



Administrative Office of the Courts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sept. 22, 2025

Magistrate judges elect officers and donate to Ruidoso flooding relief drive

SANTA FE – The New Mexico Magistrate Judges Association has re-elected its president and other officers for one-year terms and filled three vacancies on its board.

The association also donated \$2,000 and collected \$1,850 in donations from individual judges for a flooding relief drive in Ruidoso. The \$3,850 was used to purchase household items needed by people affected by flooding in the Lincoln County community.

“As judges we serve the people of New Mexico and want to do our part to help the community and residents of Ruidoso recover as quickly as possible from the devastating recent flooding,” said Eddy County Magistrate Judge Jimmy “Chuck” Foster Jr., of Artesia, who was re-elected as association president.

Lea County Magistrate Judge Clipper Miller in Hobbs was re-elected vice president, and Quay County Magistrate Judge Noreen Hendrickson in Tucumcari will continue as the association’s secretary-treasurer.

Newly elected board members are: Otero County Magistrate Judges Richard Greene and John Secrest and Los Alamos County Magistrate Judge Catherine Taylor.

Re-elected to the board were Magistrate Judges:

- Christopher Baca, Guadalupe County
- Stacey Biel, San Juan County
- Russell Bradford, San Juan County
- Keith Clayton, Lea County
- Josephine Cones, De Baca County
- Megan Fish, Eddy County
- Trubert Flowers, Harding County
- Cindy Garza, Mora County
- Philip Leger, San Miguel County
- Christian Montano, San Miguel County
- Felix Pena, Colfax County
- Cynthia Sanders, McKinley County
- Johnny Valdez, Cibola County

“My congratulations to the association’s officers and board members,” said Chief Justice David K. Thomson. “Magistrate courts deliver essential justice services to New Mexicans. For good reason magistrate courts are often referred to as the people’s court because of the large number of cases they handle each year, which brings them into contact with thousands of people across the state.”

New Mexico has 67 magistrate judges who serve four-year terms. Magistrate courts have limited jurisdiction, handling cases that involve misdemeanors, traffic violations and DWI offenses as well as civil actions up to \$10,000, including landlord-tenant disputes. Magistrate judges also conduct preliminary hearings to determine probable cause on felony charges. Nearly 155,000 civil and criminal cases were filed in the magistrate courts statewide in the 2025 fiscal year.

The association was established as a nonprofit organization in 1970, and its activities include advocating for state court system funding and legislation involving the judiciary. Officers and board members were elected at the yearly magistrate judges conference last month.

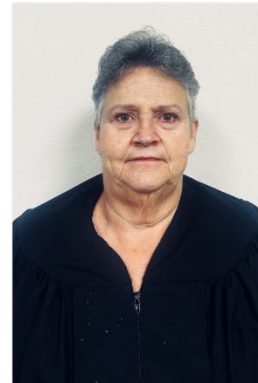
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Eddy County
Magistrate Judge
Jimmy "Chuck" Foster, Jr.



Lea County
Magistrate Judge
Clipper Miller



Quay County
Magistrate Judge
Noreen Hendrickson