

## The Abraham A. Ribicoff Building, its Judges, and Famous Cases

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### Abraham A. Ribicoff Federal Building

1963 - Construction complete. See *City's New U.S. Courts to be Dedicated*, and *Dedication Scheduled June 17 with specs*.

1981 - Renamed Abraham A. Ribicoff Federal Building. See *Building Renamed in Ribicoff's Honor*.

1988 – New federal smoking laws implemented, court personnel interviewed. See *Federal workers compete for air re smoking in building*.

1992 - Annex added. See *As new court annex opens, an era ends*.

1993 – Modernization program brochure.

1995 – Article on mood in building day after Oklahoma City bombing, including remarks from U.S. Attorney Christopher Droney. See *Ribicoff after Oklahoma City bombing*.

2015 - \$9.9 million allotted for maintenance and repairs. See *Local Fixes on Obama's List*.

2017 – Hosting national mock trial championships. See *National Mock Trial Explores Fictional Murder*.

<https://www.gsa.gov/cdnstatic/Ribicoffmore.pdf>

See page 3 for building history.

## Judges and Famous Cases

**M. Joseph Blumenfeld** (1961 - 1988) – One of the two first federal judges of the Ribicoff

### Famous Cases:

Merger of ITT & Hartford Fire Ins., biggest merger in the world at the time, opposed by Ralph Nader. See *Judge to Allow ITT Merger*, and *ITT Case is Closed, Nader Claim without Merit*.

First federal judge to permit suit against police for not protecting wife with protection order against her husband as they would against a stranger. See *Wives May Sue Police for Protection*.

**T. Emmet Clarie** (1961 - 1997) – One of the two first federal judges of the Ribicoff

### Famous Cases:

Los Machateros – second largest robbery in US history. See *Security Tight at Wells Fargo Hearing*, and *Wells Fargo defendant denied bail*.

First federal court approved “bugging” device; involving Ronald Del Mastro “The Mope.” See *Gambling Trail Tapes Obscure Footnote*.

Sentencing in second largest counterfeiting ring in Connecticut history. See *5\_of\_6-Member\_Counterfeiting\_Ring Sentenced*.

[**Robert P. Anderson** (1954-1964) (as Chief Judge, had smaller courtroom when sitting in Hartford)]

**Jon O. Newman** (1971 - 1979)

### Famous Cases:

*SCM v. Xerox* was the longest federal jury trial in recorded history at the time. Newman ruled SCM couldn't collect \$37 million in damages awarded by jury because no legal basis for damages under antitrust law. Opinion over 100 pages long. See *Judge\_Bars\_Collection\_of\_\$37\_M from Xerox*.

**Alfred V. Covello** (1992 - present)

### Famous cases:

Los Machateros – second largest robbery in US history case continues 25 years later. See *Machetero gets 7 Years*.

Post-Newtown school shooting, found Connecticut's toughest-in-the-nation gun law constitutional. See *Assault Weapons Ban Upheld*.

**Robert N. Chatigny** (1994 - present)

Famous Cases:

Art heist of \$500 million in paintings from Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum by Hartford gangster Robert "The Cook" Gentile. See *Stubborn Stand-Off Over Stolen Gardner Museum Art Could End With Sentencing*, and *Gentile to Serve 11 More Months*.

**Dominic J. Squatrito** (1994 - present)

**Alvin W. Thompson** (1994 - present)

Famous Cases:

First time Connecticut law used to hold city and state federally liable for failing to protect witness to serious crime. See *Judge Allows Suit In Witness' Slaying*.

**Christopher F. Droney** (1997 - 2011)

**Vanessa L. Bryant** (2007 - present)

Famous Cases:

Ruled that Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) unconstitutional, effectively affirmed by 2d Cir. and U.S. Supreme Court via different simultaneous case filed in SDNY. See *Judge Rules DOMA Unlawful*.

**Michael P. Shea** (2012 - present)

Famous Cases:

Sentenced Ted Hakey Jr. to 6 months for shooting at Meriden mosque. See *Meriden Mosque Shooter Gets 6 Months*.

**Second Circuit Judges with Chambers in Ribicoff**

**J. Joseph Smith**

**Jon O. Newman**

**Christopher F. Droney**

## Magistrate Judges

[Benedict M. Holden Jr. held post 8 years (1952-1960)]

**George C. Hastings** (1960 – 1965?) (U.S. Commissioner). See *City's New U.S. Courts to be Dedicated, Hastings Resigns Post as U.S. Commissioner, Hastings Begins New Term as Commissioner, Hastings Named U.S. Court Commissioner*.

**Thomas F. Parker** (part-time) (1965 – 1975?) (U.S. Commissioner). See *Four Named Magistrates, Judge Swears Ex-Clerk as U.S. Commissioner*.

1971 - By statute U.S. Commissioners retitled Magistrate Judges.

**F. Owen Eagan** (1975 - ?) (chambers moved?)

**Thomas P. Smith** (1979 – 2015)

One of the country's longest serving magistrate judges with over 35 years on the bench, and longest serving within the Second Circuit.

### Famous Cases:

Gardner Museum art heist guns (with Chatigny). See *Judge: Mobster Had 'Veritable Arsenal'*.

Ordered Roman Catholic Diocese of Bridgeport to pay \$33,195 in sanctions for withholding evidence about a priest in sex abuse case. See *Diocese Cited For Withholding Evidence*.

**Donna F. Martinez** (1994 – present)

### Famous Cases:

Angela Moutsatsos, the owner of a legendary Hartford brothel that employed more than 100 prostitutes for more than 4,000 customers pleaded guilty to conspiring to promote prostitution, money laundering and smuggling large amounts of cash from Switzerland. See *Brothel Owner Pleads Guilty*.

Arraigned Jeffrey L. St. Jean of plotting to kill U.S. District Court Judge Alvin Thompson who was assigned to sentence him for illegal possession of firearms. See *Plot to Kill Judge*.

**Robert A. Richardson** (2016 - present)

## **Bankruptcy Judges**

U.S. Bankruptcy Referee **Saul Sideman** – 1<sup>st</sup> Bankr. Ref. of Ribicoff (1960 – 1979). See *City's New U.S. Courts to be Dedicated*.

U.S. Bankruptcy Referee **Robert L. Krechevsky** (1978 – 2008)

One of the longest serving bankruptcy judges in history.

1978 - By statute Referees retitled Bankruptcy Judges

**Albert S. Dabrowski** (1993 – 2015)

**Ann M. Nevins** (2015 - present) (moved to New Haven)

Famous Cases:

Bankruptcy of rapper, 50 Cent. See *For 50 Cent Millions to Creditors*.

**James J. Tancredi** (2016 - present)