

# NEWS RELEASE

## SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA

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#### RELEASE DATE:

March 4, 2011

## JUDGE MARY MORGAN RETIRES AFTER SERVING 20 YEARS ON THE SAN FRANCISCO BENCH

**SAN FRANCISCO** -- Judge Mary Morgan, a leader of collaborative justice in San Francisco, who is well-known for her successful oversight of Behavioral Health Court, has retired from the San Francisco Superior Court, effective yesterday.

Judge Morgan's impact on mental health policy issues in the City and County and throughout California recently earned her a Heroes & Hearts award from the San Francisco General Hospital Foundation. In July, the San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women honored Judge Morgan for her contributions to the movement to address domestic violence.

"It has been an honor to serve on the San Francisco Bench, where I am proud of the difference I was able to make alongside other justice partners committed to helping people live happier, healthier and more productive lives," Judge Morgan said. "I also would like to thank my colleagues on the Bench for their support, friendship and commitment."

BHC is a collaborative justice Court program that began in 2002 to address the increasing numbers of mentally ill defendants cycling through the jails, Court and medical and social

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**SFSC/JUDGE MORGAN**  
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emergency services. BHC directs seriously mentally ill adult offenders to community mental health programs, where they receive continuous and consistent community mental health treatment.

“Mary Morgan’s retirement from our Court will leave a hole that will not be easily filled,” said Presiding Judge Katherine Feinstein. “Not only will we all miss the tremendous energy she devoted to ensuring that the most needy of our society were served in a humane manner, while the community was safe from their criminal behaviors, she inspired all of us to think more deeply and creatively about the roles we play individually and collectively in the justice system. As both a Judge and as a person, Mary was smart, tireless, creative and brave.”

Judge Morgan recently received the Heroes & Hearts Award for inspiring San Francisco community leaders to change policy issues related to the treatment of people with mental illness, and influencing statewide practices to improve California's mental health system.

In 2008, BHC was the recipient of the Council on Mentally Ill Offenders Best Practices Award for its collaborative approach to decreasing recidivism by ensuring that mentally ill offenders receive appropriate mental health treatment and intensive supervision.

Judge Morgan has presided over BHC since 2006. Prior to that time, she served as the Supervising Judge of the Criminal Division. She also presided over Domestic Violence Court.

Judge Morgan was twice a member of the San Francisco Bench. In 1981, Gov. Jerry Brown appointed Judge Morgan to the San Francisco Municipal Court, where she served until 1993. During her tenure on the Municipal Court, she served terms as the Presiding Judge and Assistant Presiding Judge. During this time, she also served as Dean and Assistant Dean of the California Judicial College; and as a faculty member at the California Judges Association, California Judicial College, California Continuing Judicial Education and the National Association of Women Judges.

Judge Morgan left the Municipal Court in 1993 for a career in Washington, D.C. From 1993 to 1994, she was the Director of the domestic violence legal clinic at The American

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University, Washington College of Law, in Washington, D.C. From 1994 to 1996, she served as a Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Policy Development, in the U.S. Department of Justice, under then-Attorney General Janet Reno.

Prior to her appointment by Gov. Gray Davis to the Superior Court Bench in 2003, Judge Morgan sat by assignment to the Court for seven years. She also worked in private practice in the 1970s. From 1978-1985, Judge Morgan served as a part-time professor at New College of Law, San Francisco State University.

A graduate of Smith College, she earned her J.D. from the New York University School of Law. She also completed a National Institute of Mental Health Fellowship from New York University.

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