



**Superior Court of California, County of Alameda
René C. Davidson Courthouse
1225 Fallon Street
Oakland, CA 94612**

August 1, 2007

For Immediate Release

**ALAMEDA COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
ANNOUNCES NEW JUDICIAL LEADERSHIP**

Oakland: The Alameda County Superior Court announces its biennial change in judicial leadership taking effect January 1, 2008.

Judge Yolanda N. Northridge becomes Presiding Judge, and Judge Jon R. Rolefson is the new Assistant Presiding Judge. Both will serve two-year terms.

The California Rules of Court, which govern the State's judicial system, requires a presiding judge for courts that have two or more judges. Presiding judges have the critical responsibility of providing leadership and direction for all aspects of the court. Selected by their peers, presiding judges must demonstrate management and administrative ability, experience and familiarity with a variety of trial court assignments (criminal and civil), the ability to motivate and educate other judicial officers and court personnel, and, the ability to assign judges based on their strengths and the public's needs. Presiding judges may serve on or cause to be created various committees, work groups and other problem solving tools to meet the court's needs.

Presiding Judge – elect Northridge replaces Judge George C. Hernandez, whose term as presiding judge concludes on December 31, 2007. She will lead the court's 85 judicial officers and oversee the operations of 15 court facilities and an annual budget of \$120 million. She currently chairs the Family Law Committee and is a member of several other court committees, including the Executive, Personnel, Library, Bench Bar, and Judge Pro Tempore committees.

Gov. Pete Wilson appointed Judge Northridge to the Superior Court on Jan. 23, 1998. Prior to joining the Court, Judge Northridge served in private practice in partnership with her spouse (the Honorable Robert D. McGuiness) from 1988 to 1998 and in the Oakland law firm Crosby, Heafey, Roach and May from 1978 to 1988. Judge Northridge received her bachelor of arts from Holy Names University in 1967 and her master of arts in political science from Claremont College in 1975. In 1978, Judge Northridge completed her *juris doctor* at the University of San Diego. There she served as a Law Review editor and a member of the National Moot Court Team.

Judge Northridge is currently the Presiding Judge of Family Law and Assistant Presiding Judge for the Superior Court of California, Alameda County. Demonstrating leadership inside and outside the Court, Judge Northridge serves as first vice-president of the Boys and Girls Club of Alameda. She maintains a valid California Teaching Credential and has lectured at the Center for Judicial Education and Research – a resource for improving justice through the ongoing

education of judicial officers. From 2002 to 2005 Northridge served as a board member of the California Judges Association.

Judge Rolefson was appointed as a Municipal Court Judge by Gov. Pete Wilson in 1996 and served in the Oakland-Piedmont-Emeryville Judicial District. He was elevated to the Superior Court in 1998 through the unification of Municipal and Superior Courts. Judge Rolefson received his bachelor of arts in economics from UC Berkeley in 1970. He received his *juris doctor* from Hastings Law School in San Francisco in 1973 and served as deputy District Attorney in Alameda County until 1980. He worked in a private law practice in Oakland and Pleasanton from 1980 until his appointment as a Municipal Court judge in 1996. Judge Rolefson has served as Executive Criminal Judge and is currently a member of the Facilities Committee and the Criminal Committee.

Media: For further information, please contact James Brighton, Bureau Chief of the Planning, Research, Court Services and Public Information Bureau, at (510) 272-5093.