



February 6, 2024

Judicial Appointments to the Provincial Court of British Columbia

It is my great pleasure and privilege to announce that the Lieutenant Governor in Council has signed Orders in Council appointing four new Provincial Court judges to the Provincial Court.

The new judge appointments are Christopher Churchill, Colleen Elden, Karen Leung and Sheryl Wagner.

Judge Churchill – will be sworn in on March 21, 2024. He will be assigned to the Vancouver Island Region with chambers in Nanaimo.

Judge Churchill graduated from Dalhousie University with an LL.B in May 1992. He was defence counsel who began his career practicing a mix of civil, family and criminal law. He became a sole practitioner in 1997 and, within a year, shifted his practice to exclusively criminal defence. He has represented clients facing criminal charges at both the Provincial and Supreme Court level.

Judge Elden – will be sworn in on March 4, 2024. She will be assigned to the Fraser Region with chambers in Surrey.

Judge Elden graduated from UBC with an LL.B in April 2007. She practiced criminal law, not only as defence counsel but also as complainant's counsel in sexual abuse prosecutions and also as ad hoc Crown counsel. She was frequently appointed as amicus curiae ("friend of the Court") for complex criminal matters to assist the Court with its decision-making by ensuring that all relevant evidence and arguments were properly presented.

Judge Leung – will be sworn in on March 4, 2024. She will be assigned to the Vancouver Region with chambers in Robson Square.

Judge Leung attended the University of Victoria graduating (LL.B., Co-op) in April 2002. She was a legal counsel at the Provincial Court since September 2013. Judge Leung was a member of numerous committees that navigated complex and sensitive relationships with members of the executive branch, counsel and the Superior Courts, particularly during the pandemic, when she worked closely with the Provincial Court's Judicial Administrative Committee drafting Court Practice Directives and Notices to the Public that ensured access to the Court during the pandemic.

Judge Wagner – will be sworn in on March 4, 2024. She will be assigned to the Vancouver Region and assigned out of the Office of the Chief Judge.

Judge Wagner graduated from the University of Alberta Law School in April 1994. Early in her career, she worked as a mediator in Australia, resolving financial disputes between credit unions and their clients. In 2005, she became Crown counsel with the BC Prosecution Service. She commenced her career in the Fraser region and later moved to the Special Prosecutions Unit, where she was involved in challenging and lengthy prosecutions, occupying senior roles in the litigation team.

The Court congratulates its newest colleagues on their appointments and welcomes them to the Provincial Court.

Melissa Gillespie
Chief Judge
Provincial Court of British Columbia