



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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The 25th Navajo Nation Council confirms Navajo District Court Judicial appointments



Council Delegate Eugenia Charles-Newton sponsored legislations to confirm newly appointed Navajo District Court Judges.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The 25th Navajo Nation Council officially confirmed the appointments of four District Court Judges—Letitia Stover, Malcolm Laughing, Victor J. Clyde, and Tyson Yazzie—on the first day of the Spring Session, solidifying new leadership within the Navajo Nation’s Judicial Branch.

“It’s my honor to sponsor these legislations to confirm our Court District Judges, their integrity to law, ethical decision making and legal knowledge will help enhance the Navajo Nation Judicial system and ensure our people received fair trials across all district courts,” said Council Delegate Eugenia Charles-Newton.

The confirmations followed a thorough and transparent process initiated by the Law and Order Committee, which held public hearings in early 2024 across all district courts to gather community input on each judicial candidate. The committee formally confirmed Judges Stover, Laughing, and Clyde on October 30, 2024. Judge Tyson Yazzie, nominated more recently, received unanimous support from the Law and Order Committee on April 16, 2025.

These appointments were made in accordance with Title 7 of the Navajo Nation Code, which mandates that all judicial candidates undergo probationary service, performance evaluations, and formal Council confirmation. All four judges received favorable evaluations from Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne and completed accredited training programs to support their ongoing judicial responsibilities.

Judge Letitia Stover brings extensive legal education and on-the-ground judicial experience to her role. Holding both a Juris Doctor and a Master of Laws degree, she served as a probationary judge since 2019 and previously worked as a staff attorney in the Kayenta Judicial District. Her training includes judicial writing, legal ethics, child and family law, and community-centered sessions on mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. Her permanent appointment reflects her academic rigor, ethical grounding, and resilience during unprecedented times.

Judge Malcolm Laughing has served since 2019 in the Ramah Judicial District and is known for his methodical leadership style and comprehensive legal training. In 2022 alone, he completed more than 85 hours of judicial instruction in substantive law, child welfare, and judicial conduct. His commitment to judicial excellence and ethical standards earned the full endorsement of the Navajo Nation Council.

Judge Victor J. Clyde, who has served since 2020 in the Tuba City and Window Rock Districts, also brings critical experience as a former Hearing Officer with the Judicial Branch. His training includes judicial writing, procedural fairness, tribal adjudication, and specialized instruction in the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), Navajo Fundamental Law, and sovereignty rights.

Judge Tyson Yazzie has been appointed to a probationary term as District Judge for the Window Rock District Court. A seasoned legal professional fluent in Diné Bizaad, Yazzie is often described as a “Prosecutor’s Prosecutor” due to his strong ethics and skillful case management. With over a decade of legal practice and a reputation for fairness and cultural fluency, Judge Yazzie’s appointment marks a new chapter for the Window Rock District Court. Yazzie was confirmed by the Council after receiving strong public and professional support.

Each judge has completed comprehensive training in Navajo law and court leadership, ensuring the Judicial Branch remains fully operational and responsive to the needs of the Navajo people.

The 25th Navajo Nation Council unanimously approved Legislation 0013-25, Legislation 0014-25, Legislation 0015-25, and Legislation 0032-25, on a consent agenda with a vote of 18 in favor and none opposed. The Navajo Nation Council serves as the final authority for these legislations.

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