Green Guide
To Judicial Candidates in Cook County

The Chicago Bar Association’s Evaluations
Of Judicial Candidates Running for Office
In the March 15, 2016 Primary Election

Provided as a public service of The Chicago Bar Association
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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 (CBA) 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 CBA 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 CBA 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 April 23, 2015.

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 helps inform and educate the public about the upcoming judicial contests in the general election.

The CBA’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 July 2015. The guidelines and standards developed by the 20,000-member CBA 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, require 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 fewer 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 JEC 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 JEC resolution, to either of two hearing rooms by a blind drawing for room assignment. Typically, 12 to 15 JEC 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, questioning, and hearing confidential.
The JEC 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 JEC cannot be assured that it has uncovered all the evidence which, in the future, may lead to formal charges. Within its authority, the JEC 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 JEC 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 JEC or denying the appeal.

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

**Reporting of Findings**

The CBA 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.
THE CHICAGO BAR ASSOCIATION FINDINGS
FOR ILLINOIS APPELLATE COURT CANDIDATES

On February 19, 2016, The Chicago Bar Association released its findings for the 2 candidates running to fill the Epstein and Quinn vacancies on the Illinois Appellate Court in the March 15, 2016 primary. The JEC has found both of those candidates Highly Qualified.

NOTE: THE FOLLOWING IS THE FULL TEXT OF STATEMENTS OF REASONS FOR EACH APPELLATE COURT CANDIDATE.
FOR JUDGE OF THE ILLINOIS APPELLATE COURT (Epstein)

EILEEN O’NEILL BURKE (D)                  HIGHLY QUALIFIED

Judge Eileen O’Neill Burke is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Justice of the Illinois Appellate Court. Judge Burke was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1990. Judge Burke was elected a Circuit Court Judge in 2008 and is currently assigned to the Law Division’s Commercial Calendar. Judge Burke is highly regarded for her knowledge of civil, criminal and appellate law, work ethic, diligence, and outstanding demeanor and temperament.

FOR JUDGE OF THE ILLINOIS APPELLATE COURT (Quinn)

BERTINA E. LAMPKIN (D)                  HIGHLY QUALIFIED

Justice Bertina Lampkin is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Justice of the Illinois Appellate Court. Justice Lampkin was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1974 and served as an Associate Judge from 1987-1992; a Circuit Court Judge from 1992-2009; and was appointed to the Illinois Appellate Court in 2009. Justice Lampkin has exceptional trial experience and has made a flawless transition to the Illinois Appellate Court. Justice Lampkin is highly regarded for her knowledge of the law, work ethic, integrity, compassion, and dedication to the justice system.
BAR ASSOCIATION FINDINGS FOR
COOK COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT AND SUBCIRCUIT COURT VACANCIES

On February 19, 2016, The Chicago Bar Association released the results of independent screenings for the judicial candidates seeking Cook County Circuit Court positions in the March 15, 2016 primary election.

Of the 81 candidates seeking election for Circuit Court positions, 64 were screened by the Judicial Evaluation Committee of the CBA. The JEC has found 12 of those candidates Highly Qualified, 43 Qualified and 9 Not Recommended. The 16 candidates who declined to participate in the JEC screening process, were found automatically “Not Recommended” according to JEC governing bylaws.

One candidate was found not recommended pursuant to the rules of the judicial evaluation committee because he was a member of the committee at the time he decided to run for judicial office.

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 (Biebel, Jr.)

JOHN FITZGERALD LYKE, JR. HIGHLY QUALIFIED

Judge John F. Lyke, Jr. is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Lyke was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1994 and was appointed to the Circuit Court in 2015. Judge Lyke is currently assigned to the First Municipal District Traffic Court and also serves in the five suburban municipal districts hearing misdemeanor and felony cases. Judge Lyke is well regarded for his knowledge of criminal law and judicial demeanor.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Elrod)

SCOTT EDWARD LIPINSKI (D) NOT RECOMMENDED

Scott E. Lipinski is “Not Recommended” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Lipinski was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 2002 and currently serves as an Assistant Cook County Public Defender in the 5th Municipal District. Although Mr. Lipinski has court experience, at this stage of his career he does not possess the depth and breadth of legal knowledge and experience to effectively serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

ROSSANA PATRICIA FERNANDEZ (D) QUALIFIED

Judge Rossana Fernandez is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Fernandez was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1997. Before her appointment to the Circuit Court in 2015, Judge Fernandez had extensive civil litigation experience that included both bench and jury trials. Judge Fernandez receives high marks from lawyers for her knowledge of the law, work ethic, fine temperament and demeanor.
FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Hogan)

MICHAEL I. O’MALLEY (D)  NOT RECOMMENDED

Michael I. O’Malley is “Not Recommended” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. O’Malley was admitted to practice law in 2005 and has served as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney for 10 ½ years. Mr. O’Malley is currently assigned to the Civil Division, but has had criminal bench and jury trial experience and experience in handling financial crimes. Mr. O’Malley is a CPA and prior to his admission to the bar worked in the banking industry. Mr. O’Malley is knowledgeable and has good practice experience. The Committee believes that additional practice experience will better prepare him for service as a circuit court judge.

ALISON C. CONLON (D)  QUALIFIED

Alison Conlon is “Qualified” to serve as a Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Conlon was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 2000. Ms. Conlon clerked for a U.S. District Court Judge for one year and served as an Assistant Corporation Counsel for one year before entering private practice. Ms. Conlon is currently a litigation partner in a large law firm. Ms. Conlon is highly regarded for her integrity, legal knowledge, trial skills, and excellent demeanor. Ms. Conlon is also involved in several pro bono and public interest organizations. Ms. Conlon will be a credit to the bench.

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

ALEKSANDRA “ALEX” GILLESPIE (D)  QUALIFIED

Judge Aleksandra Gillespie is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Gillespie was admitted to practice law in 1993 and served as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney before her appointment to the Circuit Court in 2014. Judge Gillespie is currently assigned to the First Municipal Division where her assignments have included Marriage Court, Branch Courts and Traffic Court. As a judge, she hears DUI trials, suspended license cases, misdemeanors, felony preliminary hearings and bond cases. Judge Gillespie efficiently manages a high volume court call and is well regarded for her knowledge of the law, fine temperament, and fairness.
THOMAS MALONEY CUSHING

HIGHLY QUALIFIED

Thomas M. Cushing is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Cushing was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1988 and is currently Of Counsel concentrating his practice in general, business, and civil litigation. Mr. Cushing has extensive litigation experience in both criminal and civil law. Mr. Cushing is highly regarded for his knowledge of the law, legal ability, and outstanding temperament. Mr. Cushing has been involved in community activities and community service throughout his career.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Johnson)

GREGORY RAYMOND LAPAPA (D)

NOT RECOMMENDED

Gregory LaPapa is “Not Recommended” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. LaPapa was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1982 and is currently engaged in private practice concentrating in criminal law, injury law, traffic law and DUI matters. Mr. LaPapa has been the subject of numerous lawsuits for unpaid bills and several lawsuits for breach of contract. In addition, Mr. LaPapa’s license to practice law was suspended by the Illinois Supreme Court for one year from September 2001-September 2002.

SEAN S. CHAUDHURI (D)

QUALIFIED

Sean Chaudhuri is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Chaudhuri was admitted to practice law in 2001 and is engaged in the general practice of law. Mr. Chaudhuri is dedicated to the profession and also handles a number of pro bono matters. Mr. Chaudhuri has an even temperament and demeanor and possesses the minimum qualifications to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

MARK A. LYON (D)

HIGHLY QUALIFIED

Mark A. Lyon is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Lyon was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1986 and is currently serving as a Supervising Assistant Public Defender in the office of the DuPage County Public Defender. Mr. Lyon has extensive criminal trial experience which includes death penalty cases. Mr. Lyon is an expert in criminal forensics and well regarded by opposing counsel and by the judges before whom he has appeared.
CAROLYN J. GALLAGHER (D)  
VALIDATED

Carolyn Joan Gallagher is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Gallagher was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1982 and is currently a solo practitioner concentrating in real estate, litigation, and financial institution law. Ms. Gallagher has litigation and extensive appellate practice experience. Ms. Gallagher is well regarded for her knowledge of the law, legal experience, and fine temperament.

BONNIE CAROL MCGRATH (D)  
NOT RECOMMENDED

Bonnie McGrath declined to participate in the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC) screening process and, therefore, according to The Chicago Bar Association’s governing resolution for the JEC, is automatically found NOT RECOMMENDED.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Karnezis)

MARY KATHLEEN MCHUGH (D)  
VALIDATED

Mary Kathleen McHugh is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. McHugh was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1993 and is currently a litigation partner in a trial firm. Ms. McHugh has extensive trial experience in a wide array of cases in the Law, Chancery and Commercial Divisions. Ms. McHugh is well regarded by her peers for her knowledge of the law, legal ability, and excellent demeanor.

DEVLIN J. SCHOOP (D)  
VALIDATED

Judge Devlin J. Schoop is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Schoop was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1997 and clerked for a U.S. District Court Judge for two years before entering private practice. Judge Schoop was appointed to the bench in 2015 and is dedicated to the law and to the legal profession. Judge Schoop is hardworking and well regarded for his knowledge of the law, extensive legal experience, and skills.

BRIAN J. O’HARA (D)  
NOT RECOMMENDED

Brian O’Hara declined to participate in the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC) screening process and, therefore, according to The Chicago Bar Association’s governing resolution for the JEC, is automatically found NOT RECOMMENDED.
FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Love)

BRENDAN A. O’BRIEN (D)  QUALIFIED

Brendan A. O’Brien is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. O’Brien was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1996 and is a partner in a large defense firm concentrating in medical malpractice and construction law cases. Mr. O’Brien has extensive trial experience and is highly regarded by his peers for his knowledge of the law, excellent litigation skills, and outstanding demeanor.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (O’Brien)

MAUREEN O’DONOUGHUE HANNON (D)  HIGHLY QUALIFIED

Maureen O’Donoghue Hannon is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Hannon was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1991 and has extensive civil trial experience at the federal and state levels. Ms. Hannon has tried many complex cases and is highly regarded for her knowledge of the law and legal ability.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Palmer)

PAT HENEGHAN (D)  HIGHLY QUALIFIED

Patrick J. Heneghan is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Heneghan was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1983 and is currently engaged in private practice concentrating in complex litigation, antitrust, and professional malpractice. Mr. Heneghan has tried a number of complex cases involving substantial damages. Mr. Heneghan is hardworking and well regarded by his peers and the judges before whom he has tried cases for his knowledge of the law and fine temperament.

SUSANA L. ORTIZ (D)  QUALIFIED

Susana L. Ortiz is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Ortiz was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 2001 and for the past 13 years has worked as a staff attorney at the law offices of Chicago-Kent College of Law. Ms. Ortiz has extensive criminal trial experience and is well regarded by her peers for her knowledge of the law, legal ability, and outstanding demeanor and temperament.
DEIDRE BAUMANN (D)  NOT RECOMMENDED

Deidre Baumann declined to participate in the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC) screening process and, therefore, according to The Chicago Bar Association’s governing resolution for the JEC, is automatically found NOT RECOMMENDED.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Ruscitti Grussel)

JOHN E. MARSZALEK (D)  QUALIFIED

John Marszalek is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Marszalek was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1976 and is currently engaged in private practice concentrating in personal injury and general civil litigation matters. Mr. Marszalek is well regarded by his peers and by judges before whom he appears for his legal knowledge and ability. While the candidate is qualified, questions were raised about his ability to manage a high volume courtroom.

WILLIAM S. WOJCIK (D)  QUALIFIED

William S. Wojcik is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Wojcik was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1980 and has been a sole practitioner for 35 years concentrating in personal injury, medical negligence, and workers’ compensation matters. Mr. Wojcik has extensive civil trial experience and possesses the legal knowledge, ability, and demeanor to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

DANIEL PATRICK DUFFY (D)  QUALIFIED

Judge Daniel P. Duffy is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Duffy was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1995 and was appointed to the Circuit Court in 2014. He sits in the Municipal Division hearing high volume collection and tort cases. Prior to being appointed to the bench, Judge Duffy had a distinguished career as a civil litigator. He also was a hearing officer for the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District and a member of the ARDC Review Board. Apart from his legal and judicial career, he was involved as a personal guarantor in a failed business loan which was extensively litigated and the subject of negative publicity. He stated the litigation spun out of control and he has learned a lot from that difficult experience.

MONICA M. TORRES-LINARES (D)  NOT RECOMMENDED

Monica Torres-Linares declined to participate in the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC) screening process and, therefore, according to The Chicago Bar Association’s governing resolution for the JEC, is automatically found NOT RECOMMENDED.
FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Walsh)

PATRICK JOSEPH POWERS (D) QUALIFIED

Patrick J. Powers is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Powers was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1987 and is currently a sole practitioner concentrating in domestic relations and real estate matters. Mr. Powers has experience in litigation and non-litigation matters and is well regarded for his knowledge of the law, legal ability, and excellent temperament.

FREDRICK BATES (D) QUALIFIED

Frederick H. Bates is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Bates was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1983 and concentrated his practice in labor and employment law. For the last fifteen years, Mr. Bates has served as a full-time Hearing Officer for several government agencies. Mr. Bates presides over complex employment cases and other substantial matters and is well regarded for his legal knowledge and ability. Mr. Bates possesses all the requisite qualifications to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.
FINDINGS FOR COOK COUNTY SUBCIRCUIT COURT VACANCIES

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 1 - Brim)

JESSE OUTLAW (D) NOT RECOMMENDED

Jesse Outlaw declined to participate in the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC) screening process and, therefore, according to The Chicago Bar Association’s governing resolution for the JEC, is automatically found NOT RECOMMENDED.

MARYAM AHMAD (D) QUALIFIED

Maryam Ahmad is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Ahmad was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 2000 and was engaged in private practice for several years before becoming an Assistant Cook County Public Defender in 2004. Ms. Ahmad served as a trial attorney with the Cook County Public Defender’s office until 2007 when she became an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney. Ms. Ahmad is currently assigned to the Felony Trial Division at the George Leighton Criminal Court. Ms Ahmad is well regarded by her peers and adversaries for her knowledge of the law, excellent legal ability and trial skills, work ethic, compassion, and commitment to public service.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 1 - Hopkins)

ANTHONY E. SIMPKINS (D) QUALIFIED

Anthony Simpkins is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Simpkins was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1994 and worked for several years for the Lawyers Committee for Better Housing. In 1997, Mr. Simpkins became an Assistant Corporation Counsel for the City of Chicago and served as Litigation Supervisor, Senior Municipal Prosecutor in the Law Department’s Building and Land Use Litigation Division. Since 2007, Mr. Simpkins has served as Deputy Commissioner in the City of Chicago’s Department of Community Development. Mr. Simpkins is well regarded by his peers for his knowledge, legal ability, fine temperament, and commitment to public service.

RHONDA CRAWFORD (D) NOT RECOMMENDED

Rhonda Crawford declined to participate in the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC) screening process and, therefore, according to The Chicago Bar Association’s governing resolution for the JEC, is automatically found NOT RECOMMENDED.
Lisa Copland declined to participate in the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC) screening process and, therefore, according to The Chicago Bar Association’s governing resolution for the JEC, is automatically found NOT RECOMMENDED.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 2 - Savage)

Celeste K. Jones is “Not Recommended” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Jones was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1995 and has served in a variety of positions in the Cook County Public Guardian’s Office her entire career. Since 2007, Ms. Jones has served as Supervisory Attorney in the Accounts Department where her duties include: preparing and filing annual accounts, income tax returns, ensuring payment of real estate taxes, and other duties for people under the supervision of the Public Guardian’s Office. Ms. Jones’ career in public service is exemplary, however; her limited court experience coupled with her narrow area of practice would make it difficult for her to effectively serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

Chelsey R. Robinson is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Robinson was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1996 and is engaged in private practice concentrating in criminal law, divorce, and personal injury matters. Ms. Robinson has a varied practice which includes trial experience. Ms. Robinson is also involved in community and philanthropic organizations. Ms. Robinson possesses the requisite depth and breadth of experience to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

D. Renee Jackson declined to participate in the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC) screening process and, therefore, according to The Chicago Bar Association's governing resolution for the JEC, is automatically found NOT RECOMMENDED.
TRAVIS RICHARDSON (D)  

TRAVIS RICHARDSON  

Travis Richardson is “Qualified” to serve as a Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Richardson was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1997 and is a partner in the firm of Richardson & Mackoff. Mr. Richardson has extensive civil and criminal trial experience in a variety of courts. Mr. Richardson is also actively involved in community service and bar association work. The circumstances involving Mr. Richardson’s past censure and several collection/contract lawsuits were thoroughly reviewed. Mr. Richardson possesses the depth and breadth of legal experience to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 4 - Kunkle)

EDWARD J. KING  

Edward J. King is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge King was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1981 and had extensive practice experience before his appointment to the bench in 2014. Judge King’s experience includes private practice and service as an Assistant Chicago Corporation Counsel and as an Assistant Illinois Attorney General. Judge King is currently assigned to Traffic Court and is well regarded for his knowledge of the law, judicial ability, dedication to justice, and outstanding temperament.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 5 – Eadie-Daniels)

JAMEIKA MANGUM  

Jameika Mangum declined to participate in the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC) screening process and, therefore, according to The Chicago Bar Association’s governing resolution for the JEC, is automatically found NOT RECOMMENDED.

LEONARD MURRAY (D)  

LEONARD MURRAY  

Judge Leonard Murray is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Murray was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1974 and was appointed an Associate Judge in 2007. Judge Murray presides over a high volume courtroom and is well regarded for his knowledge of the law, integrity, good management skills, judicial demeanor, and fine temperament.
FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 5 - Stuart)

FREDDRENNNA M. LYLE (D)  QUALIFIED
Judge Freddrenna Lyle is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Lyle was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1980 and was appointed to the Circuit Court in December 2011. Judge Lyle has been assigned to a number of high volume courtrooms and has efficiently and effectively managed these calls. Judge Lyle has adapted well to her assignments and is qualified to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 5 - Williams)

DARYL JONES (D)  NOT RECOMMENDED
Because the candidate was an active member of the Judicial Evaluation Committee at the beginning of this election year, the committee is required to automatically find him “NOT RECOMMENDED”.

ROBIN DENISE SHOFFNER (D)  NOT RECOMMENDED
Judge Robin Shoffner is “Not Recommended” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Shoffner was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1990 and has experience in private practice and in the government and corporate sectors. Judge Shoffner was appointed to the Circuit Court of Cook County in 2014 and has served primarily in the Circuit Court’s Traffic Division. Judge Shoffner is currently assigned to the Fourth Municipal Division. Lawyers who have appeared before Judge Shoffner expressed concerns about the judge’s knowledge of the law, work ethic, fairness, and judicial temperament and demeanor.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 6 – Ponce De Leon)

EULALIA “EVIE” DE LA ROSA (D)  QUALIFIED
Eulalia De La Rosa is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. De La Rosa was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 2004 and is currently serving as an Assistant Cook County Public Defender in the Felony Trial Division. Ms. De La Rosa has extensive trial experience and is well regarded for her knowledge of the law, excellent demeanor, and commitment to public service.
FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 6 – Santiago)

RICHARD C. COOKE (D) QUALIFIED

Richard C. Cooke is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Cooke was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1992 and is a solo practitioner concentrating in real estate law, personal injury, and civil Litigation. Mr. Cooke is articulate and well regarded for his knowledge of the law, dedication, and fairness.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 6A)

ANNA LOFTUS (D) QUALIFIED

Anna Maria Loftus is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Loftus was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1998 and concentrates her practice in medical malpractice defense. Ms. Loftus has a fine demeanor and possesses the requisite legal knowledge and experience to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

EDWARD J. UNDERHILL QUALIFIED

Edward J. Underhill is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Underhill was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1984 and is currently engaged in private practice concentrating in commercial litigation, appellate practice, and arbitration matters. Mr. Underhill has extensive litigation experience in complex commercial cases and is well regarded for his legal knowledge, work ethic, and commitment to public service.

CARLOS CLAUDIO NOT RECOMMENDED

Carlos Claudio declined to participate in the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC) screening process and, therefore, according to The Chicago Bar Association’s governing resolution for the JEC, is automatically found NOT RECOMMENDED.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 7 - Burrell)

MARIANNE JACKSON (D) QUALIFIED

Judge Marianne Jackson is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Jackson was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1973 and was appointed an Associate Judge in 1997. Judge Jackson is currently assigned to the Juvenile Justice Division’s Child Protection Department. Judge Jackson effectively manages her courtroom and is well regarded for her knowledge of the law and outstanding demeanor and temperament.
FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 7 – Rivkin-Carothers)

PATRICIA “PAT” S. SPRATT (D) QUALIFIED

Patricia S. Spratt is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Spratt was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1991 and concentrates her practice in business and commercial litigation and green initiative programs. Ms. Spratt is well regarded by her peers and by the judges before whom she has appeared. Throughout her career, Ms. Spratt has been actively involved in public service work. Ms. Spratt has a fine temperament and possesses the depth and breadth of legal knowledge and experience to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

CHRISTOPHER J. STUART (D) QUALIFIED

Christopher Stuart is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Stuart was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1985 and is currently in private practice concentrating in complex litigation matters. Mr. Stuart has both trial and appellate experience and possesses the requisite qualifications to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

JENNIFER BALLARD (D) NOT RECOMMENDED

Jennifer Ballard declined to participate in the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC) screening process and, therefore, according to The Chicago Bar Association’s governing resolution for the JEC, is automatically found NOT RECOMMENDED.

MABLE TAYLOR (D) NOT RECOMMENDED

Mable Taylor declined to participate in the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC) screening process and, therefore, according to The Chicago Bar Association’s governing resolution for the JEC, is automatically found NOT RECOMMENDED.

PATRICK D. JOHN (D) NOT RECOMMENDED

Patrick John declined to participate in the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC) screening process and, therefore, according to The Chicago Bar Association’s governing resolution for the JEC, is automatically found NOT RECOMMENDED.
ROSA SILVA (D)  QUALIFIED

Rosa Marie Silva is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Silva was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 2001 and is currently serving as an Assistant Cook County Public Defender in the Felony Trial Division. Ms. Silva has had extensive criminal trial experience and possesses the requisite legal knowledge, ability, and experience to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 9 - Berman)

THOMAS PETER KOUGIAS (D)  QUALIFIED

Thomas Peter Kougias is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Kougias was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1988 and is currently engaged in private practice concentrating in criminal defense work. Mr. Kougias served as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney from 1991-2012 and has extensive criminal trial experience. Mr. Kougias is well regarded by his adversaries and the judges before whom he appears. Mr. Kougias possesses the requisite legal knowledge, experience, and qualifications to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

JERRY ESRIG (D)  HIGHLY QUALIFIED

Jerry A. Esrig is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Esrig was admitted to practice law in 1978 and has been in private practice for 35 years. Mr. Esrig has extensive experience in personal injury, commercial, and construction litigation. Mr. Esrig is well regarded by his peers and the judges he has appeared before for his knowledge of the law and legal ability. Mr. Esrig has served as an adjunct professor and NITA instructor and is involved in various civic activities.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 10 – Howard)

COLLEEN REARDON DALY (D)  QUALIFIED

Colleen Reardon Daly is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Daly was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1996 and served for 13 years as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney before entering private practice six years ago. Ms. Daly has extensive experience in handling felony, misdemeanor, and juvenile law cases. In addition, Ms. Daly has administrative law experience before the Police Review Board. Ms. Daly has a passion for the law and is well regarded for her fine temperament and knowledge of civil and criminal law.
EVE MARIE REILLY (D)  QUALIFIED

Eve Marie Reilly is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Reilly was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1997 and has served as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney for the past 17 years. Ms. Reilly has a broad range of practice experience that includes many bench trials, several jury trials, and extensive appellate experience. Ms. Reilly has argued cases in both the Illinois Appellate and Illinois Supreme Courts. Ms. Reilly has good experience and is well regarded for her knowledge of the law, extensive appellate experience, and fine temperament.

MICHAEL JOHN MALATESTA (D)  QUALIFIED

Michael Malatesta is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Malatesta was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 2002 and is currently engaged in private practice concentrating in personal injury and civil litigation matters. Mr. Malatesta has extensive trial experience and is well regarded for his legal knowledge and outstanding temperament.

RICHARD “RICK” CENAR (D)  HIGHLY QUALIFIED

Richard G. Cenar, Jr. is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Cenar was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1986 and was in private practice concentrating in criminal defense work before becoming an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney, where he has served for the past twenty-seven years. Mr. Cenar has extensive criminal trial experience and has also had civil trial experience in his earlier work involving child protection. Mr. Cenar is well regarded by his adversaries and the judges before whom he has appeared for his excellent demeanor, legal knowledge, ability, and commitment to public service.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 11 - Kelly)

MARC MARTIN (D)  HIGHLY QUALIFIED

Marc W. Martin is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Martin was admitted to practice law in 1987 and concentrates his practice in criminal law, appellate practice, and civil forfeiture. Mr. Martin has extensive trial and appellate practice experience and has authored and published several legal articles. Mr. Martin is well regarded for his knowledge of the law, legal ability, integrity, and excellent temperament.
James Di Christofano declined to participate in the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC) screening process and, therefore, according to The Chicago Bar Association’s governing resolution for the JEC, is automatically found NOT RECOMMENDED.

Catherine Ann Schneider is “Not Recommended” for the office of Associate Judge. Ms. Schneider was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1994 and is currently the Supervising Attorney for the Coordinated Advice and Referral Program for Legal Services. Prior to her current position, Ms. Schneider had varied experience in private practice and in public service law. While Ms. Schneider has an outstanding record of public service work, at this stage of her career she lacks the depth and breadth of court experience to serve as an Associate Judge.

Judge William B. Sullivan is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Sullivan was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1992 and was engaged in the solo practice of law for 22 years before his appointment in 2015 to the Circuit Court. Judge Sullivan is currently assigned to the First Municipal Division of the Circuit Court and is well regarded for his work ethic, fine temperament, and knowledge of the law.

Louis G. Apostol is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Apostol was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1980 and has 33 years of experience, most recently as Executive Director of the Property Tax Appeal Board (PTAB). Mr. Apostol has extensive practice experience and is well regarded by his peers. Mr. Apostol also served as a Judge on the Court of Claims and possesses all the requisite qualifications to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.
MARGUERITE ANNE QUINN (D)  HIGHLY QUALIFIED

Judge Margarite Quinn is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Quinn was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1986 and was appointed an Associate Judge in 2007. Judge Quinn is currently assigned to the Second Municipal District and presides over domestic violence and criminal cases. Judge Quinn has managed both civil and criminal trial calls and is well regarded for her knowledge of the law, judicial ability, and fine temperament.

JENNIFER E. BAE (D)  QUALIFIED

Jennifer E. Bae is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Bae was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1997 and is engaged in private practice concentrating in criminal defense work. Ms. Bae is an experienced practitioner and possesses all the requisite qualifications to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

FRANK J. ANDREOU (D)  HIGHLY QUALIFIED

Frank Andreou is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Andreou was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1995 and is currently engaged in private practice concentrating in personal injury, commercial and employment litigation matters. Mr. Andreou has extensive practice and trial experience and is well regarded for his knowledge of the law, legal ability, and fine temperament.

THOMAS W. FLANNIGAN (R)  NOT RECOMMENDED

Thomas W. Flannigan is “Not Recommended” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Flannigan was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1983 and is currently engaged in private practice concentrating in civil litigation matters. While Mr. Flannigan has varied court experience, at this stage of his career he does not possess the depth and breadth of legal experience to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 12 - Mathein)

JANET CRONIN MAHONEY (D)  QUALIFIED

Janet C. Mahoney is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Mahoney was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1987 and serves as an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney assigned to the Criminal Appeals Division. Ms. Mahoney has extensive appellate practice experience and is highly regarded by her peers for her knowledge of the law and excellent demeanor.
ADAM SCOTT MATHEIN (D) NOT RECOMMENDED

Adam Mathein is “Not Recommended” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Mathein was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1997 and is a partner in his own firm concentrating in insurance law and subrogation matters. While Mr. Mathein has a high volume practice with considerable experience in arbitration, his knowledge and practice experience is in a narrow field of law and his court experience is limited. It is recommended that Mr. Mathein obtain additional practice and court experience which would better equip him for service as a Circuit Court Judge.

JAMES LEONARD ALLEGRETTI (R) QUALIFIED

James L. Allegretti is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Allegretti was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1978 and is engaged in private practice concentrating in personal injury, workers’ compensation, criminal, and traffic reinstatement hearings. Mr. Allegretti is well rounded in the law 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 12 - Tristano)

CARRIE HAMILTON (D) HIGHLY QUALIFIED

Carrie E. Hamilton is “Highly Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Ms. Hamilton was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1996 and has served as Assistant United States Attorney for the past 13 years. Ms. Hamilton is currently serving as a Deputy Chief in the Public Corruption and Organized Crime Section of the U.S. Attorney’s office. Ms. Hamilton has tried a number of complex jury cases and is highly regarded for her integrity, knowledge of the law, legal ability and outstanding demeanor and temperament.

DAVID STUDENROTH (R) QUALIFIED

David Studenroth is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Studenroth was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1987 and is currently engaged in private practice concentrating in criminal matters. Mr. Studenroth has extensive trial experience and is well regarded for his knowledge of the law, legal ability, diligence, and excellent temperament.
FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 12A)

JAMES EDWARD HANLON, JR. (D)  QUALIFIED

James Edward Hanlon, Jr. is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Hanlon was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1984 and worked as an associate and partner at a large Chicago law firm concentrating in commercial litigation. In 2000, Mr. Hanlon became an equity partner at another large firm where he worked until 2007. From 2007-2009, Mr. Hanlon was engaged in the solo practice of law concentrating in commercial litigation and criminal misdemeanor matters. In 2009, Mr. Hanlon became Director of Client Services for Novus Law, LLC, where his duties included e-discovery, document review, and management analysis. Mr. Hanlon is well rounded in the practice of law and has considerable experience in complex commercial litigation matters. Mr. Hanlon has a fine temperament and possesses all the requisite qualifications to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

ALLAN W. MASTERS (D)  QUALIFIED

Judge Allan W. Masters is “Qualified” to serve as a Circuit Court Judge. Judge Masters was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1967 and was appointed to the bench in 2001-2005. Judge Masters has a fine demeanor and possesses the requisite legal knowledge and experience to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

ALEX KAPLAN (R)  NOT RECOMMENDED

Alex Kaplan declined to participate in the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC) screening process and, therefore, according to The Chicago Bar Association’s governing resolution for the JEC, is automatically found NOT RECOMMENDED.

STEVEN A. KOZICKI (R)  QUALIFIED

Steven A. Kozicki is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Kozicki was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1985 and is currently engaged in private practice concentrating primarily in criminal defense work. Mr. Koziciki has extensive jury and non-jury trial experience and is well regarded for his legal knowledge, ability, and thoughtful demeanor.
KETKI “KAY” STEFFEN (D)  

Judge Ketki Shroff Steffen is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Judge Steffen was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1991 and was first appointed to the Circuit Court in 2010. Judge Steffen served on the bench for two years and presided over traffic, civil and criminal domestic violence cases. From 2013 to November 2015, she served as an Administrative Law Judge Arbitrator for the Illinois Workers’ Compensation Commission. Judge Steffen was reappointed to the Circuit Court in 2015 and is currently assigned to the First Municipal District where she presides over forcible detainer cases. Judge Steffen is diligent and highly regarded for her knowledge of the law, judicial ability and integrity.

KEVIN MICHAEL O’DONNELL (R)  

Kevin M. O’Donnell is “Not Recommended” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. O’Donnell was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1988 and has been a solo practitioner concentrating in real estate, wills, trusts and probate matters. While Mr. O’Donnell has practiced law for 28 years, his limited court experience would make it difficult for him to effectively serve as a judge.

GARY W. SEYRING (R)  

Gary W. Seyring is “Qualified” for the office of Circuit Court Judge. Mr. Seyring was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1978 and has practiced in a small firm or as a solo practitioner for 35 years. Mr. Seyring, who is also a Certified Public Accountant, concentrates his practice in probate, estate planning, real estate, and general business matters. Mr. Seyring has an even temperament and is well regarded by his peers for his knowledge of the law. Mr. Seyring is also involved in pro bono and public service work.

FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY (Subcircuit 14 - MURPHY)  

MATTHEW LINK (D)  

Matthew Link declined to participate in the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC) screening process and, therefore, according to The Chicago Bar Association’s governing resolution for the JEC, is automatically found NOT RECOMMENDED.