



# PRESS RELEASE

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**New York State  
Unified Court System**

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Chief Administrative Judge**

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## **Chief Judge Names Members of New Advisory Committee on Evidence**

**NEW YORK** — Chief Judge Janet DiFiore today designated the members of the new Judicial Advisory Committee on Evidence, a panel of experts charged with compiling a guide to New York’s existing law of evidence that will be readily available to judges, lawyers and the public.

Led by Nassau County Supreme Court Justice William Donnino and retired New York State Court of Appeals Judge Susan Read, the Advisory Committee is composed of current and retired judges from across the state. Professor Michael J. Hutter of Albany Law School, a widely recognized expert on New York evidence law, will serve as the Committee’s Reporter.

With its evidence law broadly dispersed among myriad cases and statutory provisions, New York is unique in lacking a consolidated source of the law of evidence, whether by statute or guide. The guide to be produced under the careful supervision of the Advisory Committee will state – in an organized, easy-to-use format – what the rules are. It will be divided into sections, and the rules will be accompanied by notes that include sources of authority and additional information, where appropriate. Once released, the guide will be updated annually to reflect any changes in the law of evidence.

The aim of the guide is to provide judges, lawyers and others with an easily accessible, important reference tool they can look to in discerning New York’s evidentiary rules. The

publication will be strictly advisory – rather than a binding set of rules – allowing for the continued case-by-case adjudication of the rules of evidence as justice dictates.

The Advisory Committee will benefit from the efforts of the New York State Law Revision Commission, which in the 1990s submitted a proposal to the Legislature to codify by statute New York’s existing rules of evidence. That proposal was rejected largely because of concerns that a statutory codification of the existing rules of evidence – unlike the guide to be developed by the Advisory Committee – would stifle the benefits of the common law evolution of the law of evidence.

“I am so pleased that we have two such accomplished, widely regarded leaders of New York’s legal community as Judges Donnino and Read to spearhead the efforts of the Advisory Committee, whose mandate is integral to improving the delivery of justice in New York. I also want to thank the Committee’s esteemed members for so graciously donating their time and talents to this vital undertaking, which will undoubtedly prosper from their depth of knowledge and experience,” said Chief Judge DiFiore.

A membership roster of the Advisory Committee follows.

The Judicial Advisory Committee on Evidence

*Co-chairs*

Hon. William Donnino  
Nassau County Supreme Court

Hon. Susan Read  
Retired New York State Court of Appeals Judge

*Reporter*

Professor Michael J. Hutter, Albany Law School

*Members*

Hon. Lucy Billings, New York County Supreme Court

Hon. John Brunetti, Onondaga County Supreme Court

Hon. Fernando Camacho, Suffolk County Supreme Court

Hon. Felix Catena, Montgomery County Court

Hon. Mark Cohen, Suffolk County Supreme Court

Hon. Daniel Conviser, New York County Supreme Court

Hon. Thomas Franczyk, Erie County Court

Hon. Bernard Fried, Arbitrator and Mediator, Judicial Arbitration & Mediation Services (JAMS);  
retired New York County Supreme Court Justice

Hon. Judith Gische, Appellate Division, First Dept.

Hon. Teresa Johnson, Supervising Judge, Rochester City Court

Hon. Barry Kamins, Partner, Aidala Bertuna & Kamins; retired New York Supreme Court  
Justice

Hon. John Leventhal, Appellate Division, Second Dept.

Hon. Martin Marcus, Bronx County Supreme Court

Hon. Robert Miller, Appellate Division, Second Dept.

Hon. Mary Work, Ulster County Surrogate's Court

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