

News Advisory

From the Rhode Island Judiciary



Justice Long to be sworn in on Monday

January 10, 2021: Melissa A. Long, an Associate Justice of the Rhode Island Superior Court, will be sworn in as the first Black justice of the state Supreme Court outside the State House at noon on Monday, January 11.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Paul A. Suttell will swear in Judge Long on the south steps of the State House in an abbreviated outdoor ceremony. The ceremony has been arranged with COVID-19 precautions in mind. Invited attendees must wear masks and follow social-distancing guidelines.

Chief Justice Suttell will give opening remarks and Judge Long's husband and three children will participate in parts of the ceremony, which will include the reading of a commentary authored by former state Senator Harold M. Metts entitled "A Step Forward for the Rhode Island Bench."

After Judge Long is sworn in, the traditional "robing" of the new Supreme Court justice will be done by Circuit Judge O. Rogeriee Thompson of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, a former Rhode Island Superior Court judge and the first Black woman appointed to that position.

Judge Long was nominated to the Supreme Court by Governor Gina M. Raimondo and confirmed by both houses of the General Assembly in December. She takes the seat vacated by the retirement of Justice Francis X. Flaherty.

The general public will be able to view the ceremony. Capitol TV will stream the ceremony live online at RILegislature.gov/CapTV. Television viewers can watch Capitol TV on Cox channels 15, 61, and high definition channel 1061, on i3 Broadband (formerly Full Channel) channel 15, and Verizon channel 34. The broadcast will also be live on Facebook, at [Facebook.com/GinaMRaimondo](https://www.facebook.com/GinaMRaimondo).

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