

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Gov. Gianforte Appoints John A. Mercer to Twentieth Judicial District Court

HELENA, Mont. – Governor Greg Gianforte today announced his appointment of John A. Mercer to serve on the Twentieth Judicial District Court, which includes Lake and Sanders Counties.

“John served the people of the Twentieth Judicial District well when I appointed him to serve his community last year, and I’m glad he was willing to do so once again,” Gov. Gianforte said. “With his extensive legal background and distinguished record, John will continue to serve as a great judge. I look forward to his service to the people of Lake and Sanders Counties on the Twentieth Judicial District Court.”

Mercer graduated from the University of Montana in 1979 and the Northwestern University School of Law in 1982. He’s served as an attorney for 42 years with the law office of Turnage Mercer & Wall in Polson, and previously as President of Heritage Management Co., also in Polson.

On December 26, 2024, the chief justice of the Supreme Court of Montana notified the governor of a vacancy in the Twentieth Judicial District.

On December 30, 2024, Gov. Gianforte announced he was accepting applications and nominations for the vacancy of any lawyer in good standing who has the qualifications set forth by law for holding the position of district court judge.

On January 14, the governor announced he received five applications and initiated a 15-day public comment period, which concluded on February 12.

On February 14, Gov. Gianforte announced an advisory council of attorneys and community leaders in Lake and Sanders Counties to assist in identifying and reviewing qualified candidates to fill the district court judge vacancy in the Twentieth Judicial District. The advisory council held a public meeting to consider applicants and review Montanans’ public comments.

The governor concluded, “I thank the members of advisory council for serving their community and giving their time to review and recommend highly qualified nominees to serve as the new district court judge.”

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