

Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson Confirmed to U.S. Supreme Court

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Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson will become the first Black woman and the third Black Justice to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court.

With support of only a handful of Republican senators, a Senate majority voted to confirm Judge Jackson's nomination to the Supreme Court, 53-47, on April 7, 2022. Judge Jackson will fill the vacancy left by Justice Stephen Breyer, who will retire at the end of the Court's current term.

During Judge Jackson's distinguished legal career, she served as a federal district judge from 2013 to 2021, a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit from 2021 to 2022, assistant special counsel and then vice chair on the U.S. Sentencing Commission, a federal public defender, and a private practice attorney.

Despite bringing a new perspective to the bench, Judge Jackson is unlikely to affect the current composition of the Court. Her decisions as a district and appellate judge suggest that, like Justice Breyer, she takes a pragmatic approach to the law.

Judge Jackson's legal methodology will become apparent shortly after she takes her seat for the 2022-2023 term, which begins on October 3, 2022. The Court is scheduled to hear oral arguments on three cases touching on contentious issues during Judge Jackson's first term. Judge Jackson, who serves on Harvard University's board of overseers, has stated she will recuse herself from hearing *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President & Fellows of Harvard* a case involving the use of race in college admissions. However, she will participate in *303 Creative LLC v. Elenis*, which asks the Court to decide on the constitutionality of a Colorado state law that prohibits business owners from refusing to provide service to people on the basis of sex, including sexual orientation and gender identity. Judge Jackson also will participate in the Court's hearing of *Merrill v. Milligan*, which asks the Court to weigh in on whether Alabama's proposed congressional district plan violates Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Judge Jackson is expected to be sworn in before the start of the 2022-2023 term.

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