

Justice Mary Fairhurst will be next chief justice

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OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP) — Justice Mary Fairhurst has been elected as the next chief justice of the Washington state Supreme Court.

Fairhurst was elected by her colleagues on Thursday, according a news release sent by the court. She will succeed current Chief Justice Barbara Madsen starting on Jan. 9. Madsen is currently up for re-election. If she wins next Tuesday, she will continue as a justice on the court.

Madsen, who was first elected to the court in 1992, became chief justice in 2010. She is the second woman to hold the position.

Fairhurst was elected to the court in 2002. As chief justice, she will become the court's chief spokeswoman and will preside over the court's public hearings. She will also co-chair the state's Board for Judicial Administration, the primary policy-setting group of the state judiciary.