

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 11, 2024

**The Delaware Judiciary mourns the passing of retired Delaware
Supreme Court Justice James T. Vaughn, Jr.**

The Delaware Judiciary notes the passing of retired Supreme Court Justice James T. Vaughn, Jr. on October 10, 2024. Our thoughts are with Justice Vaughn's family and friends and all those who worked with him during his more than 25 years of service on the Delaware bench.

“When he retired less than two years ago, I said the Court would miss Justice Vaughn's hard work, steady hand and unflappable nature. That has proven to be true. Justice Vaughn has left an indelible mark on Delaware's legal landscape. The Delaware Supreme Court and Superior Court are grateful for his long service to the citizens of Delaware,” said Chief Justice Collins J. Seitz, Jr.

Justice Vaughn, 75, first joined the bench in 1998 as the Resident Judge for Kent County Superior Court. He was later elevated to the position of President Judge of Superior Court in 2004. Gov. Jack Markell then appointed him to the Supreme Court in October 2014 and he retired from the bench in May 2023.

In his letter to the governor stating his intention to step down, he wrote, in his typically understated style, “It has been an honor and a privilege to serve ... I will always appreciate the memories of working with my colleagues on the bench and with court staff in our efforts to maintain the rule of law in this state. I leave with a sense of satisfaction that I have done my best to discharge the duties of the judicial offices I have held.”

Justice Vaughn, the son of long-serving Delaware State Senator James T. Vaughn Sr., cut a path of his own in state government on the Delaware Courts. His soft-spoken style and calm demeanor sometimes masked his unmistakable and unshakable, no-nonsense approach to the rule of law.

Prior to joining the bench, Justice Vaughn spent 22 years as an attorney in private practice in civil and criminal law, first at Vaughn & Vaughn, in 1976, then at Vaughn and Nicholas before joining the firm of Schmittinger and Rodriguez in 1988. Justice Vaughn also served as a member of the Clayton Town Council from 1979 to 1989,

including three years as its president. He was then elected to the Smyrna School Board, serving from 1989 to 1994, including three years as that board's president. A U.S. Army veteran and Delaware native, Justice Vaughn received his B.A. from Duke University, graduating magna cum laude in 1971, and his J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center in 1976. He graduated from J.B. Moore High School in Smyrna in 1967.