



# UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **KENLY KIYA KATO SELECTED AS UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE FOR CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

The United States District Court for the Central District of California announces the selection of Kenly Kiya Kato as a United States Magistrate Judge. Judge Kato was sworn in on July 1, 2014. She will preside in Riverside, California in the Eastern Division.

Judge Kato received her B.A. degree in Political Science from the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) in 1993, graduating summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa, and her J.D. in 1996 from the Harvard School of Law, graduating cum laude and serving as editor on the Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review.

Prior to her appointment, Judge Kato maintained her own private practice, focused primarily on federal criminal defense work. She has also represented both plaintiffs and defendants in civil rights and employment litigation. Judge Kato was a former Deputy Federal Public Defender before entering private practice. She started her legal career as a law clerk to now deceased Judge Robert M. Takasugi, United States District Court, Central District of California. Judge Kato has also previously served as a Lawyer Representative to the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference, as a member of the Merit Selection Panel, and as a member of the Standing Committee on Attorney Discipline.

The Central District of California has 24 authorized full-time and one part-time Magistrate Judge positions, in which one is occupied by Judge Kato. The duties of Magistrate Judges include: conducting preliminary proceedings in criminal cases, trial and disposition of misdemeanor actions, discovery, various other pretrial hearings in civil cases, trial and disposition of civil cases upon consent of the litigants, and other matters as may be assigned. Magistrate Judges are appointed for a term of eight years, and can be reappointed to additional terms.

The Magistrate Judge position requires a minimum of five years as a member in good standing of the bar of the highest court of a state, and at least five years of active practice of law. The rigorous selection process, which is governed by statute and by regulations adopted by the Judicial Conference of the United States, includes detailed background reviews and interviews before a Merit Selection Panel consisting of attorneys and non-attorney public representatives. The Panel refers candidates to the District Court, where interviews are conducted by the District Court's Magistrate Judges Committee. The top candidates are then referred to the full Court for review, selection, and appointment.

The Central District of California is comprised of the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo, and serves approximately 19.6 million people – nearly half the population of the state of California. In 2013, more than 15,000 cases were filed in the District.

**TERRY NAFISI**  
**DISTRICT COURT EXECUTIVE**