

Latino/a Lifetime Judges Confirmed During the Biden Administration

President Biden has appointed and the Senate has confirmed **37 Latino/a* lifetime judges, including 21 Latina judges**, who are now serving lifetime appointments on the federal bench. Importantly, nearly half (18) of these judges come to the bench with significant experience protecting and advancing civil and human rights.

- In our nation's history, there have only ever been 186 lifetime confirmations of Latino/a judges. President Biden has appointed nearly 20 percent of them. President Biden has also now tied President Obama for the most lifetime confirmations of Latino/a judges during an administration, though President Obama achieved this record during two terms in office.
- There have only ever been 60 lifetime confirmations of Latina judges, and 35 percent were appointed by President Biden.
- Only 30 Latino/a judges — including 10 Latina judges — have ever served on a federal circuit court, and more than one quarter were appointed by President Biden. This includes the first Latino/a judges on the D.C. Circuit (Bradley Garcia) and the Seventh Circuit (Nancy Maldonado), and the first Latina judge on the Fifth Circuit (Irma Ramirez).
- President Biden has appointed the first Latino/a lifetime district court judges in three states: Massachusetts (Judge Margaret Guzman), Minnesota (Judge Jeffrey Bryan), and Ohio (Judge David Ruiz).
- Seventy of our 91 Article III district courts (including 38 entire states) have never had a Latina lifetime district court judge, and seven of our 13 federal circuit courts have never had a Latina judge — the First, Third, Fourth, Sixth, Eighth, Tenth, and DC Circuits.

***Note:** We use Latino, Latina, and Latino/a in this fact sheet to distinguish between appointees who identify as cisgender men, appointees who identify as cisgender women, and appointees (total) of any gender, respectively. None of the Biden administration's appointees to federal courts identify as transgender or non-binary. Indeed, our nation is still waiting for its first trans or non-binary lifetime federal judge. It's long past time.

These terms are also overly simplistic, as many nominees identify — according to the Federal Judicial Center's terms — as Hispanic, as more than one race or ethnicity, in a more individualized way, or in other ways that aren't captured in the data. We celebrate their identities and the lived experience and long overdue representation they bring to the bench.

LATINO/A LIFETIME JUDGES CONFIRMED DURING THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Circuit Courts

Ana de Alba, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (California).

- Judge de Alba is the fourth Latina judge to serve on the Ninth Circuit.

Bradley Garcia, U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

- Judge Garcia is the first Latino/a judge to ever serve on the D.C. Circuit.

Gustavo Gelpí, U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit (Puerto Rico).

- Judge Gelpí is the second Latino/a judge to serve on the First Circuit.

Nancy Maldonado, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit (Illinois).

- Judge Maldonado is the first Latino/a judge to ever serve on the Seventh Circuit.

Salvador Mendoza, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (Washington).

- Judge Mendoza is the sixth Latino judge, and first Latino/a judge from Washington state, to serve on the Ninth Circuit.

Myrna Pérez, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit (New York).

- Judge Pérez is the second Latina judge to serve on the Second Circuit.

Irma Ramirez, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit (Texas).

- Judge Ramirez is the first Latina judge to serve on the Fifth Circuit.

Gabriel Sanchez, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (California).

- Judge Sanchez is the fifth Latino judge to serve on the Ninth Circuit.

District Courts

María Antongiorgi-Jordán, U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico

- Judge Antongiorgi-Jordán is the fourth Latina judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Jacqueline Becerra, U.S. District Court for the Southern District Florida

- Judge Becerra is the fourth Latina judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Jeffrey Bryan, U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota

- Judge Bryan is the first Latino/a judge to serve as lifetime judge in the state of Minnesota.

Ana de Alba, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California

- Judge de Alba, before her elevation to the Ninth Circuit, was the first Latina lifetime judge to serve on this court.

David Estudillo, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington

- Judge Estudillo is the second Latino/a judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Matthew Garcia, U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico

- Judge Garcia is the fifth Latino judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.



Ernest Gonzalez, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas

- Judge Gonzalez is one of four active Latino lifetime judges on this court.

Hector Gonzalez, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York

- Judge Gonzalez is the first Latino judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Margaret Guzman, U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts

- Judge Guzman is the first Latino/a judge to serve as a lifetime judge in the state of Massachusetts.

Robert Huie, U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California

- Judge Huie is the third Latino judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Linda Lopez, U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California

- Judge Lopez is the second Latina judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Nancy Maldonado, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

- Judge Maldonado, before her elevation to the Seventh Circuit, was the first Latina judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Angela Martinez, U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona

- Judge Martinez is the third Latina judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Araceli Martínez-Olguín, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California

- Judge Martínez-Olguín is the second Latina judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Gina Méndez-Miró, U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico

- Judge Méndez-Miró is the sixth Latina judge, and first openly LGBTQ judge, to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Ruth Bermudez Montenegro, U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California

- Judge Montenegro is the third Latina judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Evelyn Padin, U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey

- Judge Padin is the second Latina judge to serve as lifetime judge on this court.

Mia Perez, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania

- Judge Perez is the second Latina judge, and the first Asian American/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (AANHPI) judge, to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Mónica Ramírez Almadani, U.S. District Court for the Central District of California

- Judge Almadani is the third Latina judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Ana Reyes, U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia

- Judge Reyes is the first Latina judge, and first openly LGBTQ judge, to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Ramon Reyes, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York

- Judge Reyes is the second Latino judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Regina Rodriguez, U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado

- Judge Rodriguez is the second Latina judge, and the first AANHPI judge, to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

David Ruiz, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio

- Judge Ruiz is the first Latino/a judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court and in the state of Ohio.

Leon Schydlower, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas

- Judge Schydlower is one of four active Latino lifetime judges on this court.

Cristina Silva, U.S. District Court for the District of Nevada

- Judge Silva is the second Latina judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

David Urias, U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico

- Judge Urias is the fourth Latino judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Camille Vélez-Rivé, U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico

- Judge Vélez-Rivé is the fifth Latina judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Hernán Vera, U.S. District Court for the Central District of California

- Judge Vera is the 10th Latino judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.

Omar Williams, U.S. District Court for the District of Connecticut

- Judge Williams is the second Latino/a judge to serve as a lifetime judge on this court.



**SPOTLIGHT: EXCEPTIONAL
JUDGES CONFIRMED DURING
THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION**

[Ana de Alba](#), U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (California)

The Leadership Conference supported Ana de Alba's confirmation because of her impressive judicial and civil rights experience. Her career has been steeped in defending the rights of working people, having litigated numerous complex cases on workplace harassment and discrimination. In addition to her full caseload while in private practice, de Alba established and ran a Workers' Rights Clinic, which provided free legal services to workers unable to afford an attorney.

[Brad Garcia](#), U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit

The Leadership Conference supported Brad Garcia's confirmation because he has a strong record of defending civil rights. For example, he has protected the constitutional rights of people involved in the criminal-legal system, defended abortion access, and protected immigrants from unlawful deportation.

[Gustavo Gelpí](#), U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit (Puerto Rico)

The Leadership Conference supported Gustavo Gelpí's confirmation because of his dedication to equal justice and experience as a fair-minded judge. He previously served as chief judge for the U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico, having been confirmed by the U.S. Senate by unanimous consent in 2006. Prior to this, Gelpí served as a magistrate judge for the same court. Before becoming a jurist, Gelpí served in a number of roles, including solicitor general, at the Puerto Rico Department of Justice. He began his legal career as an assistant federal public defender at the office of the Federal Public Defender for the District of Puerto Rico, helping to ensure access to justice for people who could not afford an attorney.

[Nancy Maldonado](#), U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit (Illinois)

The Leadership Conference supported Nancy Maldonado's confirmation because she has spent her career defending the rights of working people. Since 2022, Judge Maldonado has served as a fair-minded judge on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. Prior to joining the federal bench, she specialized in employment discrimination and challenging unfair labor practices, especially protecting the rights of migrant farmworkers.

[Salvador Mendoza](#), U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (Washington)

The Leadership Conference supported Salvador Mendoza's confirmation because of his demonstrated commitment to equal justice, including making sure that people have access to qualified counsel in criminal defense proceedings. From 2014 until his elevation to the Ninth Circuit, Mendoza served as a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Washington, where he upheld the rights of migrant farmworkers. Before serving on the federal bench, he had a long judicial career in Benton County and Franklin County, including his time as a superior court judge, district court judge pro tempore, and juvenile court judge pro tempore. In private practice, he specialized in criminal defense litigation with more than half of his caseload pro bono on behalf of clients who could otherwise not afford counsel.

[Myrna Pérez](#), U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit (New York)

The Leadership Conference supported Myrna Pérez's confirmation because of her pursuit of equal justice for all and her exceptional experience protecting voting rights. For 15 years, Pérez led the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law's Voting Rights and Election Program, where she worked to defend the freedom to vote and safeguard our democracy.

David Estudillo, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington

The Leadership Conference supported David Estudillo's confirmation because of his extensive experience as a fair-minded adjudicator and his commitment to equal justice for all. For nearly six years, he served as a state court judge on the Grant County Superior Court in Washington, where he presided over more than 1,000 cases. Previously, Estudillo operated his own immigration law firm, representing individuals seeking asylum, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals protections, work authorizations, temporary protected status, and citizenship.

Margaret Guzman, U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts

The Leadership Conference supported Margaret Guzman's confirmation because she is a distinguished jurist with an outstanding commitment to equal justice. She currently serves as the first justice for the Ayer District Court and was previously an associate justice for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Trial Court. Prior to her judicial service, Judge Guzman served for 13 years as a public defender, representing clients who could not afford an attorney and helping them navigate the complex criminal-legal system.

Araceli Martínez-Olguín, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California

The Leadership Conference supported Araceli Martínez-Olguín's confirmation because she has spent her entire career in pursuit of equal justice for all. She has defended the rights of immigrants in her work at the National Immigration Law Center and Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto. Martínez-Olguín also has notable civil rights experience working at the Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education, the American Civil Liberties Union's Women's Rights Project and Immigrants' Rights Project, Legal Aid at Work, and the National Day Laborer Organizing Network.

Mia Perez, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania

The Leadership Conference supported Mia Perez's confirmation because of her outstanding commitment to protecting civil rights, including her experience as a public defender. From 2016 until her confirmation to this court, Perez served as a judge with the Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas. Previously, she worked in private practice at her own firm, as counsel with Jalon and Rossman, and as an associate attorney with Friedman Schuman. During her time at Friedman Schuman, she defended the rights of LGBTQ people when she helped pass a local ordinance that prohibited discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodations on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. She worked to defend the constitutional rights of people accused of wrongdoing in private practice and as a member of the Criminal Justice Act Panel, where she served as court-appointed counsel for people unable to pay for legal services. Perez began her legal career as a public defender, spending four years as an assistant defender with the Defender Association of Philadelphia.



Mónica Ramírez Almadani, U.S. District Court for the Central District of California.

The Leadership Conference supported Mónica Ramírez Almadani's confirmation because she has displayed an outstanding commitment to equal justice throughout her career. Through her work at the ACLU, the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, the University of California Irvine School of Law's Immigrant Rights Clinic, and pro bono legal services organization Public Counsel, she has steadfastly defended the rights of vulnerable communities, including immigrants and those facing discrimination.

David Urias, U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico

The Leadership Conference supported David Urias' confirmation because of his impressive legal career and extensive civil and human rights experience. For 13 years, he worked in private practice at Freedman Boyd Hollander Goldberg Urias & Ward, P.A., where he protected the rights of immigrants against discriminatory policies, including the inhumane separation of families. Previously, Urias worked at the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) as a civil rights fellow and staff attorney.

Hernán Vera, U.S. District Court for the Central District of California

The Leadership Conference supported Hernán Vera's confirmation because he has dedicated his career to equal justice. Before serving as a judge on the Los Angeles County Superior Court, Vera served for 12 years at Public Counsel, the largest pro bono law firm in the nation, where he created an impact litigation department for economic injustice. He also served as an attorney at the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

Data as of July 8, 2024.

For questions, contact Patrick McNeil at mcneil@civilrights.org.