
NEWS RELEASE



Judge John J. Russo Takes Over Veterans Treatment Court

Cleveland: Judge John J. Russo has taken over the Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) docket from newly retired Judge Michael E. Jackson. Judge Russo is also the Court's Administrative and Presiding Judge.

Judge Jackson was unable to seek re-election due to Ohio's mandatory retirement age for Judges and his term ended on Thursday, January 3. Judge Russo thanked Judge Jackson for his service to our nation and to the people of Cuyahoga County. Judge Jackson is a decorated Marine Vietnam veteran and served as the first judge of the Veterans Treatment Court.

Judge Russo's father, Charles F. Russo, served under General George S. Patton in World War II and eventually became head of the Cuyahoga County Soldier's Relief Commission, which helped veterans seeking services.

Judge Russo called this an opportunity to honor his father's service, and says he looks forward to walking side-by-side with veterans as they continue to move through the VTC program. Judge Russo added, "The best part of taking over this docket is that I have the outstanding template created by Judge Jackson and his team to follow."

Approved by the Bench in 2015, the mission of the VTC is to rehabilitate veterans by diverting them from the traditional criminal justice system. The program involves a treatment team comprised of the Court, the Veterans Administration, community treatment providers, the Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission, the Prosecutor's Office, and the Public Defender.

More than 60 veterans have successfully completed the VTC program and about 100 veterans are currently participating.