

THE HONORABLE MICHAEL L. RANKIN
ASSOCIATE JUDGE
SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Judge Michael L. Rankin was appointed to the Superior Court of the District of Columbia in 1986 by President Ronald Reagan.

Judge Rankin, originally from Holly Springs, Mississippi, was educated at Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri, where he received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1967, and at the Howard University School of Law, Washington, D.C., where he received a law degree in 1970. He was admitted to the District of Columbia Bar by examination in December 1970.

Shortly after graduating from law school, Judge Rankin entered active duty in the United States Army, leaving a position as staff attorney in the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice. While on active duty, he was assigned to the 101st Airborne Division, JAG Corps, serving in the Republic of Viet Nam.

Upon completing military service, Judge Rankin worked briefly as attorney-advisor for the Office of the General Counsel, Office of Economic Opportunity. For the next four years, he was a staff attorney at the Public Defender Service of the District of Columbia. On May 3, 1976, Judge Rankin was appointed Assistant Federal Public Defender in the District of the Virgin Islands, and in August 1976, he was named Acting Federal Public Defender. In the fall of 1978, he returned to the District of Columbia and entered private practice with Wesley Williams Associates where he practiced until June 1980, when he was appointed Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Columbia. In that office, Judge Rankin served in both the United States District Court and in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. Additionally, in the fall of 1981, he served as a Special Assistant to the United States Attorney in the District of the Virgin Islands. From December 1984 until his nomination to the Superior Court, he was Deputy Chief of the Felony Trial Division in the United States Attorney's Office, District of Columbia.

From January 1998 through December 2001, Judge Rankin was the Presiding Judge of the Criminal and Special Operations Divisions of the court, having previously served as Deputy Presiding Judge of the Criminal Division. He has co-chaired the court's Quality Service Council and represented the court on the District of Columbia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, where he chaired the Pretrial Systems Subcommittee. He previously sat by mayoral appointment as a voting member of the District of Columbia Police Officer Training and Standards Board. Judge Rankin served as an Adjunct Professor at the George Washington University School of Law, where he taught Trial Advocacy to second and third year law students from the fall of 2002 until the spring of 2018. He is presently a member of the court's Rules Committee and the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration.

Judge Rankin is married to the Honorable Zinora Mitchell-Rankin, Senior Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.