Florida’s Chief Justice to Undergo Surgery for Kidney Cancer

TALLAHASSEE- Florida’s Chief Justice Jorge Labarga will undergo surgery this month at Shands Hospital in Gainesville for removal of a kidney.

"Doctors tell me," Labarga said, "that my prognosis is very good after surgery because the cancer was detected early by blood tests during a routine medical exam. This is a big example of why regular testing is so important for everyone."

Doctors expect he will spend seven days in the hospital. He will resume his duties remotely, soon after the surgery.

As provided in the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration, the Florida Supreme Court member longest in service – Justice Barbara J. Pariente – will assume the role of Acting Chief Justice for any period of time during which Labarga is incapacitated.

Labarga became the state’s 56th Chief Justice and the first one of Hispanic descent on July 1, 2014. He joined the high court in January 2009.

Labarga has made access to civil justice for all Floridians the signature initiative of his administration. A September 18 meeting of the Florida Commission on Access to Civil Justice will continue its work despite the necessity of his absence.

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