

THE HONORABLE RAINEY R. BRANDT
ASSOCIATE JUDGE
SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Rainey Ransom Brandt serves as the deputy presiding judge of the Criminal Division. She was nominated to be an associate judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia by President Obama in 2012 and 2016, then again by President Trump in 2017 and 2019. She was finally confirmed by the U.S. Senate on August 1, 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.

Before her work at the court, Judge Brandt was a full-time professor in the Department of Justice, Law and Criminology at American University. She later remained an adjunct associate professor there until May 2023. Her areas of expertise include the prison system and other justice-related issues relevant to mass incarceration. Judge Brandt received numerous teaching awards over her 32 years at American University including the university's Outstanding Adjunct Professor Award three times.

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.

Within the court, Judge Brandt has brought about improvements in court efficiency, arranged for mentoring opportunities for both DC high school and college students, and serving as a judicial coach for new judges.

The legal community has recognized Judge Brandt over the years for her commitment to justice. The Council for Court Excellence selected her as a recipient of its 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. Rising for Justice (formerly known as DC Law Students in Court) selected Judge Brandt as its Distinguished Alumnus Award recipient in 2015.

Before taking the bench, Judge Brandt was a long time board member with D.C. Law Students in Court Program (now referred to as Rising For Justice, the 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).

Since becoming a judge in 2012, she has presided in the Domestic Violence, Civil and Criminal Divisions. Judge Brandt continues to mentor young lawyers and students and serves on several judicial committees within the court.