



# News Release

FROM: Chambers of the Chief Judge  
19th Judicial Circuit  
Lake County  
Waukegan, Illinois 60085-4359

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Waukegan, Illinois

## NINETEENTH CIRCUIT ELECTS NEXT CHIEF JUDGE

According to local Circuit Court rules, an election of a Chief Judge shall occur on or before the 30<sup>th</sup> day of June in the year preceding the year that the Circuit Judge begins his/her term. The term commences on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of January and is for one year.

At a meeting on Monday of the Circuit Judges of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, Judge Jay W. Ukena was unanimously elected to serve as the next Chief Judge. Judge Ukena’s term will commence on January 2, 2018 and will end on January 1, 2019.

“I am humbled and honored to be elected as Chief Judge by my fellow Circuit Judges. Further, I am grateful for their expression of confidence and support. I look forward to working with not only the judges and wonderful employees of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, but with all of our justice partners and Lake County in the administration of justice and service to all the people of Lake County. I will work to the best of my abilities to continue the excellent leadership provided by my predecessors”, said Judge Ukena.

The Honorable Jay W. Ukena was first elected Circuit Judge of the First Subcircuit in the November 2008 general election. He began his career as a Circuit Judge in the Family Division in February 2009 and was named Presiding Judge of the Family Division from January 2011 – June of 2014. From there he transferred to the Felony/Misdemeanor/Traffic Division where he presides over all felony traffic matters. He was named Deputy Chief Judge in January of 2016.

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Prior to his election, Judge Ukena was in private practice for twenty nine years which consisted of the areas of family law, criminal and traffic defense and Social Security disability. In addition, he served as general counsel for the North Shore Sanitary District, the Attorney for Waukegan Township, Chief Prosecutor for the City of Waukegan and the Lake Zurich Village Prosecutor.

He graduated from Lake Forest College with a B.A. and earned his Juris Doctor from John Marshall Law School. In January of 2011, Judge Ukena was appointed to the Child Support Advisory Committee by the State of Illinois where he served a three year term. He is a member of the Illinois Judges Association, the Illinois State Bar Association and the Lake County Bar Association.

Judge Ukena and his wife Karen (nee Kodiak) reside in the Village of Wadsworth. They have two grown sons, Matt who resides in Studio City, California and Mark who resides in Evanston, Illinois.

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