

United States Bankruptcy Court
Central District of California

Theodor C. Albert, Chief Judge
Kathleen J. Campbell, Executive Officer / Clerk of Court



CH, CH, CH, CHANGES... JUDICIAL COMINGS AND GOINGS IN 2022

By Bankruptcy Judge Maureen Tighe

There have been and will be significant changes in the make-up of the court in 2022. We kicked off the year with Judge Theodor Albert starting his term as Chief Judge, taking the reins from Judge Maureen Tighe just as the Omicron surge let us know we were not quite done with COVID-19. Unfortunately, the formal ceremony for the Passing of the Gavel had to be postponed due to the surge of cases in the district. That did not stop Chief Judge Albert from a very busy time as Chief Judge so far this year. Stay tuned for a new date for a ceremony this spring as we look forward to seeing everyone again in the bankruptcy professional community.

On January 18, 2022, we safely gathered outdoors in the courtyard at the Riverside courthouse where Chief Judge Albert administered the oath of office to Judge Magdalena Reyes Bordeaux. Barely two weeks later, on February 1, 2022, Judge Tighe had the honor of administering the oath to Judge Ronald Clifford in the courtyard of the Santa Barbara courthouse. We have been waiting for Judges Reyes Bordeaux and Clifford to join us for many months and are thrilled they are finally on board.



The court received word that each appointment was finally happening only a day or two before, so small ceremonies were quickly scheduled for the new judges, immediate family, and a few close friends. Riverside Operations Manager Melissa English organized a reception for Judge Reyes Bordeaux over the weekend as soon as we heard the good news on a Friday afternoon. She and her staff put out a beautiful table of fresh-baked treats along with fresh flowers and balloons. Judges Tighe, Barash, Johnson, Yun, Houle, and Clarkson joined Chief Judge Albert in welcoming our new Riverside judge.

In Santa Barbara, after Judge Clifford took the oath of office, Operations Manager Cheri Davis and her staff presented a scrumptious brunch with homemade pastries, cookies, and bouquets of local flowers. They made sure Judge Clifford knew how thrilled they are to finally have him sitting in Santa Barbara. Judges Barash and Smith also attended the ceremony with Judge Tighe. More extensive and formal oath ceremonies will be scheduled for the public in a few months.

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Both of our new judges grew up in the Central District of California and attended local universities and law schools. Judge Reyes Bordeaux received her Bachelor of Arts from the University of California, Irvine, in 1993, and her Juris Doctorate in 1997 from UCLA School of Law, where she was a co-founder and managing editor of the UCLA Journal of Law & Technology. Judge Clifford received his Bachelor of Arts from California State University at Pomona in 2003 and his Juris Doctor, magna cum laude, in 2006 from Whittier Law School, where he was an editor of the Whittier Law Review.

Prior to joining the bench, Judge Reyes Bordeaux had been a senior supervising staff attorney at Public Counsel since 2012. She supervised and managed the firm's Debtor Assistance Project, which is the nation's largest and most successful pro bono bankruptcy program providing services to over 2,000 self-represented and represented litigants annually. Judge Reyes Bordeaux provided guidance to attorneys, pro bono program staff and judges on access to justice issues in the courts. Previously, Judge Reyes Bordeaux practiced bankruptcy law for over 20 years, served as an appointed member of the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference Executive Committee and was an adjunct professor of law at Loyola Law School. She has written numerous articles on bankruptcy issues and was featured on two covers of the Los Angeles Lawyer Magazine. She is a frequent speaker at bankruptcy educational panels and has received several awards recognizing her work and scholarship in bankruptcy law.

Previously, Judge Clifford had been a partner at a boutique bankruptcy and litigation firm in Orange County, California, where his practice focused on bankruptcy, creditors' rights, commercial transactions and litigation. He represented dozens of officially appointed creditors' committees in Chapter 11 cases in 13 states, including Arizona, California, Connecticut, New York, Maryland, Massachusetts and Washington State. He also represented Chapter 7 and Chapter 11 debtors and trustees. In his litigation practice, Judge Clifford represented companies and individuals as both plaintiffs and defendants in cases such as breach of contract, lien foreclosure, asset purchases and judgment enforcement.

Engaged in his community, Judge Clifford has volunteered for the Central District's Federal Day, where students from urban areas of Orange County talk to lawyers, judges and court staff about various careers in law. He also has volunteered at the Orange County Food Bank and at the free legal clinic hosted by the Langston Bar Association in Los Angeles. Both of our new judges will be fantastic additions to the court.

We barely completed bringing our new judges in when we had a retirement. Judge Mark Wallace retired from the court on March 1, 2022. He is looking forward to spending more time hiking and traveling with his wife. We will certainly miss him in Santa Ana. Our new judges have arrived just in time. On June 2 of this year, Judge Tighe will retire and move into recall status, allowing her to keep working on existing cases for the next year. Judge Erithe Smith has also announced her retirement in October of this year. She is considering taking recall status after retirement.

The changes continue into next year -- Judge Ernest Robles has announced that he will be retiring in September 2023. These vacancies will not be filled for now because bankruptcy filings are too low to justify additional judges at this time. We will be closely monitoring the cases and requesting that a vacancy be filled when filings justify it. Judge Mark Houle will cover Chapter 13 cases in Santa Ana as well as Riverside to be sure each division has adequate judicial resources. Fortunately, our video capabilities allow judges to hear cases in any division should that be necessary. If any cases are reassigned in the future, please watch for public notices.

SAVE THE DATE: PASSING OF THE GAVEL CEREMONY

The Passing of the Gavel ceremony, marking the change of Chief Bankruptcy Judge from Judge Maureen A. Tighe to Judge Theodor C. Albert, will take place on Thursday, April 28 at 4:00 p.m. at the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in Pasadena. Seating is limited and the ceremony will be available by live stream to invited guests.

Guests attending may join the reception immediately following the ceremony. The reception is sponsored by contributions from: Beverly Hills Bar Association, Central District Consumer Bankruptcy Attorneys Association (cdcbaa), Financial Lawyers Conference, Inland Empire Bankruptcy Forum, International Women’s Insolvency & Restructuring Confederation, Federal Bar Association (Los Angeles Chapter), LGBTQ+ Lawyers Association, Los Angeles Bankruptcy Forum, Los Angeles County Bar Association, Federal Bar Association (Orange County Chapter), Orange County Bankruptcy Forum, Orange County Bar Association, San Fernando Valley Bar Association, and Turnaround Management Association Southern California Chapter.

HOLIDAY CLOSURES

Monday, May 30 - Memorial Day

Monday, June 20 - Juneteenth National Independence Day

To view the 2022 Federal Holiday Public Notice on the Court’s website click [here](#).

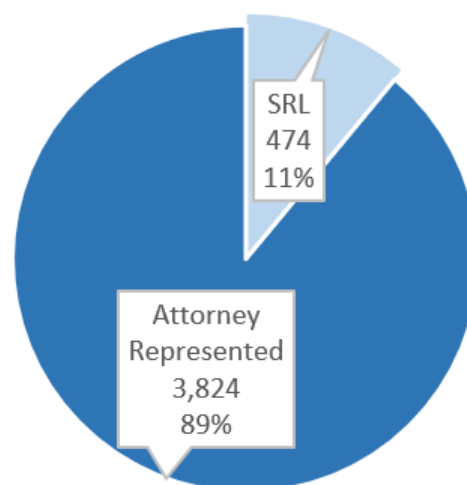
BANKRUPTCY STATISTICS

The data below represents filings year to date thru March 31, 2022. Statistics based on internal filings data.

| Divisional Filings YTD | Ch 7 | Ch 11 | Ch 13 | Total | % change from previous YTD |
|------------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|----------------------------|
| Los Angeles | 1513 | 22 | 308 | 1843 | -30.53% |
| Northern | 224 | 4 | 25 | 253 | -23.79% |
| Riverside | 997 | 7 | 216 | 1220 | -29.27% |
| San Fernando Valley | 316 | 7 | 77 | 400 | -28.44% |
| Santa Ana | 487 | 20 | 75 | 582 | -32.25% |
| Total | 3537 | 60 | 701 | 4298 | -29.86% |

| Business Filings | Ch 7 | Ch 11 | Ch 13 | Total |
|------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 2022 YTD | 205 | 46 | 15 | 266 |
| 2021 YTD | 239 | 85 | 7 | 331 |

Central District of CA - Filings YTD



The interactive Statistics Dashboard is a feature on the Court’s website that provides up-to-date filing and closing data for chapter 7, 11, and 13 cases, as well as adversary proceedings. Users can view data sorted by division or from the entire Central District, or they can choose to view only pro se (SRL) or business cases. The Statistics Dashboard also displays year-by-year and month-by-month comparisons; another option compares each month of the current year to the corresponding month of the prior year. Access the “Interactive Statistics” through the link: <https://ecf.cacb.uscourts.gov/ecfstatsdash>

TOP 10 CASES OF INTEREST*

| Debtor | Case Number | Chapter | Filed | Assets | Liabilities |
|-----------------------------|----------------|---------|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Airport Van Rental, Inc. | LA-20-20876-BB | 11 | 12/11/20 | \$10 - \$50 million | \$10 - \$50 million |
| Elite Aerospace Group, Inc. | SA-21-12231-TA | 11 | 09/13/21 | \$10 - \$50 million | \$10 - \$50 million |
| Thomas Vincent Girardi | LA 20-21020-BR | 7 | 12/18/20 | \$50 - \$100 million | \$50 - \$100 million |
| Glenroy Coachella, LLC | LA-21-11188-BB | 11 | 02/15/21 | \$50 - \$100 million | \$10 - \$50 million |
| The Harman Press, Inc. | SV-21-11544-MT | 11 | 09/20/21 | \$1 - \$10 million | \$1 - \$10 million |
| Alex A. Khadavi | LA-21-14449-BB | 11 | 05/27/21 | \$50 - \$100 million | \$50 - \$100 million |
| Plamex Investment, LLC | SA-21-10958-ES | 11 | 04/14/21 | \$100 - \$500 million | \$100 - \$500 million |
| PS On Tap, LLC | SV-21-10757-MB | 11 | 04/28/21 | \$1 - \$10 million | \$10 - \$50 million |
| The Source Hotel, LLC | SA-21-10525-ES | 11 | 02/26/21 | \$50 - \$100 million | \$50 - \$100 million |
| Western Community Energy | RS-21-12821-SY | 9 | 05/24/21 | \$50 - \$100 million | \$50 - \$100 million |

*Based on a combination of asset and liability levels, and/or name recognition.

BANKRUPTCY FRAUD PROSECUTIONS

The following information has been provided by the Office of the United States Trustee:

The People of the State of California vs. Toro, et. al.

- On May 24, 2021, sentences and orders of restitution were entered in a multi-million-dollar Southern California mortgage relief scheme. The defendants operated an advance fee mortgage relief scam that claimed to prevent the foreclosure of properties. As part of the scheme, the group targeted distressed homeowners claiming they could stop the foreclosure of their home if they made monthly payments to the defendants. Instead, the defendants delayed foreclosures and eviction actions by filing fraudulent bankruptcy documents, false court documents, and false fractional interest grant deeds.

Eduardo Toro - Seven years four months in State prison, plus restitution of \$587,144.00

Ana (Romero) Toro - Four years and four months in county jail, plus restitution of \$587,144.00

Veronica Toro - Three years in county jail, plus restitution of \$581,271.00

Maria (Toro) Gill - 180 days in county jail, plus restitution of \$11,191.00

Veronica Romero - Two years in county jail, plus restitution of \$11,191.00

Filiverto Gomez - Two years in county jail, plus restitution of \$11,191.00

Emmanuel Lopez - Two years in county jail, plus restitution of \$5,873.00

Leticia Mora - 200 hours of community service, plus restitution of \$8,480.00

Gladys Velasquez - Six months in county jail and three years formal probation