

JUDGE MANUEL L. ARGEL, JR (RET)

COMMISSIONER

Social Security System (SSS)
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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF FUNCTION

As a member of the Social Security Commission (SSC), Judge Manuel L. Argel, Jr. (Ret.) plays a crucial role in overseeing the governance of the Social Security System (SSS). He is responsible for providing policy direction and monitoring management actions, and has the authority to make decisions in disputes related to SSS coverage, benefits, contributions, and penalties. In addition to his role at the SSC, Judge Argel also serves as a Director of PLDT Inc. and Philamlife Tower Management Corp (PTMC), and is an active member of their Risk Management and Audit Committees.

CAREER MILESTONES

Judge Argel commands a substantial experience of 20-years of private law practice. He was appointed in 1995 by President Fidel V. Ramos to serve as a Regional Trial Court Judge in Laoag City, Ilocos Norte. Throughout his 20-year tenure in the judiciary, Judge Argel earned a reputation for his exceptional competence, integrity, dedication, and impartiality. Upon retiring in 2015, he had accumulated a total of 40 years of legal experience.

Prior to his role as a member of the Judiciary, Judge Manuel L. Argel, Jr. (Ret.) had a seven (7) year experience as a member of the Sangguniang Bayan of Vigan City, where he was responsible for crafting local ordinances and resolutions to govern the municipality. His work as a legislator was recognized in 2008 when he was awarded the Legislator's Award by the City Government of Vigan. With over four (4) decades of legal practice, Judge Argel's career has been marked by competence, integrity, dedication, and independence.

PROFESSIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE/ HIGHLIGHTS

A member of the Philippine Bar since 1975, Judge Argel started his career in law as an associate of private full-service law firms until he eventually formed his own law office in 1981 where he handled cases in the fields of civil, criminal, labor, corporate, patents, land registration, administrative and election cases, as well as documentation and establishment of rural banks, cooperatives and labor unions.

While in private practice, Judge Argel was accredited in 1995 as a Voluntary Labor Arbitrator of the National Conciliation and Mediation Board, the arbitration arm of the Department of Labor and Employment. During his twenty (20) years in the private practice, Judge Argel also served as President of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (Ilocos Sur Chapter) from 1993 to 1995, Provincial Secretary of National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections, Chairman of the Ilocos Sur Local Amnesty Board and a member of the People's Assistance Development Action Center, Inc.

Upon his appointment in 1995 as RTC Judge of Laoag City, Ilocos Norte, Judge Argel also served as Executive Judge of RTC Laoag from 2005 to 2007 and Presidential Assistant for Region I in the Philippine Judges Association.

Judge Argel is a founding member of the Lambda Rho Beta Fraternity, a law-school based fraternity formed in 1972. At one point or another, he was also a Charter Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus St. Paul de Vigan Council 8642, Justice and Peace Council of Ilocos Sur, Council of the Laity of the Philippines, and other civic and community organizations.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Judge Argel is a distinguished alumnus of San Beda University, where he obtained both his Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy in 1969 and his Bachelor of Laws in 1974.

He continuously strives to enhance his knowledge and skills through participation in various trainings and seminars, such as the Institute of Corporate Directors' Corporate Governance Orientation Program for GOCCs and Professional Directors Program, the ACGES seminars on "Lessons from a Pandemic" and "How to Courageously Lead During a Crisis," a seminar on Islamic Finance, and PLDT ACGES events on topics ranging from customer obsession to the metaverse and its impact on business and human interaction. He also ensures that he is up to date on corporate policies aligning with the latest Revised Corporation Code of the Philippines.