



THE  
CHICAGO  
BAR  
ASSOCIATION

# *Green Guide*

To Judicial Candidates in Cook County

The Chicago Bar Association's Evaluations  
Of Judicial Candidates Running for Office  
In the November 4, 2014 General Election

**Provided as a public service of The Chicago Bar Association**

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**Produced by The Chicago Bar Association Office of Public Affairs, 321 South Plymouth Court, Chicago, Illinois 60604 (312) 554-2000.**

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE CHICAGO BAR ASSOCIATION'S JUDICIAL EVALUATION PROGRAM**

By Board resolution, the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC) is the semi-autonomous committee of The Chicago Bar Association that conducts evaluations of candidates for judicial offices and sitting judges seeking retention within Cook County. As a service to the public, The CBA reports the findings of the JEC for all elections. The evaluations are designed to inform the public and the courts of the qualifications, independence and integrity of judicial candidates. The CBA believes that the quality of the administration of justice in our courts is determined in large part by the quality of our judges.

### **History**

The Chicago Bar Association has a long history of judicial evaluation, dating before the turn-of-the-century, and taking many forms over the years -- from running a "Bar Ticket" in 1887 -- to the present comprehensive procedure adopted in 1976. At that time, a special committee of the Board of Managers, chaired by then CBA President John D. Hayes, recommended a total revamping of the process to minimize political and bar politics, and embrace the concepts of random selection of evaluators and investigators, and to assure the confidentiality of the process and sources.

The Association's Board of Managers regularly reviews and evaluates the procedures and operations of the JEC. The JEC's governing resolution and its guidelines were both revised in 1987. The current JEC governing resolution was amended on December 2010.

### **Scope & Purpose**

Judicial candidates and sitting judges who participate in The CBA's screening process are evaluated on the basis of eight criteria: integrity, legal knowledge, legal ability, professional experience, judicial temperament, diligence, punctuality and health factors.

By providing these findings, along with "The Statements of Reasons," The CBA seeks to help inform and educate the public about the upcoming judicial contests in the general election.

The Association's 200-member Judicial Evaluation Committee annually invests thousands of volunteer attorney hours in this thorough, comprehensive and diverse peer review process evaluating more than 300 candidates for appointive and elective judicial positions within Cook County. The evaluation process for the primary candidates began in June 2013. The guidelines and standards developed by the 22,000-member Chicago Bar Association for rating judges have been adopted almost entirely by the American Bar Association as a model for local and state bar evaluation programs.

## **The Investigative Process**

The Committee's work begins when the candidate submits his or her completed questionnaire. The 16-page questionnaire for sitting judges, requires the candidate to list personal, professional and judicial references and to provide the names of lawyers who have recently appeared before him or her. Candidates with less than four years on the bench are also asked to identify adversaries with whom they worked before taking the bench. Lawyer candidates are asked to provide detailed information about their jury and non-jury trial experiences, the names of five judges before whom they have appeared and a list of at least 20 lawyers who have represented adverse positions in matters handled by them.

All candidates are also asked to relate any present or recent health problems and to submit written authorizations signed by their doctors. Complaints against a candidate to the Attorney's Registration and Disciplinary Commission and the Judicial Inquiry Board are to be described, and relevant reports and correspondence submitted with the questionnaire. Criticism of professional misconduct, in any formal civil or criminal proceeding or in the media, must also be reported by the candidate.

The Committee obtained written materials dealing with the candidates' judicial performance from the major newspapers. In several cases, transcripts and other relevant, publicly available documents relating to official investigations of judges and court personnel were obtained from official sources.

The complete file was then assigned to a two-person investigation team. The investigators conducted personal interviews with the listed legal references. A specially assigned team of investigators reviewed the files of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission and submitted to the investigators and the hearing panel a report on the information disclosed in those files. On completion of the interviews and a review of the file materials, the investigations team completed a comprehensive report regarding the qualifications of the candidate.

## **The Hearing Process**

Hearings were conducted on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and on Saturday mornings. Hearing division members were randomly assigned, in accordance with the Committee's resolution, to either of two hearing rooms by a blind drawing for room assignment. Typically, 18 to 20 members were assigned to each room. Only at that time did they learn which candidates they would be evaluating and who the other members of the panel were. Each member of the hearing panel was provided with a copy of the investigator's report, a copy of the completed questionnaire with all material submitted by the candidate, and copies of any other relevant documents including, in some cases, newspaper clippings and transcripts of court proceedings.

Each member and the candidate execute a written oath to keep the nature and content of the report and questioning and hearing confidential.

The Judicial Evaluation Committee included in its investigation all possible sources of information available to it. However, because the Committee cannot compel the production of evidence or the attendance of witnesses before it nor, understandably, expect disclosure by the authorities of evidence discovered in pending investigations, the Committee cannot be assured that it has uncovered all the evidence which, in the future, may lead to formal charges. Within its authority, the Committee develops the most complete record available and gives careful and thoughtful consideration to the available evidence.

A member of the Executive Committee chaired each hearing. The candidate was advised of the procedures to be employed at the hearing and then questioned at length by the chair in regard to abilities, experiences, perceived strengths and weaknesses and, where appropriate, specific problems disclosed in the investigation. The chair then invited questions from members of the hearing panel. The candidate was then given an opportunity to make any statement he or she chose in his or her own behalf. On excusing the candidate from the hearing room, the chair then opened the floor to discussion of the candidate's qualifications among the panel members. Only after the members had been given the opportunity to openly voice their opinions was the issue of the finding of the Committee put to a vote.

### **The Vote**

The hearing panel members voted by secret ballot and were asked to rate the candidate as "Highly Qualified," "Qualified" or "Not Recommended." The JEC's governing resolution provides that to be found "Highly Qualified" the candidate must receive that rating on 80% of the ballots. To be found "Qualified" the candidate must receive a favorable rating on 60% of the ballots. The failure of a candidate to receive 60 percent affirmative vote results in a finding of "Not Recommended." Each hearing panel member was also asked for written comments on the candidate's qualifications, areas worthy of commendation and areas of needed improvement. Following a tabulation of the vote, the chair reviewed and capsulized the written comments in preparing the statement of reasons given in support of the Committee's finding.

### **The Appellate Review Committee**

On July 12, 1990, The Chicago Bar Association's Board of Managers adopted procedures establishing a separate Appellate Review Committee to act independently from the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC).

The new Appellate Review Committee was recommended by a special committee appointed by past president Chester L. Blair. Made up of 30 lawyers, the committee hears appeals only from candidates who receive a "Not Recommended" rating from the JEC.

The candidate may request a re-evaluation by the appellate committee only on the basis that he or she believes that errors or omissions were made in the original screening process.

The Resolution adopted by the CBA's Board of Managers provides that:

A re-evaluation shall only be ordered on a determination that the Judicial Evaluation Committee's Hearing Division's finding was clearly erroneous. A re-evaluation shall not be ordered solely because the Appellate Review Panel disagrees with the Judicial Evaluation Committee's findings.

The Appellate Review Committee's authority will be limited to directing that the candidate be given a new hearing by the Judicial Evaluation Committee or denying the appeal.

Prior to the formation of the new Appellate Review Committee, all appeals were handled within the Judicial Evaluation Committee. These new appellate procedures only apply to candidates evaluated by the JEC after July 12, 1990.

### **Reporting of Findings**

The Association has always reported its JEC findings to the public for all elective judicial positions.

On February 19, 1987, The CBA Board of Managers amended the JEC governing resolution to provide publication of "Statements of Reasons" for all such elective positions and specified appointive positions, such as associate judgeships.

## **CHICAGO BAR ASSOCIATION JUDICIAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE FINDINGS FOR NOVEMBER 4, 2014 JUDICIAL RETENTION ELECTION**

The Chicago Bar Association's Judicial Evaluation Committee completed its evaluation process for retention candidates on September 11, 2014. Candidates participating in the JEC screening process receive a finding of "Qualified" or "Not Recommended." Of the 73 judges on the ballot, The JEC found one Illinois Appellate Court Justice "Qualified," and 49 Circuit Court judges "Qualified" to be retained by Cook County voters. One Circuit Court Judge was found "Not Recommended" for retention.

The results for retention candidate evaluations and findings are as follows:

### **ILLINOIS APPELLATE COURT QUALIFIED**

Thomas E. Hoffman

### **CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY QUALIFIED**

Mauricio Araujo  
Edward A. Arce  
Andrew Berman  
Margaret Ann Brennan  
Eileen Mary Brewer  
Janet Adams Brosnahan  
James Brown  
Eileen O'Neill Burke  
Thomas J. Byrne  
Diane Gordon Cannon  
Evelyn B. Clay  
Mary Ellen Coghlan  
Ann Collins-Dole  
Donna L. Cooper  
Clayton J. Crane  
Anna Helen Demacopoulos  
Lynn Marie Egan  
Candace Jean Fabri

Peter A. Felice  
James Patrick Flannery  
John J. Fleming  
Rodolfo (Rudy) Garcia  
James J. Gavin  
Robert E. Gordon  
Margarita Kulys Hoffman  
Michael B. Hyman  
Marilyn F. Johnson  
Rickey Jones  
Themis N. Karnezis  
Kathleen G. Kennedy  
Kerry M. Kennedy  
Diana L. Kenworthy  
Maureen Ward Kirby  
William G. Lacy  
Marjorie C. Laws  
Casandra Lewis

Thomas J. Lipscomb  
Pamela Elizabeth Loza  
Patricia Manila Martin  
Mary Anne Mason  
Veronica B. Mathein  
Sheila McGinnis  
Dennis Michael McGuire  
Kathleen Marie McGury  
Lewis Nixon  
William Timothy O'Brien  
Annie O'Donnell  
James N. O'Hara  
Sebastian Thomas Patti  
Edmund Ponce De Leon  
Jackie Marie Portman  
Joan E. Powell  
James L. Rhodes  
James G. Riley  
Anita Rivkin-Carothers  
Pat Rogers  
Dominique C. Ross

Kristyna Colleen Ryan  
Patrick J. Sherlock  
Laura Marie Sullivan  
Donald J. Suriano  
Shelley Lynn Sutker-Dermer  
Michael P. Toomin  
SandraTristano  
Valarie E. Turner  
Raul Vega  
Kenneth J. Wadas  
Debra B. Walker  
Ursula Walowski  
Gregory Joseph Wojkowski  
Frank G. Zelezinski

CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY  
**NOT RECOMMENDED**

Thomas E. Flanagan

**FINDINGS FOR COOK COUNTY JUDGES SEEKING RETENTION  
FOR JUSTICE OF THE ILLINOIS APPELLATE COURT**

**THOMAS E. HOFFMAN**

**QUALIFIED**

Justice Thomas E. Hoffman is “QUALIFIED” for retention as an Appellate Court Justice. Justice Hoffman was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1971 and was appointed to the Illinois Appellate Court in 1993. Justice Hoffman was elected to the Illinois Appellate Court in 1994 and is the Presiding Justice of the First Division of the Illinois Appellate Court, 1st District. Justice Hoffman is highly regarded for his knowledge of the law, work ethic, and legal ability. Justice Hoffman is always well prepared for oral arguments and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the Illinois Appellate Court. In addition to Justice Hoffman’s Appellate Court caseload, in 2000 he was appointed to serve on the Appellate Court’s Workers’ Compensation Division to decide appeals in Workers’ Compensation cases.

**FINDINGS FOR COOK COUNTY JUDGES SEEKING RETENTION  
FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY**

**MAURICIO ARAUJO**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Mauricio Araujo is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Araujo was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1993 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008. Judge Araujo is assigned to the Criminal Court and hears Felony Narcotics cases. Judge Araujo is knowledgeable, hardworking, and possesses an excellent judicial temperament.

**EDWARD A. ARCE**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Edward A. Arce is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Arce was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1985 and was engaged in private practice until becoming a judge in 2008. Judge Arce is currently assigned to the Domestic Relations Division at the Daley Center where he presides over a Domestic Relations call. Judge Arce is hardworking, thoughtful, and well regarded by the lawyers who appear before him.

**ANDREW BERMAN**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Andrew Berman “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Berman was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1975 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 1996. Judge Berman is assigned to the Circuit Court’s Juvenile Justice and Child Protection Department in the Juvenile Court. Judge Berman is highly regarded by those who appear before him for his knowledge of the law, efficient and effective management of his call, and commitment to the Juvenile Justice system.

**MARGARET ANN BRENNAN**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Margaret Ann Brennan is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Brennan was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1987 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2002. Judge Brennan hears commercial cases in the Law Division. Judge Brennan is well regarded for her knowledge of the law, ability to handle complex cases, and fine demeanor.

**EILEEN MARY BREWER**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Eileen Brewer is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Brewer was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1987 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2002. Judge Brewer is currently assigned to the Motions Section in the Circuit Court’s Law Division. Judge Brewer is dedicated and well regarded for her work ethic, diligence, knowledge of the law, and fine judicial demeanor. Judge Brewer is also effective in guiding parties to a mutual resolution of their dispute.

**JANET ADAMS BROSNAHAN**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Janet Adams Brosnahan is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Brosnahan was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1990 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2002. Judge Brosnahan is hardworking and knowledgeable in both civil and criminal law. Judge Brosnahan possesses a fine demeanor and is diligent and committed to the justice system.

**JAMES BROWN**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge James Brown is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Brown was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1989 and served as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney for four years before entering private practice. Judge Brown was elected to the Circuit Court in 2002 and for the past five years has been assigned to the Central Bond Court. Judge Brown received praise from defense attorneys and prosecutors for his knowledge of the law, legal ability, and punctuality.

**EILEEN O’NEILL BURKE**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Eileen O’Neill Burke is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Burke was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1990 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008. Judge Burke is hardworking and well regarded for her knowledge of the law and fine demeanor.

**THOMAS J. BYRNE**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Thomas J. Byrne is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Byrne was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1989 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008. Judge Byrne is assigned to the Criminal Court and hears a variety of cases that are assigned to him by the Presiding Judge. Judge Byrne is well rounded in the law and highly regarded for his diligence, pleasant demeanor, and fine temperament.

**DIANE GORDON CANNON**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Diane Cannon is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Cannon was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1981 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 1996. While concerns about Judge Cannon’s temperament have been raised, the judge possesses the requisite legal knowledge, ability and experience to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

**EVELYN B. CLAY**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Evelyn Clay is “Qualified” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Clay was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1981 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 1996. Judge Clay is assigned to the Criminal Division and serves as a Supervising Judge in the Leighton Criminal Court at 2600 South California Avenue. Judge Clay is diligent, experienced, and possesses a fine judicial temperament. It is recommended that Judge Clay continue to improve her knowledge of the law.

**MARY ELLEN COGHLAN**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Mary Ellen Coghlan is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Coghlan was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1981 and was appointed to the Circuit Court in 1995. Judge Coghlan was elected in 1996 and has served with distinction in both the Criminal and Probate Divisions of the Circuit Court. Judge Coghlan serves as Presiding Judge of the Probate Division and is well regarded for her legal knowledge, integrity, and effective skills in managing the administrative duties of the Probate Court.

**ANN COLLINS-DOLE**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Ann Collins-Dole is for “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Collins-Dole was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1990 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008. Judge Collins-Dole is assigned to the Probate Division and hears adult guardianship cases. Judge Collins-Dole is well regarded for her knowledge of the law, diligence, integrity, and fine temperament.

**DONNA L. COOPER**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Donna L. Cooper is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Cooper was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1981 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008. Judge Cooper is assigned to the Juvenile Justice Division and hears delinquency, probation violations, Department of Children and Family Services compliance cases, and a variety of other criminal cases. Judge Cooper has a high-volume call with many difficult cases. While Judge Cooper is well regarded for her integrity and outstanding temperament, she needs to improve her knowledge of the law and overall legal ability.

**CLAYTON J. CRANE**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Clayton J. Crane is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Crane was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1975 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 1996. Judge Clayton is assigned to the Criminal Division at 26th and California. Judge Crane is knowledgeable, thoughtful, and well respected by those who appear before him for his efficiency, work on the mental health call, and skills in working with pro se defendants.

**ANNA HELEN DEMACOPOULOS**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Anna Helen Demacopoulos is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Demacopoulos was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1985 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008. Judge Demacopoulos is assigned to a felony call in the Sixth Municipal District. Judge Demacopoulos is well regarded for her legal knowledge, judicial ability, work ethic, and fine judicial temperament.

**LYNN MARIE EGAN**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Lynn M. Egan is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Egan was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1985 and was appointed to the Circuit Court in 1995. Judge Egan was elected in 1996 and is currently assigned to an Individual Calendar in the Law Division. Judge Egan is highly regarded for her knowledge of the law, work ethic, diligence, and excellent temperament. Judge Egan is also to be highly recommended for her extraordinary efforts in conducting settlement conferences in cases arising throughout the Law Division.

**CANDACE JEAN FABRI**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Candace Jean Fabri is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Fabri was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1975 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 1996. Judge Fabri is assigned to the Child Protection Division of the Juvenile Court. Judge Fabri is hardworking, diligent, and well regarded for her knowledge of the law, integrity and compassion.

**PETER A. FELICE**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Peter Felice is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Felice was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1976 and was elected to the bench in 2002. Judge Felice is assigned to the Fifth Municipal District and presides over bond court and preliminary hearings. Judge Felice also handles administrative matters in Traffic Court. Judge Felice is well regarded for his work ethic, diligence, efficiency, fine temperament, and passion for the justice system.

**THOMAS E. FLANAGAN**

**NOT RECOMMENDED**

Judge Thomas E. Flanagan is “NOT RECOMMENDED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Flanagan was admitted to practice in Illinois in 1965 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 1984. Judge Flanagan is currently assigned to the Law Division and serves in the trial section. Judge Flanagan has had a distinguished judicial career and enjoys a fine reputation for his integrity. However, lawyers who have appeared before Judge Flanagan have expressed concerns about the judge’s ability to make decisions in a timely manner on motions and complex issues and to efficiently and effectively manage a trial call.

**JAMES PATRICK FLANNERY**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge James Patrick Flannery is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Flannery was admitted to practice law in 1976 and was appointed to the Circuit Court in 1988 and elected in 1990. Judge Flannery is Presiding Judge of the Law Division and is highly regarded for his knowledge of the law, judicial experience, work ethic, and outstanding demeanor and temperament.

**JOHN J. FLEMING**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge John J. Fleming is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Fleming was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1981 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 1996. Judge Fleming has had a variety of judicial assignments and is currently assigned to the Probate Division. Judge Fleming has an even-handed demeanor and is well rounded in both civil and criminal law.

**RODOLFO (RUDY) GARCIA**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Rodolfo Garcia is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Garcia was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1981 and was elected a Circuit Court Judge in 1996. Judge Garcia was assigned to the Illinois Appellate Court from 2003 until 2012. Judge Garcia is currently assigned to the Chancery Division of the Circuit Court and hears declaratory actions, actions in equity, administration of trusts, and other complex legal disputes. Judge Garcia has extensive judicial experience on both the trial and appellate courts. Judge Garcia has an outstanding temperament and is well regarded for his knowledge of the law, judicial ability, and efficiency in managing his call.

**JAMES J. GAVIN**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge James J. Gavin is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Gavin was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1985 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 1996. Judge Gavin has had a variety of judicial assignments and is currently assigned to the Circuit Court’s 4th Municipal District. Judge Gavin knows the law and is well regarded for his fair and even temperament.

**ROBERT E. GORDON**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Robert E. Gordon is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Gordon was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1962 and was appointed to the Circuit Court in 1996 and reappointed in 1998 and 2001. Judge Gordon was elected to the Circuit Court in 2002 and was appointed to the Illinois Appellate Court, First District, in 2006. Judge Gordon has had a number of judicial assignments before his appointment to the Illinois Appellate Court. Judge Gordon is an experienced jurist well regarded for his legal knowledge, work ethic, fine temperament, and commitment to the justice system.

**MARGARITA KULYS HOFFMAN****QUALIFIED**

Judge Margarita Kulys Hoffman is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Hoffman was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1983 and was appointed to the Circuit Court in 2006. Judge Hoffman was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008 and is assigned to the Third Municipal District where she hears misdemeanor, housing, traffic, mental health and veterans’ cases. Judge Hoffman is hardworking, conscientious, and well regarded for her knowledge of the law.

**MICHAEL B. HYMAN****QUALIFIED**

Judge Michael B. Hyman is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Hyman was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1977 and was appointed to the Circuit Court in 2006 and elected in 2008. In December 2012, Judge Hyman was appointed to the Illinois Appellate Court. Judge Hyman is a legal scholar well regarded for his knowledge of the law, work ethic, and commitment to the justice system and public service.

**MARILYN F. JOHNSON****QUALIFIED**

Judge Marilyn F. Johnson is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Johnson was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1980 and was appointed to the Circuit Court in 2006. Judge Johnson was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008 and hears child abuse, neglect and dependency cases in the Juvenile Court’s Child Protection Division. Judge Johnson is well regarded for her knowledge of the law, outstanding judicial temperament, diligence, and work ethic.

**RICKEY JONES****QUALIFIED**

Judge Rickey Jones is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Jones was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1986 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 1996. Judge Jones is assigned to the Leighton Criminal Court at 26th and California. Judge Jones is highly regarded for his knowledge of the law and excellent judicial demeanor.

**THEMIS N. KARNEZIS****QUALIFIED**

Judge Themis Karnezis is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Karnezis was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1970 and appointed as an Associate Judge in 1982. Judge Karnezis held positions in the First Municipal District and in the Felony Trial Division where he sat as a Criminal Court Judge from 1985-1998. In 1998, he was assigned to the Law Division and then appointed Presiding Judge of the Maywood Courthouse where he served until being appointed to the Appellate Court in 2002, where he served until 2012. Judge Karnezis then returned to the Circuit Court as Presiding Judge in the Traffic Division and is currently assigned to the Law Division. Judge Karnezis has had a stellar judicial career and is highly regarded for his knowledge of the law, extensive judicial experience, and fine demeanor.

**KATHLEEN G. KENNEDY**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Kathleen G. Kennedy is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Kennedy was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1982 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 1996. Judge Kennedy is currently assigned to the Circuit Court’s Chancery Division. Judge Kennedy is hardworking, diligent, and well regarded for her knowledge of the law, judicial experience, fine demeanor, and excellent temperament.

**KERRY M. KENNEDY**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Kerry M. Kennedy is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Kennedy was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1979 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2002. Judge Kennedy is assigned to the Fifth Municipal District and presides over preliminary felony, misdemeanor and traffic cases. Judge Kennedy knows the law, is diligent, punctual, and efficiently manages a high-volume call.

**DIANA L. KENWORTHY**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Diana L. Kenworthy is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Kenworthy was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1995 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008. Judge Kenworthy has had various judicial assignments and is currently assigned to the Domestic Violence Division. Judge Kenworthy is highly regarded for her knowledge of the law and outstanding judicial demeanor.

**MAUREEN WARD KIRBY**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Maureen Ward Kirby is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Kirby was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1989 and was appointed to the Circuit Court in 2007. Judge Kirby was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008 and is currently assigned to the County Division, where she presides over a wide variety of matters from adoption to property tax to mental health cases. Judge Kirby is passionate and enthusiastic about her assignment. Judge Kirby is well regarded for her knowledge of the law, efficiency in managing her cases, and strong work ethic.

**WILLIAM G. LACY**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge William Lacy is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Lacy was admitted to practice law in 1983 and became a Circuit Court Judge in 1996. Judge Lacy has served in the Felony Trial Division at the Leighton Criminal Court Building since 1998. Judge Lacy is well regarded for his integrity, fine demeanor, fairness, and knowledge of the law.

**MARJORIE C. LAWS****QUALIFIED**

Judge Marjorie C. Laws is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Laws was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1977 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 1996. Judge Laws serves as the Presiding Judge of the Sixth Municipal District in Markham. Judge Laws effectively manages an extremely busy branch court which has a high caseload. Judge Laws is well regarded for her knowledge of the law, depth and breadth of judicial experience, and excellent demeanor.

**CASANDRA LEWIS****QUALIFIED**

Judge Casandra Lewis is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Lewis was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1991 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008. Judge Lewis is currently assigned to the Jury Section in the Law Division. Judge Lewis has an excellent judicial temperament, is diligent and has significantly improved her knowledge of the law.

**THOMAS J. LIPSCOMB****QUALIFIED**

Judge Thomas J. Lipscomb is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Lipscomb was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1973 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2002. Judge Lipscomb is assigned to the Law Division and presides over jury trials. Judge Lipscomb is well regarded for his knowledge of the law, fine demeanor, and efficiency in managing trials.

**PAMELA ELIZABETH LOZA****QUALIFIED**

Judge Pamela Elizabeth Loza is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Loza was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1978 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008. Judge Loza is a Supervising Judge in the Domestic Relations Division’s Parentage and Child Enforcement Unit. Judge Loza is hardworking and well regarded for handling both her regular call and her administrative duties.

**PATRICIA MANILA MARTIN****QUALIFIED**

Judge Patricia Manila Martin is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Martin was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1986 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 1996. Judge Martin has served as Presiding Judge of the Child Protection Division of the Juvenile Court since 2000. Judge Martin manages the Child Protection Division and also runs a call involving abuse and neglect and child foster care cases. Judge Martin is committed to the best interests of children and is dedicated and passionate about her work. Judge Martin was appointed to a Presidential Commission on National Child Welfare and is highly respected nationally and locally for her leadership and work in child welfare.

**MARY ANNE MASON**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Mary Anne Mason is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Mason was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1977 and was appointed to the Circuit Court in 2000. Judge Mason was elected a Circuit Court Judge in 2002 and distinguished herself as a trial judge in the Chancery Division until her appointment to the Illinois Appellate Court in July 2013. Judge Mason has an outstanding reputation and is highly regarded for her knowledge of the law, integrity, breadth of experience, and strong work ethic.

**VERONICA B. MATHEIN**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Veronica Mathein is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Mathein was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1984 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 1996. Judge Mathein is assigned to the Domestic Relations Division and hears divorce, custody, and pre-decree and post-decree cases. Judge Mathein serves as a designated mentor judge in the Illinois Supreme Court’s judicial mentoring program. Judge Mathein is well regarded for her knowledge of the law, work ethic, and efficiency in managing her courtroom.

**SHEILA McGINNIS**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Sheila McGinnis is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge McGinnis was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1989 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2002. Judge McGinnis is assigned to the Fifth Municipal District and hears felonies, misdemeanors, and civil orders of protection. Judge McGinnis is well regarded for her knowledge of criminal law and family law.

**DENNIS MICHAEL McGUIRE**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Dennis Michael McGuire is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge McGuire was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1987 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2002. Judge McGuire is assigned to the First Municipal District and hears non-jury civil cases. Judge McGuire effectively and efficiently manages a high-volume call with many self-represented litigants. Judge McGuire is diligent, knowledgeable, and possesses an excellent judicial temperament.

**KATHLEEN MARIE McGURY**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Kathleen Marie McGury is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge McGury was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1977 and was appointed to the Circuit Court in 1995 and elected in 1996. Judge McGury is assigned to the Probate Division and hears a variety of guardianship and estate matters. Judge McGury is diligent, dedicated, and well regarded for her knowledge of the law.

**LEWIS NIXON****QUALIFIED**

Judge Lewis Nixon is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Nixon was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1975 and was appointed an Associate Judge in 2001. Judge Nixon was elected to the Circuit Court in 2002 and since 2008 has served as the Supervising Judge on the Mortgage Foreclosure/Mechanics Lien Section of the Chancery Division. In addition to his administrative responsibilities, Judge Nixon hears Mortgage Foreclosure and Mechanics Lien cases. Judge Nixon served as Chair of the Illinois Supreme Court’s Special Committee to create new rules governing mortgage foreclosure cases. Judge Nixon is highly regarded for his work ethic, knowledge of the law, administrative skills, and outstanding judicial temperament.

**WILLIAM TIMOTHY O’BRIEN****QUALIFIED**

Judge William T. O’Brien is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge O’Brien was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1984. Before his election to the bench in 2002, Judge O’Brien served as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney for 18 years and for a period of time chaired both the Felony Trial Division and Narcotics Division. Judge O’Brien is currently assigned to a Felony Courtroom in the Second Municipal District. Judge O’Brien is hard working and well regarded for his knowledge of the law, diligence, punctuality, fairness, and judicial experience.

**ANNIE O’DONNELL****QUALIFIED**

Judge Annie O’Donnell is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge O’Donnell was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1987. Judge O’Donnell served as an Assistant Public Defender and was engaged in private practice as a criminal defense lawyer before her election to the bench in 2008. Judge O’Donnell is currently assigned to a preliminary felony hearing call in a branch court. Judge O’Donnell is well regarded by the lawyers who appear in her court for her knowledge of the law, diligence, and fine temperament.

**JAMES N. O’HARA****QUALIFIED**

Judge James N. O’Hara is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge O’Hara was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1981 and was appointed and elected to the Circuit Court in 2008. Judge O’Hara is currently assigned to the Motions Section in the Law Division. Judge O’Hara is well regarded for his knowledge of the law, work ethic, and diligence in efficiently managing an extremely high volume and demanding call. As such calls may try the patience of any judge, Judge O’Hara must continue to strive to avoid any comments that might be misperceived by lawyers or litigants who appear before him.

**SEBASTIAN THOMAS PATTI**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Sebastian Thomas Patti is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Patti was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1982 and was appointed to the Circuit Court in 1995 and elected in 1996. Judge Patti has extensive judicial experience including service on the Illinois Appellate Court. Since 2011, Judge Patti has served as the Presiding Judge of the Domestic Violence Division. Judge Patti is highly regarded for his legal knowledge, judicial and administrative skills, work ethic, outstanding demeanor, and fine temperament.

**EDMUND PONCE de LEON**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Edmund Ponce de Leon is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Ponce de Leon was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1984 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 1996. Judge Ponce de Leon is the Presiding Judge of the County Division. Judge Ponce de Leon has extensive judicial and administrative experience. Judge Ponce de Leon is diligent, knows the law, and possesses a fine demeanor and temperament.

**JACKIE MARIE PORTMAN**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Jackie Marie Portman is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Portman was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1999 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008. Judge Portman is hearing Adult Redeploy and Deferred Prosecution cases and is doing an outstanding job with a challenging call. Judge Portman has a fine temperament and is passionate about her work.

**JOAN E. POWELL**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Joan E. Powell is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Powell was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1992 and was appointed to the Circuit Court in 2006. Judge Powell was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008 and is currently assigned to the Law Division. Judge Powell is diligent and continues to improve her judicial knowledge and courtroom efficiency.

**JAMES L. RHODES**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge James L. Rhodes is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Rhodes was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1975 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 1996. Judge Rhodes is assigned to the Sixth Municipal District and hears a variety of calls. Judge Rhodes is hardworking and well regarded for his knowledge of the law, integrity, and fine judicial temperament.

**JAMES G. RILEY****QUALIFIED**

Judge James G. Riley is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Riley was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1982 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 1996. Judge Riley is a Supervising Judge in the Probate Division and passionate about the justice system. Judge Riley is hardworking and well regarded for his knowledge of the law and efficiency in managing his call.

**ANITA RIVKIN-CAROTHERS****QUALIFIED**

Judge Anita Rivkin-Carothers is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Rivkin-Carothers was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1985. Judge Rivkin-Carothers served as an Assistant Cook County Public Defender from 1985-1987 before entering private practice. Judge Rivkin-Carothers was appointed to the Circuit Court in 2007 and elected a Circuit Court Judge in 2008 and is currently assigned to a trial call in the First Municipal District. Judge Rivkin-Carothers has a fine demeanor and is well regarded by the lawyers who appear before her.

**PATRICK T. ROGERS****QUALIFIED**

Judge Patrick T. Rogers is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Rogers was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1983 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008. Judge Rogers is assigned to the Fifth Municipal District and presides over a criminal misdemeanor courtroom. Judge Rogers is highly regarded for his knowledge of both civil and criminal law, work ethic, and excellent temperament.

**DOMINIQUE C. ROSS****QUALIFIED**

Judge Dominique C. Ross is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Ross was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1995 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008. Judge Ross is assigned to the Domestic Relations Division and hears a variety of cases including child custody issues, division of marital property, and debt removal cases. Judge Ross is hard-working and continues to improve her knowledge of matrimonial law especially as it relates to financial issues.

**KRISTYNA COLLEEN RYAN****QUALIFIED**

Judge Kristyna C. Ryan is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Ryan was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 2000 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008. Judge Ryan is currently assigned to the Circuit Court’s 4th Municipal District. Judge Ryan hears a variety of criminal, traffic, and some civil matters. Judge Ryan is hard-working, knows the law, and possesses a fine judicial temperament.

**PATRICK J. SHERLOCK**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Patrick J. Sherlock is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Sherlock was admitted to practice law in 1990 and was appointed to the Circuit Court in 2007 and elected in 2008. Judge Sherlock is assigned to the Law Division’s Commercial Calendar and hears commercial litigation cases. Judge Sherlock is well regarded for his legal knowledge and ability. Judge Sherlock is diligent, well prepared, and efficiently manages his call.

**LAURA MARIE SULLIVAN**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Laura Marie Sullivan is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Sullivan was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1988 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2002. Judge Sullivan is assigned to Central Bond Court which sets bonds for defendants in the Criminal Justice System. Judge Sullivan is hardworking and well regarded for her knowledge of the law and well-reasoned, thoughtful decisions in a difficult assignment. The judge has been the subject of unwarranted and unjustified criticism and should be retained.

**DONALD J. SURIANO**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Donald J. Suriano is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Suriano was admitted to practice law in 1983 and served as senior counsel for the Chicago Park District before his election to the Circuit Court of Cook County in 1996. Judge Suriano is currently assigned to the Law Division’s Jury Section where he conducts trials. Judge Suriano is hardworking and well regarded for his efficiency and fairness.

**SHELLEY LYNN SUTKER-DERMER**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Shelley Lynn Sutker-Dermer is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Sutker-Dermer was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1982 and is the Presiding Judge of the Second Municipal District. Judge Sutker-Dermer is highly regarded for her knowledge of the law and administrative skills. Judge Sutker-Dermer is innovative, energetic, hardworking, and efficient in managing the Second Municipal District.

**MICHAEL P. TOOMIN**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Michael P. Toomin is “QUALIFIED” for retention as Circuit Court Judge. Judge Toomin was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1967 and was appointed to the Circuit Court in 1980 and elected in 1984. Judge Toomin was appointed to the Illinois Appellate Court in 2008 and served until 2010. Since 2010, Judge Toomin has served as the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Justice Division. Judge Toomin has an outstanding reputation and is highly regarded for his knowledge of the law, extensive judicial experience, fine temperament, and administrative skills. Judge Toomin is committed to the justice system and to serving the best needs of juveniles in the system.

**SANDRA TRISTANO**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Sandra Tristano is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Tristano was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1977 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2002. Judge Tristano is assigned to the Third Municipal District and effectively and efficiently manages a high-volume call with many pro se litigants. Judge Tristano is well regarded for her legal knowledge and fine demeanor.

**VALARIE E. TURNER**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Valarie E. Turner is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Turner was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1991 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2002. Judge Turner is assigned to the Sixth Municipal District and hears non-felony traffic, municipal code violations, and misdemeanors. Judge Turner is knowledgeable, even-tempered, and effectively manages a high-volume call with many pro se litigants.

**RAUL VEGA**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Raul Vega is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Vega was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1982 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 20002. Judge Vega is assigned to the Domestic Relations Division and hears post-decree cases. Judge Vega knows the law and is well regarded for his integrity and fine temperament.

**KENNETH J. WADAS**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Kenneth J. Wadas is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Wadas was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1975 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 1996. Judge Wadas has served as a Criminal Court Judge since 1996 and is currently a supervising judge. Judge Wadas is well regarded for his knowledge of the law, fine temperament, fairness, and efficiency in managing his courtroom and administrative duties.

**DEBRA B. WALKER**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Debra B. Walker is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Walker was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1987 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008. Judge Walker is assigned to the Domestic Relations Division. Judge Walker is highly regarded for her knowledge of the law, judicial ability, diligence, and fine temperament.

**URSULA WALOWSKI**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Ursula Walowski is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Walowski was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1993 and was elected to the Circuit Court in 2008. Judge Walowski is assigned to the Domestic Violence Division and hears felony and misdemeanor domestic violence cases. Judge Walowski treats those who appear before her with dignity and respect. Judge Walowski is well regarded for her legal knowledge, integrity, work ethic, and fine temperament.

**GREGORY JOSEPH WOJKOWSKI**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Gregory Wojkowski is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Wojkowski was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1979 and served as an Assistant and Chief Assistant Corporation Counsel for the City of Chicago before his election to the Circuit Court in 1997. Judge Wojkowski is currently assigned to the Law Division and has presided over numerous jury trials. Judge Wojkowski is hardworking and well regarded for his knowledge of the law and excellent judicial demeanor.

**FRANK G. ZELEZINSKI**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Frank G. Zelezinski is “QUALIFIED” for retention as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Zelezinski was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1983 and served as an Assistant State’s Attorney for 13 years before becoming a judge in 1996. Judge Zelezinski is assigned to the Markham Court and for the past seven years has presided over a Felony Courtroom. Judge Zelezinski is an experienced jurist well regarded for his knowledge of the law. Judge Zelezinski addressed a concern about a regular starting time for his call and explained that the arrival time of detainees determines when he starts his call.

**THE CHICAGO BAR ASSOCIATION FINDINGS  
FOR ILLINOIS APPELLATE COURT CANDIDATES**

On September 16, 2014, The Chicago Bar Association released its findings for the three candidates running to fill the Gordon, Murphy and Steele vacancies on the Illinois Appellate Court in the November 4, 2014 general election. The JEC has found **1** of those candidates **Highly Qualified**, and **2 Qualified**.

**NOTE: THE FOLLOWING IS THE FULL TEXT OF STATEMENTS OF REASONS FOR EACH APPELLATE COURT CANDIDATE.**

**FINDING FOR JUDGES OF THE ILLINOIS APPELLATE COURT**

**FOR JUDGE OF THE ILLINOIS APPELLATE COURT (GORDON)**

**SHELDON (SHELLY) A. HARRIS (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

Justice Sheldon A. Harris is “Qualified” for the office of Justice of the Illinois Appellate Court. Justice Harris was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1966 and was engaged in private practice until 2000 when he was appointed a Circuit Court Judge. In 2010, Justice Harris was assigned to the Illinois Appellate Court. Justice Harris is hardworking, experienced, and well regarded for his knowledge of the law.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE ILLINOIS APPELLATE COURT (MURPHY)**

**DAVID ELLIS (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

David W. Ellis is “Qualified” for the office of Justice of the Illinois Appellate Court. Mr. Ellis was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1993 and has experience in complex commercial litigation, legislative drafting, and appellate practice. Mr. Ellis has excellent writing skills and has authored ethical opinions, briefs, and legal memoranda used in the legislative process. Mr. Ellis is well regarded for his knowledge of the law, analytical skills, and even temperament.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE ILLINOIS APPELLATE COURT (STEELE)**

**JOHN B. SIMON (D)**

**HIGHLY QUALIFIED**

Justice John B. Simon is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Justice of the Illinois Appellate Court. Justice Simon was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1967 and had a distinguished career in government and in private practice before being appointed to the Illinois Appellate Court in 2012. Justice Simon has a passion and enthusiasm for the law and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the Appellate Court. Justice Simon is hardworking, diligent, and committed to the justice system.

**THE CHICAGO BAR ASSOCIATION FINDINGS FOR  
COOK COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT AND SUBCIRCUIT COURT VACANCIES**

On September 16, 2014, The Chicago Bar Association released the results of independent screenings for the judicial candidates seeking Cook County Circuit Court positions in the November 4, 2014 general election.

Of the 28 candidates seeking election for Circuit Court positions the JEC has found 4 of those candidates **Highly Qualified**, 21 **Qualified** and 3 **Not Recommended**.

**NOTE: THE FOLLOWING IS THE FULL TEXT OF STATEMENTS OF REASONS FOR EACH CIRCUIT AND SUBCIRCUIT COURT CANDIDATE.**

## **FINDINGS FOR COOK COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT VACANCIES**

### **FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (ARNOLD)**

**BRIDGET ANNE MITCHELL (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

Bridget A. Mitchell is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Mitchell was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1981 and has extensive civil trial practice experience. Ms. Mitchell concentrates her practice in personal injury, wrongful death and dental malpractice and is a frequent speaker at bar association continuing legal education seminars. Ms. Mitchell is hardworking and well respected for her integrity, knowledge of the law, legal ability, and outstanding demeanor.

### **FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (BURKE)**

**MARITZA MARTINEZ (D)**

**NOT RECOMMENDED**

Maritza Martinez is “Not Recommended” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Martinez was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1989 and was previously evaluated and found “Qualified.” Based on newly discovered information involving Ms. Martinez’s conduct in a court proceeding, the candidate was re-evaluated. Ms. Martinez’s poor judgment and lack of candor resulted in a “Not Recommended” finding.

### **FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (CONNORS)**

**KRISTAL RIVERS (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

Kristal Rivers is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Rivers was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1997 and engaged in private practice for approximately ten years before becoming an Assistant Attorney General. Ms. Rivers handles civil commitments of sexually violent persons and has a good background in both civil and criminal law. Ms. Rivers is passionate and enthusiastic about the justice system and possesses the requisite qualifications to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (EGAN)**

**DANIEL J. KUBASIAK (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Daniel Kubasiak is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Kubasiak was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1981 and concentrated his practice in corporate and tax matters. Judge Kubasiak was appointed to the bench in 2012 and is currently assigned to Traffic Court in the First Municipal Division. Judge Kubasiak is well regarded for his knowledge of the law, diligence, and even temperament.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (PHELPS FELTON)**

**PATRICIA O’BRIEN SHEAHAN (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

Patricia O’Brien Sheahan is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Sheahan was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1996 and was engaged in private practice as an Associate in a large law firm before becoming Associate General Counsel of the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago. Ms. Sheahan has a wide range of practice experience and supervises and handles litigation for the Rehabilitation Institute. Ms. Sheahan possesses the requisite qualifications to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (HOWSE, Jr.)**

**CAROLINE KATE MORELAND (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Caroline Kate Moreland is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Moreland was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1995 and served as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney for 14 years before becoming a judge. Judge Moreland is well respected and possesses all the requisite qualifications to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (LOWRANCE)**

**THOMAS JOSEPH CARROLL (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Thomas Joseph Carroll is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Carroll was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1988 and was appointed a judge in September 2011. Judge Carroll is currently assigned to Traffic Court and has received favorable reviews from lawyers appearing in his court. Judge Carroll has a fine temperament and possesses the legal knowledge and experience to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (McDONALD)**

**CYNTHIA Y. COBBS (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Cynthia Y. Cobbs is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Cobbs was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1988 and served as a law clerk in the Illinois Appellate Court. Judge Cobbs held a number of administrative positions in the courts before becoming Director of the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts. In 2011, Judge Cobbs was appointed a Circuit Court Judge and is currently assigned to a trial courtroom in the First Municipal Division. Judge Cobbs received favorable reviews from lawyers who have appeared before her and possesses the requisite qualifications to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (NEVILLE, JR.)**

**WILLIAM B. RAINES (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

William Raines is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Raines was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1993 and is engaged in the private practice of law concentrating in criminal defense. Mr. Raines has a wealth of life experience and is well regarded for his professionalism and even temperament.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (REYES)**

**DIANA ROSARIO (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

Diana Rosario is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Rosario was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1989 and since 1991 has served as a lawyer in the City of Chicago’s Department of Family & Support Services. Ms. Rosario’s legal experience includes: litigation management, contract negotiations, and civil rights matters. Ms. Rosario has a broad base of legal knowledge and possesses an excellent demeanor and temperament.

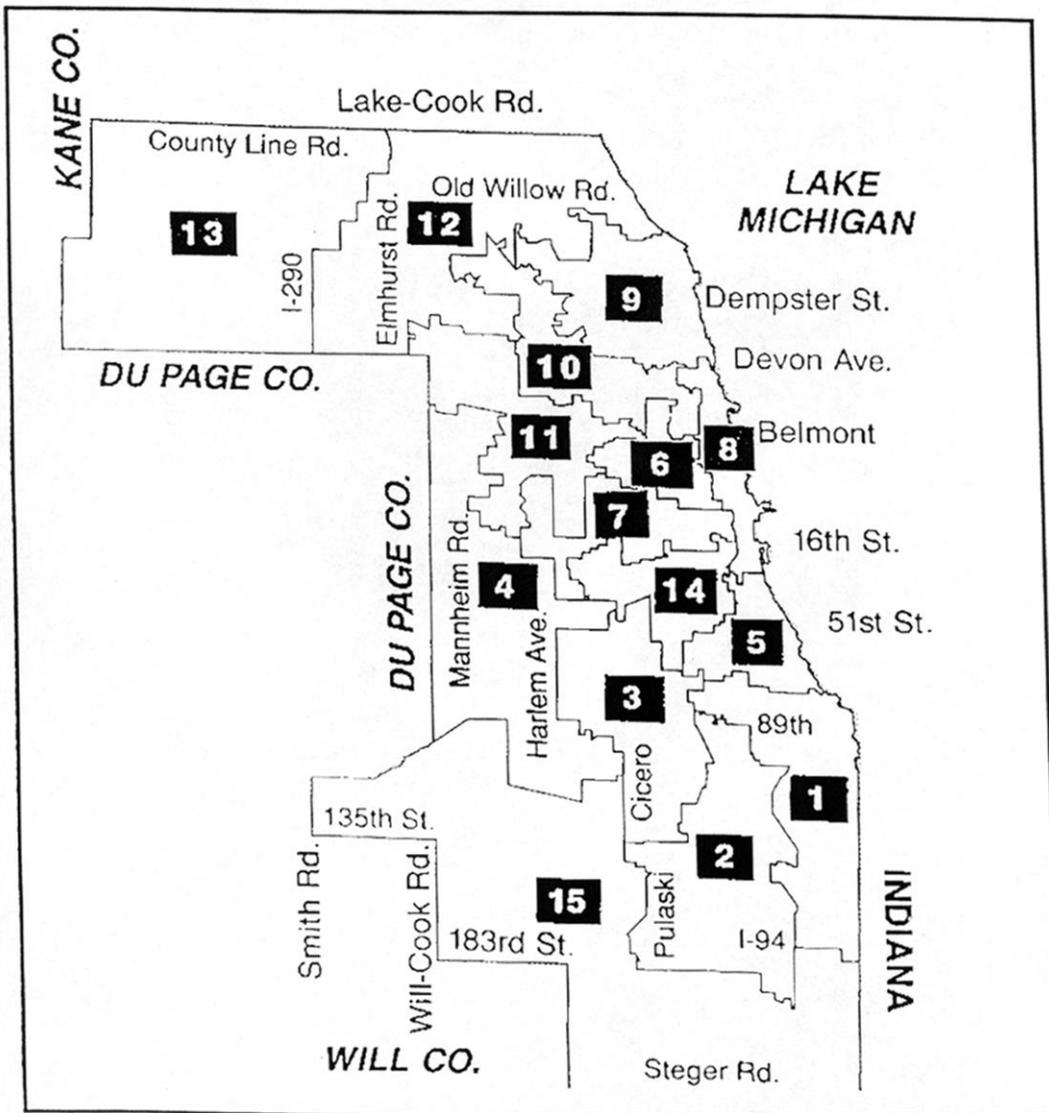
**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (HILL VEAL)**

**ANDREA MICHELE BUFORD (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Andrea Buford is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Buford was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1986 and had broad legal experience before being appointed to the bench in 2013. Judge Buford is currently assigned to Traffic Court in the First Municipal Division. Judge Buford is well regarded for her integrity, knowledge of the law, excellent demeanor, and administrative skills.

# COOK COUNTY JUDICIAL DISTRICTS



**FINDINGS FOR COOK COUNTY SUBCIRCUIT COURT VACANCIES**

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 2 – O’NEAL)**

**STEVEN G. WATKINS (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

Steven G. Watkins is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Watkins was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1991 and concentrates his practice in criminal, civil litigation, and real estate law. Mr. Watkins is well rounded in the law and has tried a number of complex murder cases. Mr. Watkins is well regarded for his knowledge of the law and legal ability. Mr. Watkins is also involved in community service.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 3 - DONNELLY)**

**TERRENCE J. MCGUIRE (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

Terrence J. McGuire is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. McGuire was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1991 and has been a solo practitioner his entire career. Mr. McGuire concentrates his practice in real estate, estate planning and probate law and served as an Administrative Law Judge for the City of Chicago for 15 years and for Cook County in the Department of Administrative Hearings for three years. Mr. McGuire is well rounded in the law and has had considerable experience as an Administrative Law Judge. Mr. McGuire possesses the requisite legal knowledge and experience to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 4 – BILLIK JR.)**

**JOHN J. MAHONEY (D)**

**HIGHLY QUALIFIED**

John J. Mahoney is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Mahoney was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1984 and is currently serving as Deputy Supervisor of the Public Corruption and Financial Crimes Unit of the Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office. Mr. Mahoney has extensive criminal trial experience and has handled many complex cases. Mr. Mahoney is well regarded for his knowledge of the law, legal ability, fine demeanor, and temperament.

**IAN BRENSON****QUALIFIED**

Ian Brenson is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Brenson was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1989 and is a sole practitioner concentrating in general litigation, business law, and appellate practice. While Mr. Brenson has limited jury trial experience, he possesses the requisite legal knowledge, temperament, and ability to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 4 – MULHERN)****JOHN MICHAEL ALLEGRETTI (D)****QUALIFIED**

John Michael Allegretti is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Allegretti was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1995 and is currently the General Counsel for the Cook County Treasurer’s Office. In addition, Mr. Allegretti has had private practice and corporate practice experience and has served as an Administrative Law Judge. Mr. Allegretti has extensive experience in tax matters and is well regarded by his peers. Mr. Allegretti possesses the depth and breadth of legal knowledge and experience to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 7 – HARDY-CAMPBELL)****ROBERT D. KUZAS (D)****QUALIFIED**

Robert D. Kuzas is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Kuzas was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1989 and is engaged in private practice concentrating in criminal law and personal injury matters. Mr. Kuzas has both criminal and civil jury trial experience and is well regarded by opposing counsel and the judges before whom he appears. Mr. Kuzas has an outstanding temperament and possesses the depth and breadth of experience to serve as a Circuit Court Judge

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 7 – TAYLOR)**

**JUDY RICE (D)**

**NOT RECOMMENDED**

Judy Rice is “Not Recommended” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Rice was admitted to practice law in 1988 and served in the Criminal Appeals Division of the Cook County State’s Attorney’s office from 1988-1989 and as an Assistant Corporation Counsel for the City of Chicago (1989-90). Ms. Rice has held a number of positions with the City of Chicago: Director of Administrative Adjudication (1990-1992); Managing Deputy Director, Department of Revenue (1992-1993); Revenue Director (1993-1995); Executive Assistant to the Mayor (1995-1996); Commissioner, Department of Water (1996-1999); Chicago City Treasurer (2000-2006); and Deputy Chief of Staff (2006-2007). In 2007, Ms. Rice joined the Harris Bank, where she is currently Senior Vice-President, Head of Community Affairs & Economic Development. Ms. Rice has had a successful career in the government and corporate sectors, but has not engaged in the practice of law since 1990. While Ms. Rice possesses a fine demeanor and temperament, her knowledge of the law and overall practice experience is limited and falls short of the CBA’s guidelines for a minimum of twelve years as a practicing attorney.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 9 – GOLDBERG)**

**MEGAN ELIZABETH GOLDISH (D)**

**HIGHLY QUALIFIED**

Megan Elizabeth Goldish is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Goldish was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1997 and is currently a supervisor in the Cook County State’s Attorney’s office at the George Leighton Criminal Court. Ms. Goldish has extensive criminal jury and bench trial experience. Ms. Goldish has also tried many murder cases and is well regarded by the judges before whom she has practiced for her knowledge of the law, legal ability, and even temperament. Ms. Goldish is actively involved in public service and various charitable organizations.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 9 –MEYER)**

**ANJANA HANSEN (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

Anjana Hansen is “Qualified” to serve as a Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Hansen was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1998 and served as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney for 12 years. During that time, she also served a four-year term as an Alderman in Evanston. Ms. Hansen is currently a solo practitioner and administrative law judge for the City of Evanston. Ms. Hansen is intelligent and possesses an excellent demeanor and outstanding people skills. Ms. Hansen has broad experience in both civil and criminal matters and although she lacks complex trial experience, she is hardworking, diligent, and possesses the requisite legal knowledge and experience to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 9 –PRESTON)**

**ABBIE FISHMAN ROMANEK (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

Abby Fishman Romanek is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Romanek was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1987 and served as an Assistant Illinois Attorney General before entering private practice. Ms. Romanek is experienced in both criminal and civil law and is well regarded by her peers for her legal knowledge and excellent demeanor. Ms. Romanek is also actively involved in

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 10 – “A”)**

**ANTHONY C. “TONY” KYRIAKOPOULOS (D)**

**HIGHLY QUALIFIED**

Judge Anthony C. “Tony” Kyriakopoulos is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Kyriakopoulos was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1990 and was appointed a Circuit Court Judge in 2010. Judge Kyriakopoulos is currently assigned to the Circuit Court’s Chancery Division. Judge Kyriakopoulos is well regarded by those who appear before him for his legal knowledge, excellent temperament, and fine demeanor.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 11 – “A”)**

**PAMELA MCLEAN MEYERSON (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

Pamela McLean Meyerson is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Meyerson was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1983 and has concentrated her practice in civil litigation, appeals and business law. Ms. Meyerson has considerable trial experience and is well regarded by her adversaries and by the judges before whom she has appeared. Ms. Meyerson is serving as chair in the Cook County Arbitration Program and is also an instructor for the University of Chicago’s Legal Clinic. Ms. Meyerson possesses all the requisite qualifications to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 12 –JORDAN)**

**JAMES PAUL PIECZONKA (R )**

**NOT RECOMMENDED**

James Pieczonka is “Not Recommended” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Pieczonka was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1983 and is currently a solo practitioner concentrating in Taxation, Real Estate and Condominium Law. Mr. Pieczonka’s practice and court experience is limited. Mr. Pieczonka held a real estate broker’s license from 2004-2007 and was actively involved as a broker during this period. The candidate owns a number of properties that are currently in foreclosure and is personally involved in several residual court actions. Mr. Pieczonka needs to gain additional practice experience and resolve these financial responsibility concerns before reapplying to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

**JAMES L. KAPLAN (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge James L. Kaplan is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Kaplan was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1971 and was appointed to the Circuit Court in 2010. Judge Kaplan is thoughtful, possesses a good demeanor, and has performed well on the bench.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 13 – IOSCO)**

**JOHN CURRY (R )**

**QUALIFIED**

John Curry is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Curry was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1978 and concentrates his practice in civil, business and commercial litigation. Prior to entering private practice, Mr. Curry served as an Assistant State’s Attorney and in the Department of Justice. Mr. Curry has complex litigation experience and is well regarded by his peers for his knowledge of the law, legal ability, and fine temperament.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 15 – DOODY JR.)**

**PATRICK KEVIN COUGHLIN (D)**

**HIGHLY QUALIFIED**

Patrick Kevin Coughlin is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Coughlin was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1996 and has served as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney for seventeen years. Mr. Coughlin is currently Deputy Chief of the State’s Attorney’s Narcotics Prosecution Bureau at the Criminal Court. Mr. Coughlin has a fine demeanor and temperament and is highly regarded for his knowledge of the law, extensive trial and court experience, and policy/legislative work.

**FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 15 – STERBA)**

**CHRIS LAWLER (D)**

**QUALIFIED**

Judge Chris Lawler is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Lawler was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1988 and practiced law for 25 years concentrating in insurance defense and plaintiffs’ personal injury work. Judge Lawler had extensive bench and trial experience before his appointment to the Circuit Court in 2013. Judge Lawler is currently assigned to a pro se litigation call and serves as a floating judge when needed in other courts. Judge Lawler is well regarded for his legal knowledge, fine demeanor and temperament, and commitment to excellence. Judge Lawler is also involved in educational and charitable organizations.



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