



THE SUPREME COURT *of* OHIO



MAUREEN O'CONNOR

CHIEF JUSTICE
SUPREME COURT OF OHIO

On Jan. 1, 2011, Maureen O'Connor became the first female chief justice and just the 10th chief in the history of the Supreme Court of Ohio. She was sworn in on Jan. 1, 2003, as the state's 148th justice, which, at the time, gave the Supreme Court its first-ever female majority.

On the first day of January, 2017, Chief Justice O'Connor began her second full term as the head of Ohio's judiciary.

The last day of her current term is Dec. 31, 2022.

Maureen O'Connor is the tenth Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Ohio, the first woman to lead the state judicial branch of government, a Cleveland-Marshall School of Law graduate, and a member of the Cleveland-Marshall Hall of Fame. She is the longest-serving statewide elected woman in Ohio history.

Chief Justice O'Connor has led significant reforms and improvements in the Ohio judicial system and is a leader nationally.

Her commitment to modernization of the courts across the state is unmatched. Since 2015, she has endowed Ohio local courts with more than \$35 million to add and enhance technology. This funding has increased access to justice for litigants, defendants, and the public. The foresight made Ohio a leader in its ability to continue to administer justice through the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

Chief Justice O'Connor has worked to improve fairness in the judicial system. She was selected by her peers in the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators to co-chair the National Task Force on Fines, Fees, and Bail Practices in 2016. In Ohio, she has advocated for reform to ensure people are not held in jail prior to resolution of their case simply because they cannot afford bail. She is spearheading the creation of a statewide criminal sentencing database and the implementation of a uniform sentencing entry to establish standardized data for felony sentencing. She has created a task force on conviction integrity to look at policies and practices to determine equity, fairness, and advise the judiciary and the legislature.

From 1985 to 1993, O'Connor served as Magistrate, Summit County Probate Court. From 1993 to 1995, she served as Judge, Summit County Court of Common Pleas, and was elected as administrative judge of the court. Serving in local and trial courts, she learned that many of society's most difficult problems underlie legal issues.

Recognizing emerging opioid abuse and its impact on court dockets, Chief Justice O'Connor led efforts of an eight-state initiative to combat the nation's opioid epidemic. She has increased the role of specialized dockets, to bring community resources together to provide an opportunity for a second chance, where warranted. She holds trial courts in esteem for the challenging work they do and the opportunities they create.

Chief Justice O'Connor left the Summit County bench to serve her community as Summit County Prosecuting Attorney from 1995 to 1999 and was honored by Cleveland State University with the Distinguished Alumnae Award for Civic Achievement and received numerous other awards. In 1999, she was elected with Governor Bob Taft to serve as Ohio Lieutenant Governor and Director of the Ohio Department of Public Safety. After 9-11, she became the state's first liaison with the newly formed U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security. As Ohio's leader in Homeland Security, she chaired the State of Ohio Security Task Force and the State Building Security Review Committee.

Chief Justice O'Connor joined the Court in January 2003, was re-elected as associate justice in 2008 and elected twice as Chief Justice in 2010 and 2016. She is past president of the national Conference of Chief Justices and former chair of the National Center for State Courts Board of Directors.