

**Gustavo E. Lavayen**  
Presiding Judge



**Darrel E. Parker**  
Court Executive Officer

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA**  
1100 ANACAPA STREET, SANTA BARBARA, CA 93101

**Contact:** Darrel E. Parker  
**Telephone:** 805-614-6594  
**Email:** [dparker@sbcourts.org](mailto:dparker@sbcourts.org)  
**Website:** [www.sbcourts.org](http://www.sbcourts.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**November 4, 2022**

## **DENISE M. HIPPACH SWORN IN AS SANTA BARBARA SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE**

Santa Barbara, California, November 4, 2022 –

On October 31, 2022 at 3:00 p.m., Presiding Judge Gustavo E. Lavayen administered the oath of office to Denise M. Hippach, the newest member of the Santa Barbara Superior Court Bench in Dept. 6 of the Superior Court in Santa Maria, CA.

Governor Newsom made the appointment on October 7, 2022. Denise Hippach, 46, of Grover Beach, has been Senior Deputy County Counsel at the Santa Barbara County Counsel's Office since 2018. She served as a Deputy Attorney General at the Idaho Attorney General's Office from 2016 to 2018. Hippach was Deputy Prosecuting Attorney at the Canyon County Prosecutor's Office from 2015 to 2016 and a Panel Attorney at the Judicial Council of California's Court-Appointed Program from 2014 to 2018. She was also a Deputy County Counsel at the Los Angeles County Counsel's Office from 2008 to 2014, Staff Attorney for Los Angeles Dependency Lawyers from 2007 to 2008 and Deputy District Attorney at the Riverside County District Attorney's Office from 2004 to 2006. Hippach earned a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Southern California School of Law. She fills the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge James E. Herman.

After administering the oath of office, Presiding Judge Lavayen noted, "What stands out about Denise, not only is her intellect but her compassion; her compassion and understanding in handling some of the most difficult cases we have, which are dependency cases." Presiding Judge Lavayen went on to say "Denise will be making long overdue history today. After she takes the oath, she will be the first African American judge to sit on the Santa Barbara County Superior Court. It has been a long time coming."

Hippach noted "The significance of my appointment and this moment is not lost on me. This has been such a long road, and it's an incredible moment."

Following an initial orientation to the Court, Judge Hippach will preside over the arraignment calendar in Santa Maria's Dept. 9.