

CHIEF JUDGE WILLIAM C. WHITBECK

Chief Judge William C. Whitbeck was born on January 17, 1941, in Holland, Michigan, and was raised in Kalamazoo, Michigan. His undergraduate education was at Northwestern University, where he received a McCormick Scholarship in Journalism and received his B.S. in 1963. He received his LL.B. from the University of Michigan Law School in 1966, and was admitted to the Michigan Bar in 1969.

Chief Judge Whitbeck has held a variety of positions with the state and federal governments, including serving as Administrative Assistant to Governor George Romney from 1966 to 1969, Special Assistant to Secretary George Romney at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development from 1969 to 1970, Area Director of the Detroit Area Office of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development from 1970 to 1973, Director of Policy of the Michigan Public Service Commission from 1973 to 1975 and Counsel to Governor John Engler for Executive Organization/Director of the Office of the State Employer from 1991 to 1993. He served on the Presidential Transition Team of President-Elect Ronald Reagan in 1980, and as Counsel to the Transition Team of Governor-Elect John Engler in 1990.

In private practice, Chief Judge Whitbeck was a partner in the law firm of McLellan, Schlaybaugh & Whitbeck from 1975 to 1982, a partner in the law firm of Dykema, Gossett, Spencer, Goodnow and Trigg from 1982 to 1987, and a partner in the law firm of Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn from 1993 to 1997.

Chief Judge Whitbeck is a member of the State Bar of Michigan, the American Bar Association, the Ingham County Bar Association, the Michigan Judges Association, the Castle Park Association, and Scribes, and has served as the Chair of the Michigan Historical Commission. He is a Fellow of both the Michigan State Bar Foundation and the American Bar Foundation. Chief Judge Whitbeck is the past-President of the American Inns of Court Chapter at the Michigan State University College of Law. He has served as a “Master of the Bench” on this Chapter of the American Inns of Court since its inception in 1999.

Chief Judge Whitbeck and his wife, Stephanie, reside in downtown Lansing in a 125-year-old historic home that they have completely renovated. They are members of St. Mary Cathedral.

Governor John Engler appointed Chief Judge Whitbeck to the Court of Appeals effective October 22, 1997, to a term ending January 1, 1999. Chief Judge Whitbeck was elected in November 1998 and re-elected in November 2004 to a term ending January 1, 2011. Chief Judge Richard Bandstra designated Judge Whitbeck as Chief Judge Pro Tem of the Court of Appeals effective January 1, 1999. The Supreme Court appointed Judge Whitbeck as Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals effective January 1, 2002, and reappointed him for two additional two-year terms as Chief Judge commencing January 1, 2004 and January 1, 2006.