



Mark Speakman
Attorney General

MEDIA RELEASE

EDITORS NOTE: Brief biographical details are below

Wednesday, 15 December 2021

TWO NEW JUDGES TO JOIN DISTRICT COURT

Two of our state's most accomplished lawyers have been appointed to the District Court of NSW, where they'll bring to the bench a total of almost 75 years of legal experience.

Attorney General Mark Speakman said Sydney silk Peter McGrath SC and experienced litigator Penny Musgrave will be a welcome addition to the ranks of dedicated judicial officers serving the NSW justice system in the District Court.

"The wealth of skills and knowledge of both of these appointees will be invaluable as they take their roles administering the NSW justice system," Mr Speakman said.

"Mr McGrath's legal career spans almost 40 years, culminating with his role at the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions as Deputy Director and periodically as Acting DPP. He has also practised at the private Bar as well as being a NSW Deputy Senior Public Defender."

Mr McGrath is involved with multiple community-driven initiatives. He has most recently been part of the working group behind the Walama List, a culturally-informed approach to sentencing eligible Aboriginal offenders being piloted in the District Court from 2022.

"Ms Musgrave has developed a deep understanding of the legal system, having practised in private, community, state and federal settings, including the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions and the former NSW Department of Justice where she was Director Criminal Law Review," Mr Speakman said.

Ms Musgrave is also an engaged contributor to the public interest through several professional memberships, including the Law Society of NSW's Criminal Law Committee and the NSW Sentencing Council DNA Review Panel.

Mr McGrath will be sworn in on 7 February, replacing Judge Stephen Norrish QC who retired on 22 May. Ms Musgrave commences three days later, replacing Judge Helen Syme who retires on 20 December.

Appointees' biographies

Peter McGrath SC

Mr McGrath graduated from Sydney University in 1981 with a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws. He commenced practice as a solicitor with the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions, before being called to the Bar in 1990. Mr McGrath was appointed a NSW Crown Prosecutor in 2012, took silk in 2014 and was appointed NSW Deputy Senior Public Defender in 2017. The following year he was appointed NSW Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions and served as the Acting DPP for periods in 2019 and 2021.

Penny Musgrave

Ms Musgrave is an outstanding lawyer with more than 35 years' experience in a range of legal settings, including the NSW public sector and the Commonwealth. She obtained her law degree from the University of New South Wales in 1985. While working for the CDPP from 1989 to 2008, Ms Musgrave was involved in several significant legal cases, and at the Department of Justice she was the Director Criminal Law Review from 2008 to 2015 and a member of the NSW Sentencing Council DNA Review Panel. She rises to the bench from private practice, having led her own firm since 2016, where she primarily practised in criminal law.