



UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
District of Rhode Island

**REBECCA L. AITCHISON SELECTED TO SERVE AS U.S. MAGISTRATE JUDGE
FOR THE DISTRICT OF RHODE ISLAND**



The United States District Court for the District of Rhode Island is pleased to announce the selection of Rebecca L. Aitchison as a full-time U.S. Magistrate Judge. Ms. Aitchison will assume the role upon the retirement of the Honorable Patricia A. Sullivan in October 2026.

Ms. Aitchison brings an impressive breadth of legal talent, courtroom experience, and public service to the bench. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from Wheaton College in 2008, where she was captain of the Women’s Basketball Team, and her Juris Doctor from Roger Williams University School of Law cum laude in 2011, where she was managing editor of the law review. She is admitted to practice in the state and federal courts of Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

Ms. Aitchison spent her career providing indigent criminal defense as a Public Defender in the state and federal courts. She spent seven years as a trial lawyer with the Rhode Island Public Defender’s Office before joining the Federal Defenders Office, where she presently serves as one of the three assistant federal defenders. Ms. Aitchison has served for three years on the Executive Committee of the Rhode Island Women’s Bar Association and for ten years on the Executive Committee of the Rhode Island Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers. She also serves as an Adjunct Professor at Roger Williams University School of Law, where she teaches Criminal Litigation: Written and Oral Advocacy.

The daughter of a Brazilian immigrant mother and an American father, Ms. Aitchison grew up in a multilingual household, speaking both Portuguese and English. She is also proficient in Spanish.

Chief Judge John J. McConnell, Jr. praised Rebecca Aitchison’s selection, stating, “Becky’s deep commitment to public service, combined with her distinguished experience as both a state and federal public defender, has prepared her exceptionally well for this role. Her integrity,

sound judgment, and dedication to ensuring equal justice under the law make her an outstanding addition to the bench for the District of Rhode Island and the community.”

A magistrate judge is a judicial officer of the district court and is appointed by majority vote of the active district judges of the court to exercise jurisdiction over matters assigned by statute as well as those delegated by the district judges. They serve an eight-year term.

May 26, 2026

Hanorah Tyer-Witek
Clerk of Court