

SUPREME COURT OF VIRGINIA

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PRESS RELEASE – September 30, 2026

Kristi S. Wright Selected as Director of the Court Improvement Program

Karl R. Hade, Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia, is pleased to announce the selection of Kristi S. Wright as Director of the Court Improvement Program, effective October 1, 2026. Kristi will succeed Sandra L. Karison, who is retiring effective November 1, 2026, after serving as Director of the Court Improvement Program since 2016. Sandra previously served as Assistant Director of the Department of Legal Research in the Office of the Executive Secretary from 2004 to 2016 and as a Staff Attorney in the Court Improvement Program from 1998 to 2003.

Kristi joined the Office of the Executive Secretary in 2008 as a Staff Attorney in the Department of Legislative and Public Relations. She served as the Director of the Department of Legislative and Public Relations from August 2014 to August 2021. Since 2021, Kristi has served as Staff Attorney and Program Director for the Judicial Performance Evaluation Program in the Department of the Assistant Executive Secretary & Counsel.

Prior to joining the Office of the Executive Secretary, Kristi served as staff to the Virginia Commission on Family Violence Prevention and the Virginia Commission on Youth. She also has worked in private practice and for Voices for Virginia's Children. Kristi is a graduate of Texas Tech University and completed a graduate dual degree program, earning a Master of Social Work from Virginia Commonwealth University and a Juris Doctor from the University of Richmond School of Law.

The Virginia Court Improvement Program (CIP) works in the area of juvenile and family law and is dedicated to improving the effectiveness of child dependency court proceedings. CIP offers training, facilitates data-driven decision making, supports compliance with legal standards, and promotes family engagement and best practices. In collaboration with judges, attorneys, the Virginia Department of Social Services, Indian tribes, persons with lived experience, and community partners, CIP strives to advance safety, permanency, and well-being for children, strengthen the judicial process for all individuals impacted by child welfare issues in Virginia, and contribute to broader systemic reform. The Court Improvement Program also implements standards promulgated by the Judicial Council of Virginia governing attorneys who serve as

guardians ad litem for children and for incapacitated persons under Title 64.2, and for attorneys appointed to represent parents and guardians in child dependency cases.

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