



PRESS RELEASE

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**MICHAEL D. COUGHLAN – PRESIDING JUDGE
GUS C. BARRERA, II – ASSISTANT PRESIDING JUDGE
FOR 2022 AND 2023**

SUPERIOR COURT OF
CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SAN JOAQUIN
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Stockton, CA 95202
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Stockton, CA — Judge Michael D. Coughlan is the new Presiding Judge and Gus C. Barrera, II is the new Assistant Presiding Judge. Their terms commenced January 1, 2022 and run through December 31, 2023.

Judge Coughlan served as the former Assistant Presiding Judge in 2020 – 2021 and replace outgoing Presiding Judge Xapuri B. Villapudua. Judge Coughlan earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of the Pacific and his Juris Doctor degree from the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law. Judge Coughlan began his legal career in private practice, which included practicing as a managing lead attorney with the California State Auto Association. He then entered into civil litigation as a solo practitioner, where he specialized in insurance coverage, personal injury, commercial litigation, mediation, and arbitration. Judge Coughlan was appointed to the Superior Court by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2005.

Judge Barrera earned a Juris Doctor degree from the Brigham Young University Law School and a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of California, Berkeley. He was a partner and attorney at the Law Offices of Allan Jose and Gus Barrera II from 2005 to 2010. Judge Barrera served as a deputy district attorney at the San Joaquin County District Attorney's Office from 1998 to 2005 and was an associate at David Allen and Associates from 1997 to 1998. He had been a sole practitioner since 2011 when he was appointed to the Superior Court by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. in 2016. In addition to serving as the Assistant Presiding Judge, Judge Barrera will continue to sit as the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court.

The Presiding Judge, with the assistance of the Court Executive Officer, is responsible for leading the court, establishing policies, and allocating resources in a manner that promotes equal access to justice, maximizes the use of judicial and other resources, increases efficiency in court operations, and enhances service to the public. The Assistant Presiding Judge shall act in the absence of the Presiding Judge and will then assume the role of the Presiding Judge when the two-year term as Assistant expires.

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