

The Honorable Rainey R. Brandt
Associate Judge
Superior Court of the District of Columbia

Rainey R. Brandt was sworn in as an associate judge on September 16, 2019. Prior to that, she served as the deputy presiding magistrate judge, having been a magistrate since November 7, 2012.

Judge Brandt was born and raised in LaGrange, Georgia. She has a Ph.D. from American University (1993), where she was a member of Alpha Kappa Delta Honor Society. Her dissertation focused on the effects of incarceration on the father-child relationship. In addition, she attended The Columbus School of Law at the Catholic University of America, and received her JD in 1995.

Prior to her work at the court, Judge Brandt was a full-time professor in the Department of Justice, Law and Criminology at American University. She is still an adjunct associate professor there. Her areas of expertise include the prison system and other justice related issues. Judge Brandt received the university's Outstanding Adjunct Professor Award an unprecedented two times in just four years, 2006 and 2009.

Judge Brandt began her tenure with the court in 1996, when she served as law clerk to Judge Michael Rankin and later Judge Stephanie Duncan-Peters. In 1998, Judge Brandt became the Special Counsel to the Chief Judge and served three successive chief judges. In addition to serving as senior advisor to three of the chief judges of Superior Court, Judge Brandt served as ombudsman to the justice community for prisoner/correctional issues. During her tenure at the Superior Court, Judge Brandt has held leadership roles on various committees dealing with topics focused on improving access to and the administration of justice. For example, she was instrumental in helping the District of Columbia meet its congressionally-mandated deadline for the closure of the prison facility at Lorton. Her involvement with DC felony designations, a process that assigns sentenced felons to the appropriate Federal Bureau of Prisons facility, ensured the success of the transition and paved the way for a criminal justice collaborative that has facilitated the handling of those found guilty of felonies in the DC Superior Court. Judge Brandt's tireless work on behalf of the court through the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council led to two successful Fugitive Safe Surrender initiatives. Safe Surrender is a US Marshals program that encourages people with outstanding warrants to turn themselves in. The second DC Safe Surrender program took place in August 2011 and was a great success with over 700 people turning themselves in despite being interrupted by a hurricane. As a result, there was a significant reduction in the number of outstanding warrants, but more importantly, made our community safer and kept our deputy marshals out of harm's way. Within the court, Judge Brandt has brought about improvements in court efficiency, arranged for mentoring opportunities for the students at Thurgood Marshall Academy, a public charter high school in Anacostia, and provides training sessions for new and seasoned judges.

In May 2015, Judge Brandt received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the DC Law Students in Court legal clinic. In 2010, Judge Brandt was selected as the recipient of the Council for Court Excellence's Justice Potter Stewart Award, in recognition of her work on behalf of the administration of justice. This very prestigious award is given annually to an individual who has made a significant contribution to the law, the legal system, the courts, or the administrative process in our nation's capital.

Prior to taking the bench, Judge Brandt was a long time board member with D.C. Law Students in Court Program (program assists the low income persons in DC with landlord tenant issues and misdemeanor arrests), and an executive board member of the Voices for a Second Chance (formerly Visitors Services Center, a nonprofit that works to see that those released from jail reintegrate into their DC community). She continues to mentor young lawyers and students, and serves on several judicial committees within the Court.

Judge Brandt moved to the District of Columbia in 1988, and is married to Robert W. Brandt, a chief with the United States Marshals Service.