



# UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

District of New Mexico  
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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **PHILLIP G. SAPIEN APPOINTED PART-TIME UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO**

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M – On Friday, March 6, 2026, the United States District Court for the District of New Mexico appointed Phillip G. Sapien as Part-Time United States Magistrate Judge. The position, which is for a 4-year term, is located in Farmington, New Mexico.

Mr. Sapien obtained his B.A from the University of New Mexico (1988) and his J.D. from the University of Arizona College of Law (1991). Mr. Sapien began his legal career at the New Mexico Public Defender's Office in Albuquerque, NM (1992) where he represented several hundred clients charged with crimes ranging from petty misdemeanors to first-degree felony offenses. In 1996, he left the Public Defender's office and entered private practice in the areas of general practice, criminal defense, personal injury, and wrongful death. He has been lead or co-counsel in over 120 jury trials in state and federal court and participated in countless bench trials and hearings while in private practice. Additionally, Mr. Sapien has been a Criminal Justice Act (CJA) panel attorney since 1999 and has been appointed to represent clients in a few hundred cases during his service on the CJA panel.

Along with his extensive legal career, Mr. Sapien has been highly involved in the local community. He has been a member of and served on various committees and professional organizations, including the New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association, the New Mexico Criminal Defense Lawyers Association, and the New Mexico Supreme Courts's Commission on Professionalism. And he has devoted a considerable amount of time to service on other community service organizations related to housing services and Little League Baseball.

Mr. Sapien was selected from a pool of applicants for the Part-Time Magistrate Judge position. A Magistrate Judge Merit Selection Panel, consisting of attorneys and lay persons from around the state, reviewed the applicants and reported their recommendations to the district's United States District Judges, who then made the final determination after interviewing the candidates.

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