



## United States District Court District of Montana

TYLER P. GILMAN, CLERK OF COURT  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF MONTANA  
RUSSELL E. SMITH COURTHOUSE  
201 E. BROADWAY  
MISSOULA, MT 59802

MAILING ADDRESS:  
P.O. BOX 8537  
MISSOULA, MONTANA 59807  
TELEPHONE: 406-542-7260  
FACSIMILE: 406-542-7272

July 8, 2025

### COURT ANNOUNCEMENT

The United States District Court for the District of Montana announces that District Judge Susan P. Watters, will assume senior judge status effective June 8, 2026. Judge Watters informed President Trump and Montana's congressional delegation of her decision by letter dated June 30, 2025. Senior status is retirement from active service while retaining judicial office and is available to federal district judges who satisfy certain age and length-of-service requirements. Senior judges typically take a reduced workload but continue to be eligible to preside over all types of federal cases.

Judge Watters was nominated to the federal bench by President Obama and received her judicial commission on December 19, 2013. Judge Watters was the first woman appointed as a United States District Court Judge in the State of Montana.

Judge Watters was raised in Billings, Montana, and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Eastern Montana College in 1980. She then received a Juris Doctor at the University of Montana School of Law, graduating in 1988. She served as a Deputy County Attorney in Yellowstone County, Montana from 1989 to 1995 before working in private practice until 1998. From 1998 to 2013 she served as a judge on the Thirteenth Judicial District Court of Montana, where she had previously worked as a law clerk after graduating.

Judge Watters's decision will create a vacancy in the district's statutory allotment of three active-duty federal district judges. The president is expected to confer with Montana's senators in selecting a nominee to replace Judge Watters, and the nominee's name will be presented to the United States Senate for its consideration and approval.