanctions and Civil Document Fraud Legal Program at the former Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). From 1987 to 1990, he worked as assistant general counsel for the former INS. Mr. McGoings is a member of the Pennsylvania and District of Columbia bars.

Sarah M. Burr, Assistant Chief Immigration Judge

Sarah M. Burr was appointed as an ACIJ in October 2006, based in New York City. She received a bachelor of arts degree in 1971 from George Washington University and a juris doctorate in 1980 from Benjamin Cardozo Law School. From 1994 to October 2006, Ms. Burr served at the New York Immigration Court as an immigration judge, after her appointment as an immigration judge in February 1994. From 1981 to 1994, Ms. Burr worked as a staff attorney and as supervisory attorney of the immigration unit in the criminal defense division of the Legal Aid Society in New York. From 1980 to 1981, she served as a law clerk for U.S. Magistrate Judge John Caden, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of New York. Ms. Burr is a member of the New York State Bar.

Larry R. Dean, Assistant Chief Immigration Judge

Larry R. Dean was appointed as an ACIJ in January 2000, based in San Antonio. He received a bachelor of science degree in 1970 from the University of Southern Mississippi and a juris doctorate in 1973 from Tulane University School of Law. From 2000 to October 2006, Mr. Dean served as an ACIJ in OCIJ. From January to December 1999, Mr. Dean served as an immigration judge at the immigration court in New York. From 1987 to 1998, he served in the U.S. Army as an attorney and circuit judge at Fort Polk, La.; Fort Carson, Colo.; The Judge Advocate General's School in Charlottesville, Va.; Korea; Japan; Fort Lee, Va.; and Fort Benning, Ga. Mr. Dean is a member of the Mississippi and Louisiana bars.

Thomas Y. K. Fong, Assistant Chief Immigration Judge

Thomas Y. K. Fong was appointed as an ACIJ in October 2006, based in Los Angeles. He received a bachelor of science degree in 1972 from Brigham Young University and a juris doctorate in 1977 from Brigham Young University, J. Reuben Clark Law School. From 1984 to October 2006, Mr. Fong served at the Los Angeles Immigration Court following his appointment as an immigration judge in October 1984. In 1977, Mr. Fong joined DOJ through the Attorney General's Honors Program serving as a trial attorney with the former INS in Los Angeles. From 1982 to 1984, Mr. Fong worked at the former INS as appellate trial attorney and chief legal officer, also in Los Angeles. From 1972 to 1978, he served as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army. Mr. Fong is a member of the Hawaii Bar.

Stephen S. Griswold, Assistant Chief Immigration Judge

Stephen S. Griswold was appointed as an ACIJ in October 2006, based in San Francisco. He received a bachelor of arts degree in 1978 from Wesleyan University, Connecticut, and a juris doctorate in 1985 from the George Washington University National Law Center. From 2005 to October 2006, Mr. Griswold served at the San Francisco Immigration Court following his appointment as an immigration judge in January 2005. From 1996 to 2004, he served as a senior legal advisor and senior panel attorney, and from 1986 to 1989, as a staff attorney at the BIA. From 1986 to 1989, he was in private practice in Washington, DC, Maryland, and Virginia. He is a member of the Maryland Bar.

MaryBeth Keller, Assistant Chief Immigration Judge

MaryBeth Keller was appointed as an ACIJ in February 2008, with primary responsibility for issues of conduct and professionalism relating to immigration judges. She received a bachelor of arts degree in 1984 from The Catholic University of America and a juris doctorate in 1987 from the University of Virginia School of Law. From 2004 to February 2008, Ms. Keller served as General Counsel at the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR). During that time, from July 2006 to February 2008, she served as Acting ACIJ for Conduct and Professionalism and from October 2004 to April 2006, she served as Acting Chief Administrative Hearing Officer. From 1988 to 2004, Ms. Keller served at the BIA, as a senior panel attorney and as an attorney advisor. From 1987 to 1988, she worked as a law clerk in the 5th Judicial District of Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa. Ms. Keller is a member of the Iowa Bar.

Jeffrey L. Romig, Assistant Chief Immigration Judge

Jeffrey L. Romig was appointed as an assistant chief immigration judge in January 2009. He received a bachelor of arts degree in 1981 from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pa., and a juris doctorate and a master of arts degree in 1985 from the University of Pittsburgh. From January 2008 to January 2009, Mr. Romig served as an immigration judge at the immigration court in York, Pa.; from June 2006 to January 2008, he served as an immigration judge at the Headquarters Immigration Court in Falls Church, Va.; and from January 2002 to June 2006, he served as an immigration judge at the Los Angeles Immigration Court. From April 1999 to December 2001, Mr. Romig served as appellate counsel for the former INS in Falls Church, Va. From August 1995 to April 1999, he served as supervisory attorney advisor for the BIA. From December 1994 to August 1995, Mr. Romig worked on the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform (“Jordan Commission”), in Washington, DC, as a senior policy analyst. From November 1986 to December 1994, he worked at the BIA as an attorney advisor. Mr. Romig is a member of the Pennsylvania Bar.

Gary W. Smith, Assistant Chief Immigration Judge

Gary W. Smith was appointed as an ACIJ in October 2005. He received a bachelor of science degree in 1971 and a juris doctorate in 1975, both from the University of South Carolina. He completed the Army War College in 1998, receiving a master's level completion certificate. From February to October 2005, Mr. Smith served as an immigration judge in the San Francisco Immigration Court. He served in a succession of assignments for more than 29 years of active Army service, including: chief circuit judge, 2nd Judicial Circuit, Fort Gordon, Ga.; chief circuit judge, 6th Judicial Circuit, Seoul, Korea; chief trial judge, U.S. Army Trial Judiciary, Arlington, Va.; circuit judge, 2nd Judicial Circuit, Fort Gordon, Ga.; and staff judge advocate, Fort Bliss, Texas. Mr. Smith is a member of the South Carolina Bar.

Elisa M. Sukkar, Assistant Chief Immigration Judge

Elisa M. Sukkar was appointed as an ACIJ in April 2008, based in Miami. She received a bachelor of science degree in 1983 from Florida International University and a juris doctorate in 1987 from Nova Law School. From March 1995 to April 2008, Ms. Sukkar served as an immigration judge at the Miami Immigration Court. From 1987 to 1995, she was in private practice in Miami where she specialized in immigration law. Ms. Sukkar is a member of the Florida Bar.

Jack H. Weil, Acting Assistant Chief Immigration Judge

Judge Weil was appointed as an acting ACIJ in April 2009, with primary responsibility for training immigration judges, court administrators, interpreters, legal technicians, and judicial law clerks. He received a bachelor of arts degree in 1985 and a juris doctorate in 1988, both from the University of Maryland. From 1994 to 2009, Judge Weil served as an immigration judge in the El Centro Immigration Court. From 1990 to 1994, he worked as associate counsel to the director, EOIR. From 1988 to 1990, Judge Weil was a judicial law clerk with the San Diego Immigration Court. In 2001, he joined the faculty of the National Judicial College where he teaches "Bias and Ethics for Administrative Law Judges" and serves as faculty assistant in the course on distance training of judges. Judge Weil is co-author of "Deskbook on Evidence for Administrative Law Judges" published by the National Judicial College in 2006. He is a member of the Maryland Bar.

Scott M. Rosen, Counsel to the Chief Immigration Judge

Scott M. Rosen was appointed as counsel to the Chief Immigration Judge in March 2008. He received a bachelor of business administration degree in 1978 from Emory University and a juris doctorate in 1983 from the Cleveland-Marshall College of Law. From July 2006 to March 2008, he served as special counsel to the Chief Immigration Judge. From 1998 to 2006, Mr. Rosen served at OGC as a senior assistant general counsel and associate general counsel. From 2001 to 2001, he was detailed to the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia where he served as a special assistant U.S. attorney. From 1995 to 1998, Mr. Rosen served as appellate counsel for the former INS in Falls Church, Va. From 1989 to 1995, he served as a trial attorney for the former INS in Miami. Mr. Rosen is a member of the Florida Bar.

Brooke B. Grandle, Deputy Counsel to the Chief Immigration Judge

Brooke B. Grandle was appointed as deputy chief counsel to the Chief Immigration Judge in March 2008. She received a bachelor of arts degree in 1997 from Wellesley College and a juris doctorate in 2002 from the Washington College of Law at American University. Ms. Grandle also received a Diplôme d'Etudes Juridiques Européennes et Internationales in 2001 from Paris X - Nanterre and a master of arts degree in 2004 from the School of International Service at American University. From April 2007 to March 2008, Ms. Grandle served as counsel to the Chief Immigration Judge. From 2004 to April 2007, Ms. Grandle served as an associate general counsel and attorney advisor in the Office of the General Counsel (OGC) at EOIR. Ms. Grandle joined DOJ through the Attorney General's Honor Program, serving in the Employee Labor Relations Unit, OGC, from October 2002 to 2004, when she joined EOIR. Ms. Grandle is a member of the New York State Bar.

Edward F. Kelly, Counsel for Operations

Edward F. Kelly was appointed as Counsel for Operations in March 2008. He received a bachelor of arts degree in 1982 from the University of Notre Dame and a juris doctorate in 1987 from Notre Dame Law School. From February 2007 to March 2008, he served as special counsel to the Chief Immigration Judge. From 1989 to 2007, Mr. Kelly served as senior legal advisor, attorney team leader, and staff attorney at BIA. From 1987 to 1989, he served as assistant counsel to the Subcommittee of the Judiciary on Immigration, Refugees, and International Law in the U.S. House of Representatives. From 1982 to 1984, Mr. Kelly served in the Peace Corps in Gabon and Equatorial Africa. He has been a teacher of humane letters at Trinity School, Falls Church, Va., from 2002 to present. Mr. Kelly is a member of the Virginia Bar.