

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Title Of “Master in Chancery” Is Now “Magistrate in Chancery”

The title of “Master in Chancery,” which has existed in Delaware since the 1980s, carries negative connotations for many Delawareans due to the use of the word “master” and its connection to slavery. Although the title “Master in Chancery” has no link to that historical context, the Court of Chancery is sensitive to the title’s negative connotations and therefore proposed “Magistrate in Chancery” as a suitable and modern substitute title. This change in title also reflects the Court initiatives to broaden the judicial role and function of the Magistrate in Chancery position.

To accomplish the title change, the Delaware General Assembly passed Senate Bill 179 on June 30, 2023, and Governor John C. Carney signed SB 179 on July 17, 2023, making it effective immediately. The Court of Chancery, in compliance with the enactment of SB 179, amended its Rules of Procedure to adopt the legally appropriate title.

The Court of Chancery will begin enforcing this change in title on August 15, 2023. Practitioners are encouraged to review their standard forms to ensure that they are using the correct title. It is acceptable and encouraged to refer to judicial officers holding this title as ‘Magistrate in Chancery,’ ‘Magistrate’ or ‘Your Honor’ in all contexts.