

United States District Court

Eastern District of Missouri
Thomas F. Eagleton U.S. Courthouse
111 South 10th Street
St. Louis, Missouri 63102

Nathan M. Graves
Clerk of Court

314-244-7900

December 30, 2025

JUDGE NOELLE C. COLLINS TO SERVE AS CHIEF MAGISTRATE JUDGE

APPRECIATION OF SERVICE OF OUTGOING CHIEF MAGISTRATE JUDGE SHIRLEY P. MENSAH

United States Magistrate Judge Noelle C. Collins was sworn in for a five-year term as Chief Magistrate Judge for the Eastern District of Missouri at 10 a.m. today, as United States Magistrate Judge Shirley P. Mensah concludes her five-year term.

Judge Collins has served as a Magistrate Judge since 2013. Prior to that, she worked as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in St. Louis, specializing in human trafficking prosecutions for the last three years of her nearly ten year-tenure as a federal prosecutor. Judge Collins serves on several District Court committees, including co-chair of the Community Outreach Committee and member of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee. She is also a presiding judge over the Janis C. Good Mental Health Court.

Judge Collins serves the federal judiciary at a national level after her 2025 reappointment by Chief Justice John G. Roberts to the Federal Judicial Center's Magistrate Judge Education Advisory Committee. The six-member committee designs national workshops and presents programs to the nation's magistrate judges. Additionally, she was elected to the board of the Federal Magistrate Judge's Association as 8th Circuit Director from 2016 to 2019. U.S. District Judge Jonathan E. Hawley of the Central District of Illinois previously served with Judge Collins on the FJC committee. Judge Hawley said of her service as a judicial educator, "Judge Collins is a national leader among magistrate judges, having participated in the education and training of magistrate judges as a member and chair of the Magistrate Judge Education Advisory Committee for the Federal Judicial Center. I have no doubt she will utilize the same leadership skills she has exhibited on a national level in her new role as Chief Magistrate Judge."

Judge Collins began her legal career in Saint Louis in private practice with concentrations in commercial litigation and employment law and client counseling. She taught as an adjunct

professor teaching civil and criminal law and procedure to undergraduates and graduate students at Webster University in the Legal Studies Department in Saint Louis and at Webster's Leiden campus in the Netherlands.

As the Chief Magistrate Judge in the Eastern District of Missouri, Judge Collins will lead the eight magistrate judges as they make recommendations to the Court on various matters of operations and governance. She will also sit on standing committees and be involved with special projects. When asked about this role, Judge Robin L. Rosenberg, Director of the Federal Judicial Center opined, "Judge Collins is a leader who brings vision, diligence and enthusiasm to her work. In her role as chair of the Federal Judicial Center's Magistrate Judge Education Advisory Committee, she elevated the level of involvement among magistrate judges and the quality of the programming in order to benefit all of her colleagues. The District is fortunate to have Judge Collins as its next Chief Magistrate Judge."

Outgoing Chief Magistrate Judge Shirley P. Mensah completed a successful five-year term that saw significant changes in the Eastern District leadership and bench. In her role, she was instrumental in assisting with the selection and onboarding of two new Magistrate Judges as well as a new Clerk of Court, Chief of Probation, and Chief of Pretrial Services. During her tenure, Judge Mensah actively engaged in court governance and civic outreach serving on several court committees and, nationally, serving as Magistrate Judge representative to the Judicial Conference Committee for Defender Services. She was elected by fellow Magistrate Judges in the Eighth Circuit to serve as the Magistrate Judge representative to the Eighth Circuit Judicial Council from 2017 through 2019. Judge Mensah is proud to be a naturalized citizen with roots in the United States and continues to preside over naturalization ceremonies and speak on the importance of U.S. citizenship.

Chief District Judge Clark noted the significance of the occasion: "We're grateful for the outstanding job Judge Mensah has done as Chief Magistrate Judge, and we look forward to the excellent leadership Judge Collins brings to this important position."

For further information contact the Clerk of Court at 314-244-7900.