



**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF MERCED**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Merced Superior Court Judges Elect New Presiding Judge

The Merced Superior Court judges recently held their election and have elected Judge Donald Proietti as the new Presiding Judge. This will be his second two year term as Presiding Judge. His new term formally begins Jan. 1, 2019 and ends Dec. 31, 2020. He also serves on various committees with the Judicial Council. Proietti was appointed to the bench in 2009 by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. The former civil attorney joined the bench as part of a 2006 legislative bill that created 50 more judge positions across the state. The presiding judge has the authority and duties prescribed in the California Rules of Court, according to Linda Romero Soles, the court's chief executive officer.

Judge Mark Bacciarini was elected to serve another two year term as Assistant Presiding Judge. He is also the designated Criminal Presiding Judge. Bacciarini was appointed to the bench in 2010 by Governor Schwarzenegger. Prior to his appointment he worked for the Merced District Attorney's office from 2000 – 2010.

The assistant presiding judge is assigned duties as the presiding judge deems necessary and acts as presiding judge in Proietti's absence, according to CEO Romero Soles.

The Superior Court Judges hold the internal election every other year as stated in the Local Rules of the Court.

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