

17<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF  
FLORIDA  
BROWARD COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
201 S.E. 6TH STREET, SUITE 20170  
FORT LAUDERDALE, FL 33301



TRIAL COURT  
ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE  
SALLIE JAMES, PUBLIC  
INFORMATION OFFICER  
(954) 831-7559  
SJAMES@17TH.FLCOURTS.ORG

**For Immediate Release**

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**Governor DeSantis Appoints James R. Harris and Jeremy I. Franker to the Broward Bench**

**Fort Lauderdale, FL** – The Seventeenth Judicial Circuit is pleased to announce the appointment of two new judges to the bench: **James R. Harris** to the Circuit Court and **Jeremy I. Franker** to the County Court.

“On behalf of the 17th Judicial Circuit, we would like to officially welcome Judge James Harris and Judge Jeremy Franker aboard,” said Chief Judge Carol-Lisa Phillips of the Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> appointments. “We are pleased to have them join the circuit and look forward to their contributions.”

Judge Harris fills the vacancy created when Judge **Jonathan D. Lott** was appointed to the Fourth District Court of Appeal on October 30, 2025. Judge Franker fills the vacancy left by Judge **Mardi Levey Cohen**, who retired on December 31, 2025.

“It’s an honor and a privilege to be chosen by the governor in this capacity. I look forward to this opportunity to serve the citizens of Broward County to my fullest capacity,” said Judge Harris, a Fort Lauderdale native who has served for nearly six years as a Senior Assistant Statewide Prosecutor with the Office of the Attorney General. Judge Harris will be assigned to the Family Division.

During his tenure with the Office of the Attorney General, Judge Harris served as a legal advisor to the 22nd Statewide Grand Jury and prosecuted complex cases involving RICO, drug trafficking, and organized fraud, working in collaboration with Homeland Security, the DEA, FDLE, and local law enforcement agencies.

Previously, Judge Harris worked in the Division of Children’s Legal Services and in private practice handling commercial and PIP litigation. He also served nearly eight years as an Assistant State Attorney with the Broward State Attorney’s Office.

Judge Franker comes to the 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit from the U.S. Department of Justice where he served as Deputy Director of Joint Task Force Vulcan, leading a national prosecution team on foreign terrorist organizations that included Tren de Aragua (TdA) and MS-13.

Judge Franker served in the Department of Justice for seven years and prosecuted complex organized crime and racketeering cases for the Violent Crime and Racketeering Section. In addition to Florida, Judge Franker has tried federal cases in Alaska, St. Louis, and Washington DC. Previously, Judge Franker worked for seven years as a Statewide Prosecutor for the Florida Attorney General and started his legal career as an Assistant State Attorney in Miami.

“I am incredibly thankful to the governor for entrusting me with this appointment and I look forward to serving the citizens of Broward County on the bench,” Judge Franker said. Judge Franker will preside in the South Regional Courthouse in Hollywood.

### **ABOUT THE SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA**

The Seventeenth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida is the court for Broward County, headquartered in Fort Lauderdale, FL. It is the second largest circuit court in the state. Broward County has 90 judges. Of those, 32 are county court judges and 58 are circuit judges. Four courthouses comprise the 17th circuit and include the Broward County Courthouse in Fort Lauderdale, and three satellite courthouses: the North Regional Courthouse in Deerfield Beach, the West Regional Courthouse in Plantation and the South Regional Courthouse in Hollywood.

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