



PRESS RELEASE

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Alaska Supreme Court Selects Next Chief Justice

Anchorage, Alaska (June 19, 2018): By unanimous vote, the members of the Alaska Supreme Court have selected Justice Joel H. Bolger to serve as Chief Justice commencing July 1, 2018, for a three-year term. Justice Bolger follows Chief Justice Craig Stowers, whose term as Chief Justice expires June 30, 2018.

Under Alaska's Constitution, the Chief Justice is selected from among the justices of the supreme court by majority vote of the justices. The Chief Justice serves as the administrative head of the judicial branch of government, presides over supreme court arguments and conferences, appoints presiding judges for all judicial districts, and serves as the chair of the Alaska Judicial Council. A justice may serve more than one three-year term as Chief Justice but may not serve consecutive terms in that office.

Justice Joel H. Bolger was appointed to the Alaska Supreme Court in January 2013. Born and raised in Iowa, he received a B.S. in Economics from the University of Iowa in 1976 and a J.D. in 1978. He came to Alaska as a VISTA attorney with Alaska Legal Services Corporation in Dillingham and later became the supervising attorney for ALSC in Kodiak. Justice Bolger served as an assistant public defender in Barrow and then returned to Kodiak to join the firm of Jamin Ebell Bolger & Gentry. He worked as a private attorney from 1982-1997. He served on the Board of Directors for ALSC from 1984-1987. Justice Bolger was appointed to the District Court in Valdez in 1997, to the Superior Court in Kodiak in 2003, and to the Alaska Court of Appeals in 2008. He serves as co-chair of the Criminal Justice Working Group and as a

member of the Alaska Criminal Justice Commission, and he has also served on the Judicial Conference Planning Committee, the Appellate Rules Committee, the Criminal Pattern Jury Instructions Committee, the Fairness Diversity and Equality Committee, the Family Law Rules Committee, the Child Support Review Committee, the Alaska Bar Association CLE and Convention Steering Committees, as a Magistrate Training Judge, and as an alternate on the Three-Judge Sentencing Panel. Justice Bolger is married to Cheryl Bolger; they have two children Stephanie and Jackson.

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