



## Dominican Judge Breaks Ground in Manhattan Appellate Term

The judge is the first person of Dominican descent to preside over the appellate bench.

Judge Bianka Perez, Associate Justice of the Appellate Term of the New York Supreme Court, First Department, in the First and Twelfth Judicial Districts.  
Courtesy photo

**Brian Lee** [↗](#)

Litigation Reporter

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New York court officials on Monday announced the ground-breaking appointment of a Dominican jurist, Judge Bianka Perez, to a key appeals court in Manhattan.

Chief Administrative Judge Joseph A. Zayas named Perez an associate justice of the Appellate Term of the Supreme Court, First Department, in the First and Twelfth Judicial Districts.

Perez is the first person of Dominican descent to sit on the appellate bench, which hears appeals from civil and criminal courts in Manhattan and the Bronx. The move was in line with the court system's ongoing effort to promote diversity and inclusiveness on the bench.

Perez's appointment took effect immediately, and was made after consultation with Judge Dianne Renwick, presiding justice of the Appellate Division, First Department.

A past president of the Dominican Bar Association, Perez fills a vacancy created by the recent elevation of Judge Marsha Michael to the state supreme court's Appellate Division, First Department.

"Justice Perez is a fair and dedicated jurist who has earned a reputation for her high standards, collegiality, and hard work," Zayas said in the statement. "She has broad-based legal and judicial experience, handling a range of criminal and civil matters over the course of her distinguished career. Her wide-ranging expertise, combined with her fine character and passion for the law and the pursuit of justice, will greatly benefit New York's Appellate Term bench."

Perez said: "It is an honor to be appointed to the Appellate Term, First Department, and to serve our community of the Bronx in the People's Court. I know I didn't get here alone. With the help of my loving and courageous mom, my wonderful husband, and my girls, I am not only the first-generation lawyer in my family but also now the first Justice of Dominican descent to be appointed to the Appellate Term, First Department."

Perez was elected in 2020 to the state supreme court in Bronx County, where she has been serving in the civil term, presiding over the court's motor vehicle part and conducting hearings and jury, bench, and summary jury trials on all supreme court civil matters.

She has also been handling cases and presiding over trials in the county's criminal court since 2017.

Perez's past experiences include serving in New York City's Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings as an administrative law judge. She

was in private practice for more than a decade, representing clients in civil, criminal, and family matters. She began her legal career as an associate at the New York City law firm of Ginarte, O'Dwyer, Winograd & Laracuenta.