



1 **IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO**

2 **July 22, 2026**

3 **NO. S-1-AO-2026-00012**

4
5 **IN THE MATTER OF THE**
6 **ESTABLISHMENT OF A STRUCTURE**
7 **FOR THE ASSIGNMENT OF JUDGES**
8 **FOR ELECTION CONTESTS AND**
9 **OTHER JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS**
10 **UNDER THE ELECTION CODE FOR**
11 **2026 PRIMARY AND GENERAL**
12 **ELECTIONS IN NEW MEXICO**

13 **SECOND AMENDED ORDER**

14 WHEREAS, the Election Code requires the assignment of district judges to
15 hear election contests and preside over other post-election proceedings;

16 WHEREAS, the upcoming primary and general elections may require the
17 Judiciary to resolve election contests and preside over other proceedings initiated
18 under the Election Code;

19 WHEREAS, the public business requires the expeditious disposition of
20 election contests and other Election Code proceedings that may arise as a result of
21 the upcoming general election; and

22 WHEREAS, in accordance with this Court's superintending control over the
23 Judiciary under the Constitution of the State of New Mexico, N.M. Const. art. VI,
24 § 3, and the authority of the Chief Justice to designate district judges under N.M.

1 Const. art. VI, § 15, when the public business requires, the Court, on its own motion,
2 having considered the foregoing and being otherwise sufficiently advised, Chief
3 Justice Julie J. Vargas, Justice Michael E. Vigil, Justice David K. Thomson, Justice
4 C. Shannon Bacon, and Justice Briana H. Zamora concurring;

5 NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that the following district judges
6 hereby are DESIGNATED to preside as “Election Judges” over election contests
7 that may be filed under Rule 1-087 NMRA and NMSA 1978, § 1-14-3 (1971), ballot
8 impoundment proceedings that may be filed under NMSA 1978, § 1-14-9 (2023);
9 recount or recheck proceedings that may be filed under NMSA 1978, § 1-14-14(C)
10 (2023); mandamus proceedings that may be filed under NMSA 1978, § 1-14-21
11 (1977); and ballot image review proceedings under NMSA 1978, § 1-14-22 (2019),
12 in each county in New Mexico as assigned in the discretion of the Chief Judge in
13 their respective judicial districts;

14 First Judicial District Court

15
16 Los Alamos County

Hon. T. Glenn Ellington

Hon. Todd A. Coberly

18
19 Rio Arriba County

Hon. T. Glenn Ellington

Hon. Jason Lidyrd

21
22 Santa Fe County

Hon. T. Glenn Ellington

Hon. Jason Lidyrd

1 Second Judicial District Court

2
3 Bernalillo County

Hon. Joshua Allison
Hon. Erin O'Connell

5
6 Third Judicial District Court

7
8 Doña Ana County

Hon. Manuel I. Arrieta
Hon. Conrad Perea
Hon. Casey Fitch

10
11
12 Fourth Judicial District Court

13
14 Guadalupe County

Hon. Abigail Aragon

15
16 Mora County

Hon. Abigail Aragon

17
18 San Miguel County

Hon. Abigail Aragon

19
20 Fifth Judicial District Court

21
22 Chaves County

Hon. Dustin Hunter
Hon. Jared Kallunki

23
24
25 Eddy County

Hon. David Finger
Hon. AnneMarie Lewis

26
27
28 Lea County

Hon. Lee A. Kirksey
Hon. Michael Stone

29
30
31 Sixth Judicial District Court

32
33 Grant County

Hon. Thomas Stewart
Hon. James Foy

34
35
36 Hidalgo County

Hon. Thomas Stewart

Hon. Jarod K. Hofacket

Luna County

Hon. Jennifer DeLaney

Hon. Jarod K. Hofacket

Seventh Judicial District Court

Catron County

Hon. Mercedes C. Murphy

Hon. Shannon Murdock-Poff

Sierra County

Hon. Roscoe Woods

Hon. Mercedes C. Murphy

Socorro County

Hon. Mercedes C. Murphy

Hon. Shannon Murdock-Poff

Torrance County

Hon. Shannon Murdock-Poff

Hon. Roscoe Woods

Eighth Judicial District Court

Colfax County

Hon. Steven A. Romero

Hon. Jeffrey Shannon

Hon. Emilio Chavez

Taos County

Hon. Emilio Chavez

Hon. Jeffrey Shannon

Hon. Steven A. Romero

Union County

Hon. Steven A. Romero

Hon. Jeffrey Shannon

Hon. Emilio Chavez

Ninth Judicial District Court

Curry County

Hon. Fred Van Soelen

Hon. Benjamin S. Cross
Hon. Donna J. Mowrer

Roosevelt County

Hon. Donna J. Mowrer
Hon. Benjamin S. Cross
Hon. Fred Van Soelen

Tenth Judicial District Court

De Baca County

Hon. Timothy Rose

Harding County

Hon. Timothy Rose

Quay County

Hon. Timothy Rose

Eleventh Judicial District Court

McKinley County

Hon. R. David Pederson

San Juan County

Hon. Curtis Gurley

Twelfth Judicial District Court

Lincoln County

Hon. Daniel A. Bryant
Hon. John Sugg

Otero County

Hon. John Sugg
Hon. Daniel A. Bryant

Thirteenth Judicial District Court

Cibola County

Hon. Amanda Sanchez Villalobos
Hon. George P. Eichwald

Sandoval County

Hon. James A. Noel
Hon. Allison P. Martinez

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, except for the Election Code proceedings brought pursuant to the statutes or rule set forth above, the Chief Judge in each judicial district shall appoint district judges to carry out other election day, election night, and post-election duties required of judges under the Election Code;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that any district judge designated under this order who is assigned to preside over an election contest or other Election Code proceeding concerning or affecting a retention or contested election for that judge's position shall recuse from presiding in the matter, and the Chief Justice shall designate another judge to preside over the matter;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Election Judges shall not recuse in any election contest or Election Code proceeding except as set forth above and under N.M. Const. art. VI, § 18;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that should the Election Judge believe that recusal is mandatory due to bias or prejudice or when the judge's impartiality may reasonably be questioned, because it is a matter in which the judge has an interest, *see* N.M. Const. art. VI, § 18, or for any other reason justifying recusal, the Election Judge shall immediately apprise the Chief Justice of the perceived need for recusal

1 and the Chief Justice shall determine whether recusal is appropriate. *State ex rel.*
2 *Anaya v. Scarborough*, 1966-NMSC-009, ¶¶ 2, 4, 75 N.M. 702, 410 P.2d 732
3 (explaining that a judge is presumptively biased if they meet any of the grounds for
4 recusal set forth in N.M. Const. art. VI, § 18 and that "an 'interest' necessary to
5 disqualify a judge must be a present pecuniary interest in the result, or actual bias or
6 prejudice, and not some indirect, remote, speculative, theoretical or possible
7 interest."); Rule 21-211(A) NMRA (mandating recusal where a judge's impartiality
8 may reasonably be questioned);

9 IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that in the event that all Election Judges in a
10 single judicial district recuse, the affected judicial district shall notify the Supreme
11 Court the day of said recusal to request the designation of an out-of-district Election
12 Judge and shall identify the case as an election contest or Election Code proceeding
13 requiring an expedited designation;

14 IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that any district judge appointed by a Chief
15 Judge under this order to carry out election day, election night, and post-election
16 judicial duties shall not designate any other person to serve in the judge's place
17 unless otherwise provided in the Election Code;

18 IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that any mandamus proceedings that may be

1 filed under NMSA 1978, § 1-14-21, may be filed in the district court or the Supreme
2 Court, as appropriate, but shall not be filed in the New Mexico Court of Appeals;
3 and

4 IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Election Judges designated in this order
5 are not subject to the exercise of peremptory excusals notwithstanding the provisions
6 in NMSA 1978, § 1-14-7 (1969), and Rule 1-087(E) NMRA.

7 IT IS SO ORDERED.



WITNESS, the Honorable Julie J. Vargas, Chief Justice
of the Supreme Court of the State of New Mexico, and
the seal of said Court this 22nd day of July, 2026.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Elizabeth A. Garcia".

Elizabeth A. Garcia, Chief Clerk of the Supreme Court
of the State of New Mexico

I CERTIFY AND ATTEST:
A true copy was served on all parties
or their counsel of record on date filed.
Kristen Edwards
Deputy Clerk of the Supreme Court
of the State of New Mexico