



**Superior Court of California, County of Alameda
René C. Davidson Courthouse
1225 Fallon Street
Oakland, California 94612**

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For Immediate Release

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF ALAMEDA
ANNOUNCES NEW JUDICIAL LEADERSHIP**

Oakland: The Alameda County Superior Court announces its biennial change in judicial leadership taking effect January 1, 2012. Judge C. Don Clay has been elected by his peers to serve as the new Presiding Judge, and Judge Winifred Y. Smith will be the new Assistant Presiding Judge. Both judges will serve two-year terms.

Presiding Judge-elect Clay replaces Judge Jon R. Rolefson, whose term as presiding judge will conclude on December 31, 2011. Judge Clay will lead the Court's 85 judicial officers and oversee the operations of all court facilities in Alameda County and an annual budget of approximately \$120 million.

Governor Gray Davis appointed Judge Clay to the Superior Court bench in October 2003. Judge Clay currently serves as the Supervising Judge at the Hayward Hall of Justice and as the Assistant Presiding Judge for the Superior Court of California, Alameda County. Demonstrating leadership in the court, Judge Clay has served as Supervising Judge, Executive Criminal Judge, and presided over a criminal jury trial department and calendars including felony Law & Motion, civil Law & Motion, unlawful detainer court trials, civil settlement conferences for direct calendar judges, as well as Elder Abuse Court.

Judge Clay earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of California, Berkeley, and a *juris doctorate* degree from the University of California, Hastings School of Law. Judge Clay practiced both criminal and civil law in Alameda County from 1981 to 2002 where he handled a broad range of criminal cases from minor misdemeanors to serious felonies and white-collar crime. His civil litigation practice included business disputes, entertainment litigation, and personal injury cases on behalf of both plaintiffs and defendants. Prior to his appointment to the bench, Judge Clay worked in the office of the United States Attorney for the Northern District of California from 2002 to 2003. In that role, he oversaw all of the criminal and civil work of the office and served as the Acting United States Attorney in the absence of the United States Attorney. Prior to his role as Assistant Presiding Judge and Supervising Judge in Hayward, Judge Clay served as a felony criminal trial judge with an ancillary assignment presiding over the Elder Abuse calendar in Oakland. He has served as chair of the Court Security Committee as well as a member of the Executive, Bench Bar, and Criminal Committees.

Governor Gray Davis appointed Judge Winifred Y. Smith in November 2000. A graduate of Stanford University for her undergraduate degree and Boston University School of

Law, she currently serves as the Supervising Judge of the Civil Direct Calendar departments. Prior to her current assignment, she completed the following assignments: misdemeanor pretrials (2001), juvenile court (2002-2003), supervising judge of the Wiley W. Manuel Courthouse and Allen E. Broussard Justice Center (2004-2006), civil law and motion (2006-2007), and civil direct calendar (2007-present). Before her appointment to the bench, Judge Smith served as a deputy assistant attorney general for the state Department of Justice in San Francisco (1974-2000) and worked on a variety of issues including health, education, and welfare matters. Currently completing a three-year term on the Judicial Council, Judge Smith has served on the Judicial Council's Executive Committee as well as the Planning and Public Policy Committee. Prior to her current role on the Judicial Council, Judge Smith was an active member of the Judicial Council's Access and Fairness Advisory Committee (2004-2007) and served on the Continuing Judicial Studies Program Committee of the Center for Judicial Education and Research (CJER). In addition to her committee work at the state level, she currently chairs the Court's Civil Committee, and serves as a member on the Executive Committee, Community Focused Court Planning Committee, and Bench Bar Committee.

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