

The Star-Ledger

N.J. taps former CIA officer to lead Homeland Security office

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NJ Advance Media for NJ.com and The Star-Ledger

Published June 4, 2021

A former CIA officer has been appointed to lead the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, the governor announced Friday.

Laurie R. Doran will take over this weekend as acting director of the agency overseeing local counterterrorism and cybersecurity work. She's at least the third straight CIA veteran to hold the job.

"Laurie has served our country and our state honorably for over three decades, and she could not be more qualified," Gov. Phil Murphy said in a statement announcing his appointment.

Doran thanked the governor for the promotion. "I look forward to carrying on our mission," she said in a statement.

Doran will join the governor's cabinet but still needs confirmation from the state Senate.

She previously spent more than 30 years at the CIA, officials said. She was Senior Manager and Operations Officer in the Directorate of Operations and served most of her time abroad.

After retiring she joined New Jersey's Homeland Security office in April 2018, according to online pension records.

During the past three years, she's overseen the Intelligence and Operations Division, officials said. Her tenure overlapped with the 2019 mass shooting in Jersey City, which the state's top law enforcement official has called the "deadliest domestic terrorist event in New Jersey history."

Doran is replacing Jared Maples, who's taking a job at the National Hockey League.

Residents "are in good hands with Laurie at the helm," Maples said in a statement.

Doran earned a Master of Public Administration from Suffolk University and has a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Massachusetts, officials said.