



NEWS RELEASE

**New York State
Unified Court System**

**Hon. Joseph A. Zayas
Chief Administrative Judge**

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New York State Courts Announce Expansion of Judicial Trainings in 2024, With Emphasis on Bail and Securing Orders

*Judicial Institute's Robust Curriculum Will Benefit Both
New and Veteran Judges Across New York State*

NEW YORK – Chief Administrative Judge Joseph A. Zayas today announced a recommitment by the court system to a robust statewide program of judicial education, with a particular focus on bail training for judges handling criminal cases.

To ensure that judges serving in the criminal courts are up to date on all the changes to the State's bail laws and decisional law interpreting them, specific educational standards have been implemented. Late last year, after consultation with the Administrative Board of the Courts and with the approval of the Court of Appeals, Chief Judge Rowan D. Wilson amended section 17.3 of the Rules of the Chief Judge to give the Chief Administrative Judge and the Administrative Board additional discretion regarding judicial training requirements. In accordance with the new rule, earlier this year, Judge Zayas issued an administrative order instituting new benchmarks specifically regarding education on the laws surrounding bail and securing orders. Judges who are within the first year of assuming office or newly assigned to courts handling criminal cases will complete four hours of educational programming on the bail laws. Judges in their second year will complete two hours of such training. All other judges handling criminal cases will complete one hour of training on this topic each year. Additional training will be provided regarding the rules governing discovery in criminal cases, and the discretion judges have in determining sanctions for discovery violations.

All judges attending the new bail programs will receive refresher courses designed to clearly and thoroughly explain fundamental principles governing bail determinations under New York law, all relevant changes to the Criminal Procedure Law, and significant developments in the caselaw surrounding bail and securing orders.

The targeted bail program will be integrated into the comprehensive judicial education that is offered year-round. The New York State Judicial Institute spearheads this curriculum through its summer seminars with specialized sessions in criminal, civil, housing, matrimonial, and other areas of law, as well as general training on ethics and judicial demeanor; in-person trainings in January for all new judges; and continuing education courses offered virtually throughout the year. The nationally recognized Judicial Institute, when it opened in 2003, was the nation's first judicial education and research facility built by and statutorily established for a state court system. For the past 20-plus years, it has provided comprehensive, robust training to New York State judges on a broad array of topics and issues.

Judges also avail themselves of additional opportunities for education and training focused on the specialized needs of individual trial courts that are regularly offered through the various judicial associations at their annual conferences.

"In my role as chief administrator of the courts, I am proud to place a renewed emphasis on meaningful education and training opportunities, especially training on an issue, like bail, that is so important to the fair and equitable functioning of our criminal justice system," said Chief Administrative Judge Zayas. "That the stellar educational programs delivered to our new judges at the Judicial Institute this year have been augmented by an extra emphasis on bail issues will benefit not only those individuals appearing before the courts but all New Yorkers."

"I am grateful to Chief Judge Wilson and Chief Administrative Judge Zayas for their leadership in upholding New York's preeminent status as a national model for judicial education and commend the Judicial Institute for its unparalleled commitment to excellence in judicial scholarship over the past two decades, further marked by its efficient rollout of our newly enhanced judicial education curriculum. These programs aim to more effectively support the New York State Courts' dedicated, hardworking judges in their daily efforts to analyze complex questions of law and fact before rendering impartial decisions that promote the fair administration of justice throughout our great state," said First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Norman St. George.

"Judicial education serves as the cornerstone in ensuring that judges and justices are well-equipped, knowledgeable, and proficient in specialized areas of the law. A well-informed judiciary plays a crucial role in promoting a deeper understanding of the law and its implications, thereby bolstering public trust and confidence in the judicial system," said Hon. Kathie E. Davidson, Dean of the New York State Judicial Institute. "These targeted educational programs will help the judiciary to continue to operate with impartiality and independence while safeguarding the interests of the community. Chief Administrative Judge Zayas's focus on expanding judicial educational trainings and programs underscores the courts' commitment to uphold justice for all litigants."

The renewed focus on enhanced judicial education started in January, with all new judges assembling for the annual two-week New Judges Seminar in White Plains. A diverse range of topics was covered, including the recent bail and discovery law changes. Additional education on these issues is scheduled for later this month, over the summer, and again in the fall. The bail education programs will be included again at the Judicial Institute's New Judges Seminar in January 2025, with the cycle continuing again throughout next year—all in fulfillment of Judge Zayas's commitment to ensure ongoing education and training on this important issue.

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