

THE HONORABLE THOMAS J. MOTLEY
SENIOR JUDGE
SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Judge Thomas John Motley was appointed to the Superior Court of the District of Columbia in 2000 by President William J. Clinton.

Judge Motley was born in Washington, D.C., and spent most of his childhood in Cheraw, South Carolina. Judge Motley received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy from Columbia College in 1976. He received his law degree in 1979 from Harvard Law School, where he was a staff editor for the Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review. The following year, Judge Motley served as a law clerk to Judge Robert F. Collins of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

In 1980, Judge Motley joined the District of Columbia law firm of Steptoe & Johnson. After two and a half years in private practice, he entered public service, becoming an Assistant United States Attorney in the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia in 1983.

Over the next fifteen years, Judge Motley served with distinction in nearly every section of the United States Attorney's Office, trying over 60 cases in both local and federal court, including cases involving charges of robbery, murder, bribery, perjury, mail fraud, and conspiracies to commit government fraud. He served the majority of his tenure in the Office in the Public Corruption/Government Fraud Section, where he was primarily responsible for investigating and prosecuting violations of federal criminal laws adversely affecting the integrity of both federal and local governments. As a line Assistant U.S. Attorney, Judge Motley received eight Department of Justice Special Achievement Awards and, in 1996, he received the Department of Justice Director's Award, one of the highest honors presented to an Assistant United States Attorney. In 1997, Judge Motley was appointed Senior Litigation Counsel and later appointed the Acting Chief of the Public Corruption/Government Fraud Section of the United States Attorney's Office.

In January 1998, then United States Attorney Wilma A. Lewis appointed Judge Motley to the position of Principal Assistant United States Attorney, making him the second-in-command of the largest United States Attorney's Office in the country, with nearly 340 attorneys and an equal number of support personnel. In this position, he participated in and contributed to all major decisions regarding policies, initiatives, personnel, supervision and evaluation of major criminal and civil cases in the office. Judge Motley received numerous awards throughout his tenure at the United States Attorney's Office. In 1996, then United States Attorney Eric H. Holder, Jr., presented Judge Motley with the Harold J. Sullivan Award, annually awarded by the Assistant United States Attorneys Association to the Assistant United States Attorney who "best exemplifies selfless devotion, personal courage, professional fairness, and trial excellence." In 1999, United States Attorney Lewis presented Judge Motley with the STAR (Special Thanks for Achieving Results) Award, in recognition of his contributions as Principal Assistant.

Judge Motley has been an active member of the Thurgood Marshall Inn of Court since its founding in 1990. He was a member of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the National Capital Area for ten years, and in 1995, was recognized as the National Big Brother of the Year. As a former member of the Board of Directors of the local organization, Judge Motley encouraged others to become Big Brothers and to become more involved in our community.

Judge Motley was sworn in as an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, on October 27, 2000, and has presided over matters on the Juvenile, Paternity & Support, Mental Health, Felony II, Domestic Violence and Civil II calendars.