



United States District Court District of Montana

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COURT ANNOUNCEMENT

United States Magistrate Judge John T. Johnston has announced his retirement from the Great Falls Division of the District of Montana, effective January 5, 2027. Judge Johnston communicated his decision in a letter dated December 30, 2025, addressed to Chief United States District Judge Brian M. Morris. His retirement marks the conclusion of a distinguished 12-year tenure on the federal bench.

Judge Johnston was appointed to the position of United States Magistrate Judge for the District of Montana on January 5, 2015, becoming the fifth magistrate judge to serve on a full-time basis in the Great Falls Division. Throughout his tenure, he has served as a member of the Ninth Circuit Magistrate Judges Executive Board, contributing to the governance and administration of the magistrate judge system at the circuit level.

Born and raised in Butte, Montana, Judge Johnston earned his law degree with honors from the University of Montana School of Law in 1988. He began his legal career at the law firm of Corette, Pohlman & Kebe, where he distinguished himself as a litigator and rose to the rank of partner. His practice was focused on trial work, and he became an active member of both the Montana Trial Lawyers Association and the Association of Trial Lawyers of America — professional affiliations that reflect his commitment to the highest standards of advocacy and legal professionalism. He continued to build upon that reputation at his subsequent firm before receiving his federal appointment.

Judge Johnston and his wife, Angie, have four children.

The District of Montana maintains three full-time magistrate judge positions, located in Missoula, Billings, and Great Falls. The court has commenced recruitment efforts to fill the vacancy that will result from Judge Johnston's retirement in the Great Falls Division.