

Supreme Court of Kentucky
Chambers, State Capitol
Frankfort, Kentucky
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Chief Justice Minton sworn in today to 3rd term as chief justice of Kentucky

FRANKFORT, Ky., June 8, 2016 – After eight years as head of the state court system, [John D. Minton Jr.](#) will continue in that role as he begins a third term as chief justice of Kentucky on June 28. His fellow [Supreme Court](#) justices elected him to another four-year term on Monday and he was sworn in today by Deputy Chief Justice Mary C. Noble at the Capitol in Frankfort.

“The Supreme Court re-elected Chief Justice Minton for a third term because of his excellent judicial temperament, his dedicated work ethic and the national recognition he will bring the Kentucky Court of Justice through his upcoming service as president of the Conference of Chief Justices,” Deputy Chief Justice Noble said. “As chief justice, he has initiated many projects for the betterment of the court system. These include revising legal rules of practice, developing an electronic court filing system and making Judicial Branch salaries competitive with the other branches of government, which the entire Supreme Court supports.”

Chief Justice Minton said much has transpired in the last eight years to make the Judicial Branch stronger, leaner and better prepared to meet the changing demands on the state court system. “It’s been a privilege to lead the courts during these challenging times. I’m honored to be elected by my colleagues to serve a third term as chief justice.

“I’m excited to see how our upgrades in court technology are transforming the way the courts do business,” he said. “With our new eFiling program, Kentucky attorneys can now file court documents in any of the 120 counties without having to make a trip to the courthouse. We’ve also undertaken our first-ever judicial workload study to determine how to be more efficient in applying judicial resources to the workload in various jurisdictions. These and many other improvements are possible because we have court personnel, justices, judges and circuit court clerks who are committed to enhancing how we serve the public and are not satisfied with the status quo. I’m proud of their efforts and look forward to continue to work with them to further strengthen Kentucky courts.

“I’m also proud of the partnership we’ve forged with the Executive and Legislative branches these last few years,” he said. “I believe we’ve managed to achieve that elusive balance of good government – maintaining the separation of powers without compromising the power of collaboration.”

Chief Justice Minton became Kentucky’s fifth chief justice in June 2008 and was chosen by his colleagues for a second term as chief justice in June 2012. The chief justice serves as the

administrative head of the state court system and is responsible for its operation. He was elected to serve on the Supreme Court in 2006 and was re-elected in 2014 for a second eight-year term.

Seminal Changes During Minton Administration

The Kentucky court system has been transformed in many areas during Chief Justice Minton's two terms as chief justice. The Great Recession had plunged the country into a financial crisis when he began serving as chief justice in 2008. Faced with significant cuts to the Judicial Branch budget, he steered the state court system through Kentucky's worst economic downturn in decades by cutting programs, streamlining the organizational structure of the Administrative Office of the Courts and creating efficiencies at all four levels of the court system.

He managed to keep the Judicial Branch within its appropriated budget while also focusing on his two main goals: investing in the people who operate the courts and in the court technology that can cut costs and deliver better service. He has overseen a sweeping KYeCourts technology initiative and the implementation of eFiling statewide.

He created the Judicial Branch Compensation Commission to determine how to make the court system's salary structure more fair and competitive with the other branches of state government. The commission's work resulted in the first overhaul in decades of the salary structure for non-elected court personnel and salary improvements for the elected circuit court clerks. He is currently seeking to increase the salaries of Kentucky's elected judges, whose compensation lags well behind many other states.

Under his leadership, the AOC has conducted a groundbreaking study to measure judicial caseloads as the basis to address workload imbalances among jurisdictions and provide data for a comprehensive judicial redistricting plan.

During his tenure, the Supreme Court has adopted the state's first uniform family law rules and Juvenile Court rules to ensure that family and juvenile law is applied consistently in all 120 counties. He formed the Kentucky Access to Justice Commission to improve access to civil legal aid for those who cannot afford legal representation.

Chief Justice Minton has also joined forces with the Executive and Legislative branches to reform Kentucky's juvenile justice system and overhaul its penal code to curb prison costs and improve public safety.

Professional Background

Prior to being elected to the [2nd Supreme Court District](#) in 2006, Chief Justice Minton was a circuit judge from 1992 to 2003 and a Kentucky Court of Appeals judge from 2003 to 2006. He was in private practice for 15 years before taking the bench. He holds degrees from Western Kentucky University and the University of Kentucky College of Law.

He is president-elect and a member of the board of directors for the national Conference of Chief Justices. He is also a member of the board of directors for the National Center for State Courts. He previously served on the board of the Council of State Governments and is a 2010 alumnus of the CSG's prestigious Toll Fellowship Program, one of the nation's top leadership development programs for state government officials.

The Kentucky Bar Association gave him the Outstanding Judge Award in 2003 and he was named Distinguished Jurist in 2012 by the University of Kentucky College of Law Alumni Association. He was inducted into the Western Kentucky University Hall of Distinguished Alumni in 2013.

He and his wife, Susan Page Minton, a Bowling Green native, have two children.

Supreme Court of Kentucky

The Supreme Court is the state court of last resort and the final interpreter of Kentucky law. Seven justices sit on the Supreme Court and all seven justices rule on appeals that come before the court. The justices are elected from seven appellate districts and serve eight-year terms. A chief justice, chosen for a four-year term by his or her fellow justices, is the administrative head of the state's court system and is responsible for its operation.

Administrative Office of the Courts

The Administrative Office of the Courts in Frankfort is the operations arm for the state court system. The AOC supports the activities of nearly 3,400 employees and 403 elected justices, judges and circuit court clerks. The AOC executes the Judicial Branch budget and works closely with the chief justice to ensure the Kentucky Court of Justice fulfills its statutory duties as stated in the Kentucky Constitution.

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