

David N. Matlock

David N. Matlock was appointed Secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services on January 8, 2024.

Matlock previously served as Chief Judge of the Juvenile Court for Caddo Parish from 1999 until his retirement in June 2023. He was first elected to serve as judge in 1994. The Juvenile Court of Caddo Parish is one of four special juvenile courts in Louisiana with exclusive original juvenile jurisdiction, hearing cases regarding juvenile delinquency, Family in Need of Services (FINS) cases concerning ungovernable children, truants and runaways, and Children in Need of Care (CINC) cases where a child has been abused, neglected or abandoned.

Matlock played a pivotal role in moving the court to a [trauma-informed care](#) approach, focused on addressing childhood trauma and mitigating intergenerational trauma. During his tenure, the juvenile court had the state's first Juvenile Drug Court, Family Drug Court, Juvenile Mental Health Court and Truancy Court. He also saw the development of the state's first Sex Trafficking Community Response Team and Specialized Victims Intensive Unit.

Matlock has been recognized for his commitment to Louisiana's youth, including by receiving the Volunteers for Youth Justice Hero of the Year Award in 2019, Louisiana CASA Judge of the Year in 2005 and 2019, Volunteers for Youth Justice Shining Star Legal Advocate in 2008, and the Together We Can, Catherine Lafleur Legal Advocacy Award in 2020.

Prior to his service as judge, Matlock served on the Caddo Parish School Board from 1990 to 1994. He also has served as an adjunct instructor of jurisprudence and juvenile justice at Louisiana State University in Shreveport, as well as a private practice attorney at law firms in Louisiana and Texas. He has been admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court.

A Shreveport native, Matlock graduated from C.E. Byrd High School as a National Merit Scholar, completed his undergraduate studies at Louisiana State University in Shreveport and earned a juris doctorate from Baylor University.

Matlock and his wife, Mary, have four children, four children-in-law and eight grandchildren.