

Port of New Orleans President and CEO Brandy Christian stepping down

CFO Ronald Wendel Jr. assumes acting leadership of the port

[Noi Mahoney](#)

Tuesday, May 14, 2024



Brandy D. Christian has served as president and CEO of the Port of New Orleans since January 2017, as well as the CEO of the New Orleans Public Belt Railroad since 2018. (Photo: Port of New Orleans)

[The Port of New Orleans](#) announced Tuesday that President and CEO Brandy D. Christian will step down in June to pursue an opportunity in the private sector.

Christian has served as president and CEO since January 2017, as well as the CEO of the New Orleans Public Belt Railroad (NOPB) since its acquisition by the port in February 2018.

“Reflecting on my time at the Port New Orleans and NOPB, I will be departing with immense gratitude for the dedicated team and supportive community who have made the port a beacon of innovation and efficiency,” Christian said in a news release. “We have navigated challenges and embraced opportunities thoughtfully and strategically, propelling our port and region to new heights.”

Ronald Wendel Jr., executive vice president and CFO, will assume acting leadership of the Port of New Orleans and NOPB following Christian’s departure. Wendel joined the port in 2015.

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Christian joined the port in 2015 as COO. After taking the reins as president and CEO Jan. 1, 2017, she led the port’s acquisition of the NOPB, connecting the rail and maritime supply chains in the region. In 2018, she led the development of a master plan to align all four lines of business — cargo, cruise, real estate and rail — that provided a road map for sustainable and inclusive growth, the port said.

Christian oversaw the start of the largest economic development project in Louisiana history, the \$1.8 billion Louisiana International Terminal (LIT), a new container facility in St. Bernard Parish.

Construction on the LIT is set to begin in 2025, with the first berth opening in 2028. Port officials estimate the LIT will have an annual capacity of 2 million twenty-foot equivalent units. It is aimed at solidifying Louisiana’s position as a hub for global markets.

The Port of New Orleans is a deep-water port providing multimodal connectivity through its network of land, river, rail and roadway. Located on the Mississippi near the Gulf of Mexico, the port provides access to more than 30 major inland hubs, such as Chicago, Memphis, Tennessee, and Canada, via 14,500 miles of railways and interstate roadways. It is the nation’s only deep-water port with six Class-1 railroads.



The Port of New Orleans is a deep-water port located on the Mississippi near the Gulf of Mexico. (Photo: Port of New Orleans)

In 2023, the Port of New Orleans saw a 12% year-over-year (y/y) rise in container volumes at 481,593 TEUs. The port also handled a total of 406 vessel calls last year, which represents a 22% y/y increase.

“Under Christian’s guidance, the port has navigated through profound challenges and achieved remarkable successes,” Walter Leger Jr., chairman of the port’s board of commissioners and the NOPB commission, said in a statement. “Christian has positioned the port to regain its place as the premier destination within the global supply chain as we embark on a transformational economic development project in the Louisiana International Terminal.”