



Chicago Council
OF LAWYERS
Chicago's public interest bar association

**The Chicago Council of
Lawyers Evaluation Report:
Judges Seeking Retention in
the November 2024 General
Election**

October 8, 2024

The Chicago Council of Lawyers (“Council”), in this report, releases its evaluation of the judges seeking retention in the November general election. We also include our evaluations of the candidates who won their primary election held in March 2024 and who are on the November ballot.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY FOR RETENTION CANDIDATES

The criteria for the Council’s evaluations are whether the retention candidate has demonstrated the ability to serve on the relevant court in the following categories:

- fairness, including sensitivity to diversity and bias
- legal knowledge and skills (competence)
- integrity
- experience
- diligence
- impartiality
- judicial temperament
- respect for the rule of law
- independence from political and institutional influences
- professional conduct
- character
- community service

If a candidate has demonstrated the ability to perform the work required of a judge in all of these areas, the Council assigns a rating of **Qualified**. If a candidate has demonstrated excellence in most of these areas, the Council assigns a rating of **Well Qualified**. If a candidate has demonstrated excellence in all of these areas, the Council assigns a rating of **Highly Qualified**. If a candidate has not demonstrated that they meet all of the criteria evaluated by the Council, the Council assigns a rating of Not Qualified.

As part of the evaluation process, we require candidates to provide detailed information about their backgrounds, including any complaints filed against them with the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission (“ARDC”) or the Judicial Inquiry Board (“JIB”).

In conducting these evaluations, the Council has participated in a joint investigation and interview process with the Alliance of Bar Associations for Judicial Screening (“Alliance”). The Alliance includes the following bar associations: Asian American Bar Association, Black Men Lawyers Association, Black Women Lawyers Association, Chicago Council of Lawyers, Cook County Bar Association, Decalogue Society of Lawyers, Hellenic Bar Association, Hispanic Lawyers’ Association of Illinois, Illinois State Bar Association, Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago, Puerto Rican Bar Association, and the Women’s Bar Association of Illinois.

The Council's evaluation process includes:

1. A review of a written informational questionnaire provided to the Alliance by the candidate, including details of the candidate's career and professional development and information on any complaints filed against the candidate with the JIB or the ARDC;
2. A review of the candidate's written responses to the supplemental essay questionnaire;
3. Interviews of judges, attorneys, and others with personal knowledge about the candidate, including those who have and those who have not been referred to the Alliance by the candidate, and not restricted to Council members;
4. A review of the candidate's professional written work, where available;
5. An interview of the candidate done jointly with the Alliance;
6. Review of any information concerning the candidate provided by the ARDC or the JIB;
7. A review of any other information available from public records, such as the Board of Election Commissioners, prosecutorial agencies, or substantiated media coverage;
8. An evaluation of all the above materials by the Council's Judicial Evaluation Committee;
9. Submission of the proposed evaluation and write-up to the candidate prior to its public release, to provide an opportunity for comment, correction, or reconsideration.
10. The candidate is given a reasonable period of time to submit a written appeal of the Council's rating and written findings. The appeal is a written response to concerns discussed in the proposed write-up. The appeal is reviewed by both members of the original committee and by individuals who work with the Committee exclusively for appeals. Appellate decision-making is done by consensus.

The Council places special importance on interviews with attorneys who practice before the judge, particularly those who were not referred to the Council by the candidate, and when available, interviews with litigants who have had cases in front of said judge. Most evaluations are based on information gathered and interviews held during the few months just prior to the general election.

In evaluating candidates, the Council expresses written reasons for its conclusions. Without knowing the reason for a recommendation concerning a candidate, the public cannot use the bars' evaluations intelligently to draw its own conclusions.

Retention Elections (all ballots)

Hon. Martin S. Agran—Qualified

Hon. Martin S. Agran was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1972. He was appointed to the Circuit Court in 1994 and elected to the bench the same year. Since 2011, he has been assigned to the Third Municipal District in Rolling Meadows on the civil call. His previous judicial assignments were at the Chancery Division, the Law Division, Juvenile Justice, and the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, he served as an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney, in private practice, and as a panel attorney with the Federal Defender's Office.

Judge Agran is considered to "run a tight ship" with respect and sensitivity. He displays an even temperament and strong legal intellect. He is considered fair and brings a great deal of experience to the bench.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Michael Brendan Barrett—Qualified

Hon. Michael Brendan Barrett was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1991 and elected to the bench in 2018. Since April 2024, he has been assigned to the Law Division and previously sat in Markham, the Sixth Municipal District. He was previously in private practice, in personal injury, probate and estate planning, and worker's compensation cases.

Judge Barrett is considered to have strong legal acumen and an ability to maintain control of proceedings. He is praised for his character, temperament and impartiality.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Ronald F. Bartkowicz—Qualified

Hon. Ronald F. Bartkowicz was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1965. He was appointed as an Associate Judge in 1985 and appointed as a Circuit Court judge in 1997. He was elected to the Circuit Court in 2000 and since 2001 has been assigned to the Law Division. Prior to becoming a judge, he was an attorney for the Chicago Transit Authority.

Judge Bartkowicz receives consistently positive reviews across the board. He has extensive experience, and practitioners report that he is knowledgeable about the law and enjoys resolving cases while maintaining a great judicial temperament. He is deemed a diligent, punctual, fair, respectful, impartial, and effective case manager.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Tiana Ellis Blakely—Well Qualified

Hon. Tiana Ellis Blakely was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2004. She was elected in 2018 and has served in the Sixth Municipal District in Markham since that election. Prior to becoming a judge, she worked as an Assistant Public Defender in Cook County.

Judge Blakely is widely regarded as an excellent criminal judge by both state's attorneys and defense attorneys. She is considered fair and respectful with a balanced approach. She receives praise for her courtroom management with regard to both efficiency and impartiality.

The Council finds her **Well Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Carl B. Boyd—Qualified

Hon. Carl B. Boyd was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1991. He was elected to the bench in 2012. Since 2017, he has been assigned to the Felony Division in the Sixth Municipal District in Markham, Illinois. His previous judicial assignments were in the Civil and Criminal Divisions in the Sixth Municipal District and in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, he was in private practice.

Judge Boyd is considered to have good knowledge of the law and a good temperament, and both assistant state's attorneys and public defenders describe him as fair. He is reported as someone who takes the time necessary to research the relevant law and who is not "above considering that maybe he made a mistake or might be wrong."

In 2022, Judge Boyd was charged with misdemeanor domestic battery. Although he was originally reassigned to restricted judicial duties as a result, after his criminal case was dismissed and a subsequent Judicial Inquiry Board investigation was closed, Judge Boyd was restored to the Felony Division in January 2023. Judge Boyd has been forthright in addressing questions about this incident. We recognize that the dynamics of intimate partner violence are such that a person at risk may choose not to pursue charges. The Council strongly values due process and respects the integrity of the investigations into the matter, and therefore, is not downgrading its recommendation.

The Council finds Judge Boyd **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Daniel Patrick Brennan—Qualified

Hon. Daniel Patrick Brennan was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1995. He was elected in 2006, and since 2012, he has been assigned to the Chancery Division, Mortgage Foreclosure/Mechanics Lien Section in Chicago. His previous judicial assignments were at the Sixth Municipal District

in Markham and the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, he was counsel to the Cook County Sheriff's Office.

Judge Brennan's reputation among attorneys is excellent. He is mild-mannered but exceptional at managing his courtroom and keeping the atmosphere calm and efficient. He is fair but sensitive to the needs of self-represented litigants. He is considered knowledgeable about the law and procedure. Overall, there are no issues reported with his rulings, demeanor or integrity.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Tommy Hoskins Brewer—Qualified

Judge Brewer was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1976. He was appointed in 2010 and, since 2017, has been Presiding Judge of the Sixth Municipal District in Markham, Illinois, where he previously served. Prior to becoming a judge, he was in private practice and served as a special prosecutor.

Judge Brewer is considered to be knowledgeable, hardworking, and fair. He is praised for his temperament. As Presiding Judge he is praised for his focus on reducing the backlog in the Markham courthouse and for his willingness to utilize new approaches to improve the administration of justice. For example, Judge Brewer embraces the use of administrative hearing officers to improve the adjudication of family law cases where neither party is represented by legal counsel.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Mary Margaret Brosnahan—Qualified

Hon. Mary Margaret Brosnahan was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1986. She was elected to the Circuit Court in 2000, and since 2017, she has been a Supervising Judge in the Criminal Division in Chicago (First Municipal District). Her previous judicial assignments were in the Felony Trial Division, Central Bond Court, and Traffic Court in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, she was a career prosecutor in the Cook County State's Attorney's Office.

Judge Brosnahan is considered to have a model demeanor on the bench. She is reported to treat all parties fairly and demonstrates consistency in her courtroom. Attorneys describe her as hard-working and highly prepared for court.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Jill Cerone Marisie—Qualified

Hon. Jill Cerone Marisie was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1990. She was elected to the Circuit Court in 2006 and since 2017 has served as Acting Presiding Judge of the Third Municipal District in Rolling Meadows and also sits in the Mental Health Court. Previously, she served in the Third Municipal and First Municipal Districts. Prior to becoming a judge, she worked as an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney as well as in private practice.

Judge Cerone Marisie is considered to have good legal ability, and she is described as thorough, knowledgeable, careful, and reasonable in her approach. She also gets high marks for sensitivity, character, and temperament.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Joel Chupack—Qualified

Hon. Joel Chupack was admitted to practice in 1982. Judge Chupack was elected in the 12th Subcircuit in 2018 and, since 2020, has been assigned to the Chancery Division. Prior to that, he was assigned to Eviction Court in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, he was in private practice.

Judge Chupack is considered to have good legal knowledge and ability. Lawyers noted that he is diligent and ensures he has a strong handle on the relevant factual and legal issues before ruling. He is considered to have a good judicial temperament and strong character.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Elizabeth Ciaccia-Lezza—Qualified

Hon. Elizabeth Ciaccia-Lezza was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2001. She was elected to the bench in 2018, and since 2019 has been assigned to the Fourth Municipal District. Previously, Judge Ciaccia-Lezza was in traffic in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, she was an Assistant State's Attorney at the Cook County State's Attorney Office.

Judge Ciaccia-Lezza is considered to have good legal ability and is praised for her diligence, her punctuality, and her extensive knowledge of the law and willingness to do the research required. Although some respondents raised concerns regarding her temperament, those concerns were general in nature and did not generally affect the view that Judge Ciaccia-Lezza is a qualified judge.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Michael Robert Clancy—Qualified

Hon. Michael R. Clancy was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1989. He was appointed to the Circuit Court of Cook County in 2011 and elected in 2012. Since 2017, he has been assigned to the Felony Division of the Criminal Division. His previous judicial assignments have been in the First Municipal District and Domestic Violence. Before becoming a judge, he worked as an Assistant State’s Attorney and a private criminal defense attorney.

Judge Clancy is well-regarded by most attorneys who responded to the investigation. Generally, attorneys describe him as even-keeled, but stoic, sometimes stern, and occasionally “curt.” Overall, he is considered a fair and impartial jurist who issues well-researched and well-reasoned decisions. A minority of respondents felt that he is more “state-oriented” than “defense-oriented” but that he generally has a high level of impartiality.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. H. Yvonne Coleman—Qualified

Hon. H. Yvonne Coleman was admitted to the Louisiana bar in 1981 (inactive); admitted to the Illinois bar in 1988; and admitted to the Texas bar in 2008 (inactive). She was appointed to the Circuit Court in 2017 and elected in 2018. Judge Coleman has been assigned to the Domestic Relations Division since 2023. Before becoming a judge, she was with the Illinois Attorney General, Chicago Independent Police Review Authority, and in private practice.

Although Judge Coleman is relatively new to her assignment, respondents generally had positive things to say about the judge. She is considered “professional” and “level-headed” and respondents say she manages her courtroom well. Judge Coleman appears diligent about her responsibilities and well-prepared for court.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Kevin Patrick Cunningham—Qualified

Hon. Kevin Patrick Cunningham was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1992. He was elected in 2018 and has since been assigned to the Sixth Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, he was a prosecutor for the Village of Oak Lawn and Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney, as well as in private practice.

Judge Cunningham is reportedly always well prepared, diligent, and thoughtful. He is described as good with pro se litigants. Those interviewed had nothing but positive things to say. Judge Cunningham takes a people-centered focus on access to the justice system, balancing the return to in-person court with the benefits of technology-assisted remote hearings for more routine matters, like status hearings.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for the Circuit Court to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Colleen Daly—Qualified

Hon. Colleen Daly was admitted to practice in 1996. She was elected in 2018, and since 2019, has been assigned to the Third Municipal District in Rolling Meadows. Previously, she served in traffic in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, she was a solo practitioner and an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney.

Judge Daly received high marks across the board. She is considered to have very good legal ability, and she is reported to have effectively handled a very heavy parentage call. Respondents complimented her sensitivity to bias, and she was described as “one of the best” and “amazing” in terms of character.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for the Circuit Court to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Adrienne E. Davis—Qualified

Hon. Adrienne E. Davis was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1994. She was appointed in 2017 and elected in 2018. Since that time, she has been assigned to the First Municipal District. Before becoming a judge, she was an Assistant Public Defender at the Law Office of the Cook County Public Defender.

Judge Davis is reported to have good legal knowledge and understanding of complex legal and evidentiary matters. She runs an efficient courtroom, getting through the heavy call expeditiously, while taking breaks for her staff and still affording attention to the cases. She is also reported to be calm, respectful, thoughtful in her approach to the cases before her, candid with parties regarding the strengths and weaknesses of their case, and is diligent in keeping abreast of new and novel legal developments.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Kent Delgado—Well Qualified

Hon. Kent Delgado was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1996. He was appointed to the Circuit Court in 2017 and elected in 2018. He is assigned to the Probate Division and previously served in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, he was a solo practitioner and an Assistant State’s Attorney in Cook County.

Judge Delgado is generally described as knowledgeable in probate law. He is considered level-headed and respectful in the courtroom. Respondents noted his diligence, stating that he always provides the legal basis for his decision. He is described as always punctual, prepared,

well-versed in the law and of optimal temperament. The steps he took during the first months of the pandemic and shutdown are said to exemplify his dedication to his duties, but also to the needs of the litigants.

The Council finds Judge Delgado **Well Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Daniel R. Degnan—Qualified

Hon. Daniel R. Degnan was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1995. He was elected to the bench in 2012 and since 2016 he has been assigned to the Probate Division of the Circuit Court. Previously, he served in the Domestic Relations Division and in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, he worked in private practice and in government.

Judge Degnan is praised by judges and lawyers for his work ethic, intelligence and demeanor. He is described as a “quick learner” and is praised for his courtroom management skills as well as his professional demeanor.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. John H. Ehrlich—Qualified

Hon. John H. Ehrlich was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1998. He was elected to the bench in 2012. Since 2014, he has been assigned to the County Department. Previously, he served in Foreclosure and the First Municipal District—Traffic Section. Prior to becoming a judge, he worked in the City of Chicago Law Department and in private practice handling commercial litigation matters.

Judge Ehrlich generally receives high marks for his legal knowledge and ability, with practitioners praising his thoroughness in researching the law, carefully considering all positions, and explaining the bases for his rulings. He receives universal praise for his courtroom management, judicial temperament, and sensitivity to diversity and bias.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. David Wayne Ellis—Qualified

Hon. David Wayne Ellis was admitted to practice in 1993. He was elected to the Illinois Appellate Court in 2014. Prior to becoming a judge, he was the Chief Counsel to the Speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives, served as House Prosecutor in the Blagojevich Senate Impeachment trial, as a Special Assistant Attorney General, and in private practice.

Justice Ellis is reported to be a thoughtful and well-reasoned Appellate Justice and an excellent writer. He is praised for having an even demeanor and good temperament.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Illinois Appellate Court.

Hon. Kathy M. Flanagan—Not Qualified

Hon. Kathy M. Flanagan was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1979. She was elected to the Circuit Court in 1988 and, since 2010, has been Supervising Judge of the Law Division, Motion Section. Her previous judicial assignment was in the Domestic Relations Division. Prior to becoming a judge, she was in private practice.

Judge Flanagan is nearly universally praised among practitioners for her punctuality, diligence, and legal knowledge. One respondent described her knowledge of civil procedure as “encyclopedic.”

The most significant concerns about Judge Flanagan relate to her judicial temperament and carry over from prior evaluations. While a minority of those interviewed support her and simply observe that she is stricter than other judges while managing her courtroom effectively and efficiently, a majority of those interviewed report that they have observed Judge Flanagan acting temperamentally, unprofessionally, and impatiently, with some noting that her behavior has become more erratic recently. She reportedly does not allow attorneys to argue their positions fully; refuses to accept case management orders that take into account unique circumstances of particular cases; schedules trials without regard to attorneys’ existing trial conflicts; imposes unduly severe consequences for failure to comply with rules; and, in general, lacks flexibility for matters outside of attorneys’ control.

While Judge Flanagan may have a well-intentioned desire to move cases along and clear backlogs within the Law Division, its manifestation as impatience, unprofessionalism, and disrespect to attorneys is a serious concern to the Council. This is particularly so given that these concerns have been raised for years, but Judge Flanagan does not appear to have successfully addressed them.

On balance, the Council finds her **Not Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Ellen L. Flannigan—Qualified

Hon. Ellen L. Flannigan was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1988. She was elected to the Circuit Court in 2006 and, since 2016, has been assigned to the Domestic Relations Division. Her previous assignment was in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, she was in private practice.

Interviewees characterize Judge Flannigan as patient and listening to both attorneys and the litigants, including self represented litigants. She is considered very fair and noted for her impartiality and ability to apply the law to the facts at hand, free of preconception. She is

described as punctual, diligent and “one of the strongest judges we have in the Domestic Relations Division.” Judge Flannigan has steadily improved in her years on the bench.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Beatriz A. Frausto-Sandoval—Qualified

Hon. Beatriz A. Frausto-Sandoval was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2005. She was elected in 2018 and, since 2023, has been assigned to the Juvenile Justice Division. Previously, she served in the Domestic Violence Division and in Traffic. Prior to becoming a judge, she was in private practice.

Judge Frausto-Sandoval is reported to have a good temperament. Lawyers praised her for being a quick learner who made decisions thoughtfully and handled difficult cases well. She was also praised for her integrity and impartiality.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. John Terrence Gallagher—Qualified

Hon. John Terrence Gallagher was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1988. He was elected to the bench in 2012, and, since 2014, he has been assigned to the Fifth Municipal District in Bridgeview. He was previously assigned to a misdemeanor courtroom at Branch 35 in Chicago and to the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, he was a solo practitioner and served in the U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General.

Judge Gallagher is praised for his courtroom demeanor and manages people appearing in his courtroom with “patience and grace,” especially self represented litigants. He reportedly manages his courtroom well and is constantly prepared and allows difficult issues to be fully briefed and argued. While his legal knowledge is generally considered good, some attorneys questioned his willingness to admit he is always learning. Overall, he is consistently fair and maintains an orderly and well-paced courtroom.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. William Gamboney—Qualified

Hon. William Gamboney was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1977. He was elected to the bench in 2012, and, since 2017, he has been in the Criminal Division in Chicago. His previous assignments were in the Juvenile Justice Division and the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, he was an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney and a solo practitioner.

Judge Gamboney is described as open-minded and well-prepared for hearings. He is considered principled and sensitive to bias. Judge Gamboney received mixed commentary on his courtroom demeanor, with some describing him as mild-mannered and others remarking that he becomes “annoyed” or raises his voice when apparently upset. Regardless, he is well-regarded by attorneys appearing in his courtroom and keeps educated on changes in the law. On balance, positive comments on his legal ability, fairness, and courtroom management tend to overshadow remarks that the judge can become impatient at times.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Peter Michael Gonzalez—Qualified

Hon. Peter Michael Gonzalez was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1994. He was appointed to the bench in 2017 and elected in 2018. He currently hears cases in traffic court in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, he was a solo practitioner and served as an administrative law judge in the Illinois Department of Employment Security and as an Assistant Public Defender.

Almost every attorney reported some temperament issues, especially noting that he becomes visibly frustrated and “yells.” He is otherwise considered impartial, fair and sensitive to issues of bias. He is reported to have good legal ability and works to stay informed about developments in the law. He generally maintained a well-managed, efficient courtroom. Concerns about his temperament should not be minimized, but respondents generally felt he should be retained. The judge is relatively new to the bench, which may suggest an opportunity to address concerns.

On balance, the Council finds him **Qualified** for the Circuit Court.

Hon. Ieshia Eshale Gray—Not Qualified

Hon. Ieshia Eschale Gray was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2002. She was elected to the bench in 2018 and, since 2022, has been assigned to Sixth Municipal District in Markham. Judge Gray presides over the new Sauk Village Restorative Justice Community Court. She previously served in the Fourth Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, she was an Assistant Public Defender and a Court Coordinator in the Civil Protection Division.

Judge Gray receives praise for her legal knowledge and ability, as well as her sensitivity to diversity issues and her efficient courtroom management when on the bench. However, some concerns were expressed about her work ethic in connection with the timing of her days off. While some practitioners report that Judge Gray has a good temperament and is impartial, a majority expressed serious concerns about these matters, with many noting that they would take a substitution of judge if assigned to her in the future. Several attorneys have suggested that Judge Gray personalized matters and treated them punitively after they presented positions with which she disagreed.

On balance, the Council finds Judge Gray **Not Qualified** for retention.

Hon. John Joseph Hagerty—Qualified

Hon. John Joseph Hagerty was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1990. He was elected in 2018 and has been assigned to the Second Municipal District in Skokie. Prior to becoming a judge, he was in private practice.

Judge Hagerty received high praise for his legal knowledge and ability. He is reported to be thoughtful in his legal analysis and reasoning. Lawyers also commended him for his impartiality and temperament.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Robert F. Harris—Qualified

Hon. Robert F. Harris was admitted to practice in 1991. He was appointed to the Circuit Court in 2017 and elected in 2018. Since 2023, he has been assigned to the Law Division and previously served in the First Municipal District. Before taking the bench, he served as the Cook County Public Guardian.

Judge Harris receives overwhelming praise from practitioners, including widespread praise for his legal knowledge and ability, including his willingness to research areas that are new to him. His diligence, temperament, and integrity are also widely praised.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for the Circuit Court.

Hon. Toya T. Harvey—Qualified

Hon. Toya T. Harvey was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1995. She was appointed in 2017 and elected in 2018. Since 2020, she has been assigned to the Law Division and previously served in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge she was an Assistant Public Defender.

Judge Harvey is generally considered to have good legal knowledge, and she is seen as being particularly good at settlement conferences. She is described as being very impartial and fair to both sides, and as having an excellent temperament and character.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Elizabeth Mary Hayes—Qualified

Hon. Elizabeth Mary Hayes was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1986. She was elected to the bench in 2012 and, since 2015, she has been assigned to the Fifth Municipal District in Bridgeview and previously served in the Sixth Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, she served as an

Assistant Public Defender, was a Hearing Officer in the Child Protection Division, and a staff attorney with the Illinois Guardianship & Advocacy Commission.

Judge Hayes is well regarded for her courtesy, courtroom management, legal knowledge, and preparedness for cases. She is considered respectful and impartial with an excellent grasp of the rules of evidence. There are a minority of respondents, however, who find her consistently rude with a poor temperament in domestic violence cases.

On balance, the Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Thomas Hoffman—Well Qualified

Hon. Thomas Hoffman was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1971. He was appointed to the Circuit Court in 1984 and elected in 1988. He was assigned to the Appellate Court, First District in 1993 and elected in 1994. He previously served in the Law Division. Prior to becoming a judge, he was an Assistant Corporation Counsel for the City of Chicago and was in private practice.

Justice Hoffman is well known for his intellect, preparation, and active participation from the bench. He is praised for having a strong command of the appellate record and applicable case law, while being willing to apply a common-sense approach when appropriate. Some interviewed reported a sometimes “gruff” demeanor characterized by very pointed questioning, while others described similar behavior as Justice Hoffman being “involved” or “incisive.”

The Council finds him **Well Qualified** for retention to the Appellate Court.

Hon. Cecilia A. Horan—Qualified

Hon. Cecilia A. Horan was admitted to the Illinois bar in November 1997. She was appointed in 2017 and elected in 2018. She is assigned to the Chancery Division. Before becoming a judge, she was in private practice.

Judge Horan is generally viewed as a competent judge with good ability and knowledge in her field. She displays good judicial temperament and is well-prepared.

The Council finds Judge Horan **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Carol M. Howard—Well Qualified

Hon. Carol Howard was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1986. Judge Howard was elected in 2006 and, since 2009, has been assigned to the Criminal Division. Previously, she was assigned to the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, she was an Assistant Cook County Public Defender.

Respondents were overwhelmingly positive in their assessment of Judge Howard’s legal ability, demeanor, and integrity. She is described as respectful and professional, even in “chaotic environments.” Judge Howard is considered well-prepared, capable, and effective on the bench.

The Council finds her **Well Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Lindsay Christopher Hugé—Qualified

Hon. Lindsay Christopher Hugé was admitted to practice in 1989. He was elected in 2018 and is assigned to the Traffic Division and First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, he was a career public defender with the Law Office of the Cook County Public Defender.

Judge Hugé is recognized for his fairness, thoroughness, and solid legal reasoning. He is generally considered respectful and impartial. There are some concerns about his courtroom management, particularly with regard to punctuality and attentiveness. This does not yet seem to rise to the level of impacting the quality of justice in his courtroom, but some practitioners report that it creates tension in the courtroom.

On balance, the Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Lionel Jean-Baptiste—Qualified

Hon. Lionel Jean-Baptiste was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1991. He was appointed to the bench in 2011 and elected in 2012. Since 2012, he has been assigned to the Domestic Relations Division and previously served in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, he served as the Alderman for the 2nd Ward of Evanston, Illinois, and was a solo practitioner.

Judge Jean-Baptiste is described as a “very knowledgeable” jurist with good legal ability. He is reported to be diligent with good courtroom management skills, and he is considered to be impartial and sensitive to diversity and bias issues. He is consistently praised for his temperament, with practitioners reporting that he “makes the courtroom relaxed in often tense situations”, is “very calm and understanding”, and “allows all parties to feel heard.”

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Preston Jones, Jr.—Qualified

Hon. Preston Jones, Jr. was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1994. He was appointed in 2017 and elected in 2018. He is presently assigned to the Law Division and previously served in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, he was an Assistant Public Defender.

Judge Jones is considered to have good legal knowledge, and he has shown a willingness to reconsider his rulings to reach the right result when necessary. Respondents spoke positively of his character, impartiality, temperament, and diligence.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Martin C. Kelley—Qualified

Hon. Martin C. Kelley was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1992. He was elected to the bench in 2012 and, since 2013, has been assigned to the Third Municipal Court in Rolling Meadows. He previously served in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, he was in private practice.

Judge Kelley is respected for his knowledge of the law and efforts to keep up to date on changes in the law. He handles both complex and mundane matters and handles both with care. He is overwhelmingly described as calm and courteous. Respondents consider him very fair, very impartial, and sensitive to issues of bias.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Kathaleen T. Lanahan—Qualified

Hon. Kathaleen T. Lanahan was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1993. She was elected to the Circuit Court of Cook County in 2018 and, since 2023, has presided over the Problem Solving Courts (Drug Court, Mental Health Court, and Veterans' Court) in the Fifth Municipal District. Previously, she served in the Fifth Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, she was an Assistant State's Attorney in Cook County.

Judge Lanahan is reported to be well-versed in the law and to have an even-keeled and level-headed demeanor. She is praised for her diligence and efficient management of a high-volume courtroom.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Kimberly Dionne Lewis—Qualified

Hon. Kimberly Dionne Lewis was admitted to the Illinois bar in 2001. She was elected in 2012, and, since 2014, has been assigned to the Child Protection Division of the Juvenile Justice and Child Protection Department. She was previously assigned to the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, she was in private practice and had served as an Administrative Law Judge and an Assistant State's Attorney.

Judge Lewis understands the legal issues well, keeps abreast of new laws, and gives rulings that are well-reasoned. She is well-respected for her knowledge of the JCA and work ethic. She is considered even-tempered, sensitive to bias and diligent.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Stuart Fredric Lubin—Well Qualified

Hon. Stuart Fredric Lubin was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1974. He was appointed in 1991 and elected in 1994. Since 1991, he has been assigned to the Juvenile Justice Division and previously served in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, Stuart Lubin was a career Assistant Cook County Public Defender.

Judge Lubin is regarded as an excellent jurist with very good legal ability. He is praised for his courtroom management skills, efficiently running court calls. He is reported to have a good temperament and to be helpful, patient, and respectful of all parties. He is praised for his integrity and impartiality.

The Council finds him **Well Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Aicha Marie MacCarthy—Well Qualified

Hon. Aicha Marie MacCarthy was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1997. She was elected to the bench in 2012 and, since 2013, has been assigned to the Probate Division. Previously, she served in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, she was a solo practitioner and worked in government, at the Chicago Housing Authority and at the Chicago Department of Law.

Judge MacCarthy is considered to have excellent legal knowledge and ability. She is well-prepared and respected for direct and clear decisions. The issues in her courtroom can be complex and emotionally difficult, but she is adept at handling sensitive situations and known for treating everyone patiently, fairly, and with respect.

The Council finds her **Well Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Lisa Ann Marino—Not Qualified

Hon. Lisa Ann Marino was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1988. She was elected in 2012 and, since 2016, has been assigned to the First Municipal District as well as the Mortgage Foreclosure Section of the Chancery Court. Previously, she served in the Juvenile Justice Division. Prior to becoming a judge, she was a solo practitioner and an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney.

Many respondents raised concerns about Judge Marino's legal ability, character, temperament, and diligence. These reports vary significantly from the investigation conducted in 2018, when

Judge Marino was comparatively newer to her assignment in the Housing Section, and the Council found her qualified for retention. Complaints include repeated legal errors, anti-defendant bias, shouting from the bench, unpreparedness, and arriving late to the bench or taking excessive time to make decisions.

Given the breadth and volume of these concerns, the Council finds her **Not Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Diann K. Marsalek—Qualified

Hon. Diann K. Marsalek was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1990. She was appointed in 2011 and elected in 2012. Since 2021, she has served as Supervising Judge in the Traffic Section of the First Municipal District and previously served in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, she worked in the Illinois Attorney General’s Office as a litigator and a policy advisor.

Judge Marsalek is considered to have good courtroom management skills and to be fair and respectful to all parties. She is reported to be exceptionally knowledgeable about her area of law and is reported to be well prepared.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Thomas Francis McGuire—Qualified

Hon. Thomas Francis McGuire was admitted to practice in 2000. He was elected in 2018 and since 2019 has been assigned to the Third Municipal District in Rolling Meadows. Prior to becoming a judge, he was a solo practitioner, an Assistant State’s Attorney, and an attorney with the Office of the Chief Judge.

All interviewees had positive comments regarding his legal knowledge and abilities. He grasps complex issues well and is organized and prepared. Other judges seek his guidance. He is good with self represented litigants, exercising care and patience. Interviewees noted that Judge McGuire has worked to become more proficient with technology in his courtroom.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Michael B. McHale—Qualified

Hon. Michael B. McHale was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1991. He was elected in 2006 and, since 2013, has been assigned to the Criminal Division and previously served in the Domestic Violence Division. Prior to becoming a judge, he served as an Assistant State’s Attorney.

Judge McHale is reported to run a controlled and efficient courtroom. Public defenders report some prosecution bias in his courtroom but ultimately consider him fair.

The Council finds Judge McHale **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Scott D. McKenna—Well Qualified

Hon. Scott D. McKenna was admitted to the bar in 1996. He was elected in 2018 and, since 2023, has been assigned to the Law Division. Previously, he served in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, he was in private practice.

Judge McKenna is generally well-regarded as a professional, ethical judge, who runs a courteous, well-managed courtroom. He is prepared, knowledgeable and effective. Many respondents consider him to be “one of the best.” Overall, respondents offered high praise for this judge in all aspects of judicial qualifications.

The Council finds him **Well Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Michael T. Mullen—Well Qualified

Hon. Michael T. Mullen was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1981. He was elected in 2012 and, since 2013, has been assigned to the Chancery Division. Previously, he served in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, he was in private practice and had served as a U.S. Attorney and in the Illinois Attorney General's Office.

Judge Mullen is described as a smart, kind, and well-organized judge. He is even-tempered and conducts his courtroom with patience and preparation. He is reported to be sensitive to issues of bias and good at maintaining order in his courtroom without losing his patience or becoming unkind. Feedback on Judge Mullen is uniformly positive.

The Council finds him **Well Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. James Patrick Murphy—Qualified

Hon. James Patrick Murphy was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1995. He was elected in 2006 and, since 2018, has been assigned to the Probate Division. He previously served in the Domestic Violence Division and in Traffic. Prior to becoming a judge, he was an Assistant State’s Attorney.

Judge Murphy is considered knowledgeable about the law and well-prepared for his cases. Attorneys consider him thorough and his opinions well-researched. He is described as respectful with an even temper and a well-managed courtroom.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. David R. Navarro—Well Qualified

Hon. David R. Navarro was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1993. He was appointed to the Appellate Court, First District, in 2023. He was previously appointed to the Circuit Court in 2017 and elected in 2018. Prior to becoming a judge, he served in the Illinois Attorney General's Office, as an Assistant State's Attorney, and a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney.

Justice Navarro is reported to be a fair and knowledgeable judge. He is considered to have a fair and balanced approach, ensuring all parties receive equal treatment under the law. We note that he is being evaluated for retention to the Circuit Court, the position to which he was elected, and not the Appellate Court to which he is presently assigned.

The Council finds him **Well Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Karen Lynn O'Malley—Qualified

Hon. Karen Lynn O'Malley was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1992. She was elected to the bench in 2012 and, since 2013, has been assigned to the Probate Division. Previously, she served in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, she was in private practice, served as an Assistant State's Attorney, and taught trial practice at Northwestern University School of Law.

Judge O'Malley is considered to have good knowledge of the law and procedures in her current assignment. She served as a faculty liaison for the 2018 Judicial Education Conference where she worked on the curriculum for a course addressing implicit bias. She is reported to be fair to all parties before her. She is praised for being well prepared.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Shannon P. O'Malley—Not Qualified

Hon. Shannon P. O'Malley was admitted to the bar under the name Phillip Spiwak in 1992; he changed his name in 2012. He was elected to the bench in 2018 and, since 2019, has been assigned to the Child Protection Division. He previously served in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, he was in private practice.

Judge O'Malley's legal knowledge and ability are considered average, although a minority of respondents felt it was below average with many attorneys questioning his ability to make well-reasoned decisions. Judge O'Malley is considered sensitive to bias and respectful to everyone, particularly the minors in his courtroom. However, there are many complaints about his courtroom management, which has not improved in his years on the bench. Delays in his courtroom can mean that a child remains in a group home, psychiatric hospital, or other placement longer than necessary.

The Council finds him **Not Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Ramon Ocasio III—Qualified

Hon. Ramon Ocasio III was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1989. Justice Ocasio was appointed to the Appellate Court, First District in 2023. He was previously elected to the Circuit Court in 2006 and until 2023 served in a felony courtroom in the Fourth Municipal District in Maywood and in Central Bond Court. Prior to becoming a judge, he served as a Supervisor in the Public Defender's Office in the Illinois Attorney General's Regional Consumer Fraud Office.

The overwhelming consensus among attorneys interviewed regarding the judge is that he has a solid command of the law, listens to all sides, and is open to arguments. His rulings are considered sound, reasoned, and fair. He is consistently described as compassionate, respectful, and patient. There were no complaints about his integrity, work ethic, or courtroom demeanor. . We note that he is being evaluated for retention to the Circuit Court, the position to which he was elected, and not the Appellate Court to which he is presently assigned.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Appellate Court.

Hon. Erika Lynn Orr—Well Qualified

Erika Lynn Orr was admitted to practice in 1998. She was elected in 2018 and has been assigned to the Domestic Relations Division in the Sixth Municipal District in Markham. Prior to becoming a judge, she was a solo practitioner.

Judge Orr is consistently described as knowledgeable about the law and consistent in applying the law to facts before her. Many respondents note that her background in finance serves her well in domestic relations. She is praised for her sensitivity to cultural issues that arise in family matters and ensures self-represented litigants in her courtroom understand the process without ever crossing into legal advice or advocacy. She is considered to have the highest integrity and to be diplomatic, sometimes stern, but always patient and fair.

The Council finds her **Well Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Paul Steven Pavlus—Qualified

Judge Pavlus was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1993. He was elected to the bench in 2012. Since 2014, he has had dual assignments to the First and Second Municipal Districts. Prior to becoming a judge he served as an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney.

Judge Pavlus is considered to have good legal ability and temperament. He is praised for his ability to move his call efficiently and how respectful he is to all parties who appear before him.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Linda Perez—Qualified

Hon. Linda Perez was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2001. She was elected in 2018 and is assigned to the Juvenile Justice Division in the Fifth Municipal District in Bridgeview. Prior to becoming a judge, she served in the Cook County Public Defender's Office.

Attorneys who appear before Judge Perez are mixed in their opinions of her performance on the bench. Although no-one expressed concerns about her legal knowledge, there is a divide in opinions about her temperament and impartiality. Particularly, there are concerns from some attorneys about how she treats parents of the juveniles in her courtroom and whether she is sufficiently sensitive to issues of bias. However, the balance of comments were generally positive with at least one respondent noting that she takes her role quite seriously which may indicate a willingness to address the concerns.

On balance, the Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Marian E. Perkins—Qualified

Hon. Marian E. Perkins was admitted to practice in 1987. She was appointed in 2017 and elected in 2018. She is assigned to the Chancery Division/Mortgage Foreclosure Section. Prior to becoming a judge, she was a solo practitioner and a trial advisor at the University of Chicago Mandel Clinic Intensive Trial Techniques Course.

Judge Perkins has good knowledge of the law, and she has become skilled and knowledgeable in her specialized court and the issues it presents. Lawyers gave her high marks on sensitivity to diversity and lack of bias, temperament, and character.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Clare J. Quish—Qualified

Hon. Clare J. Quish was admitted to the bar in 2000. She was appointed in 2016 and elected in 2018. Since 2021, she has been assigned to the Chancery Division and previously served in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, she was in private appellate practice and an adjunct professor at Loyola University Law School.

Judge Quish is considered to have very good legal knowledge and is praised for her professionalism. She is reported to listen to both sides and is helpful to litigants, making an effort to understand the law and the facts. A minority of respondents noted a reluctance to make "tough decisions," but the majority of respondents found her professional and knowledgeable.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Cynthia Ramirez—Qualified

Hon. Cynthia Ramirez was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1990. She was elected in 2012 and since 2014 has been assigned to the Juvenile Justice Division. She was previously assigned to the Domestic Violence Division and to the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, she served as an Assistant Public Defender, as an administrative law judge with the Illinois Department of Human Services, and with the Illinois Department of Public Health, and has been in private practice.

Judge Ramirez is considered to have good legal ability with some respondents noting that her legal ability continues to improve. She is known for running a smooth and efficient courtroom. While she is considered fair and sensitive to bias, some attorneys feel she can become a little impatient. Although she has become more even-tempered on the bench, there remains room for improvement.

The Council finds her for **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Erica Lorraine Reddick—Qualified

Hon. Erica Lorraine Reddick was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1991. She was appointed in 2010 and elected in 2012. She was elected to the bench in 2012. Since 2013, she has been assigned to the Criminal Division and was previously assigned to traffic and the Child Protection Division. Prior to becoming a judge, she was an Acting Chief Assistant Cook County Public Defender and an Assistant Public Defender.

Judge Reddick is reported to be a diligent judge with a calm but firm demeanor and excellent legal ability. She is praised not only for her intellect, but also for always being on time and being respectful of the attorney's time.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Mary Colleen Roberts—Qualified

Hon. Mary Colleen Roberts was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1989. She was elected in 2006 and since 2021 has been assigned to the Law Division. Previously she was assigned to the Domestic Relations Division, Criminal Court Division, Access to Community Treatment Court and the Juvenile Justice Division. Prior to becoming a judge, she was a social worker and then served as an Assistant State's Attorney. She has also served as a hearing officer for the Cook County Circuit Court and an Assistant Corporation Counsel for the City of Chicago.

In 2018, the Council found Judge Roberts Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court, based on the following evaluation:

Judge Roberts is considered to have very good legal ability. Her rulings are reported to be thoughtful and thorough. She understands the relevant law and is praised for how she applies the law to the facts of the case. She has an excellent temperament and is well respected for her treatment of litigants unrepresented by legal counsel. Judge Roberts has good court management skills and runs her courtroom both efficiently and fairly. Before being assigned to her current call, Judge Roberts helped plan and was the founding judge for the Access to Community Treatment Courtroom 201 at the Leighton Criminal Courts Building, where she received praise for her problem solving abilities in this community treatment diversion court.

In 2024, Judge Roberts fully participated in the evaluation process, but the Alliance did not conduct a new investigation. Her 2024 application did not raise any new issues.

The Council finds Judge Roberts **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Joanne F. Rosado—Qualified

Hon. Joanne F. Rosado was admitted to practice in 2001. She was appointed in 2017 and elected in 2018. She is assigned to the Criminal Division in Chicago and previously served in the Juvenile Justice Division. Prior to becoming a judge, she was an Assistant Cook County Public Defender.

Judge Rosado is considered to have good legal ability and temperament. She is praised for her deep knowledge of the relevant law, her integrity, and for being fair to all parties.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Stephanie D. Saltouros—Qualified

Hon. Stephanie D. Saltouros was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1996. She was appointed in 2016 and elected in 2018. Since 2024, she has been assigned to the Law Division and previously served in the Domestic Violence Division and First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, she was a solo practitioner and an Assistant State's Attorney in Cook County.

Judge Saltouros is in a new judicial assignment but has been considered to have a professional demeanor and good legal ability in prior evaluations. Respondents for this evaluation were generally positive, describing her as respectful and patient. She is considered “pragmatic” in her application of the law and well-prepared. She runs her courtroom smoothly.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Beatriz Santiago—Qualified

Hon. Beatriz Santiago was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1996. She was elected to the bench in 2012 and, since 2017, has been assigned to the Third Municipal District in Rolling Meadows and serves in the Restorative Justice Community Court in Avondale. Previously she was in misdemeanor branch courts and traffic. Prior to becoming a judge, she served as an Assistant Cook County Public Defender and in private practice.

Judge Santiago is considered to be very knowledgeable in the law with an excellent work ethic. She is said to display the highest character and an even, focused temperament. There are no issues reported about her courtroom management.

The Council finds Judge Santiago **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Regina Scannicchio—Well Qualified

Hon. Regina Scannicchio was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1989. She was elected to the bench in 2012, and, since 2022, has been Presiding Judge of the Domestic Relations Division, where she was previously assigned. Prior to becoming a judge, she was in private practice.

Judge Scannicchio is considered a dedicated and knowledgeable jurist, with an excellent courtroom demeanor. She is described as approachable and engaged as Presiding judge, as well as fair and considerate in court.

The Council finds her **Well Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Debra A. Seaton—Qualified

Hon. Debra A. Seaton was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1986. She was appointed in 2017 and elected in 2018 and, since 2021, has been assigned to the First Municipal District Housing Section. She was previously assigned to the Sixth Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, she served in the Law Office of the Cook County Public Defender.

Judge Seaton generally gets high marks for her legal ability. Although some respondents raised questions about her temperament and impartiality, any issues in that regard do not appear to be substantial or significant enough to raise questions regarding her qualifications.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for the Circuit Court.

Hon. James Shapiro—Qualified

Hon. James Shapiro was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1985. He was appointed between 2007 and 2012 and then elected in 2018. He has been assigned to the Domestic Relations Division

since 2018. Prior to becoming a judge, and in between his judicial service, he was a solo practitioner and a U.S. Attorney.

Judge Shapiro is generally considered knowledgeable and fair. He is described as even-tempered and respectful and empathetic toward self-represented litigants. Respondents generally consider him an asset to the bench.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Athanasios (Tom) S. Sianis—Well Qualified

Hon. Athanasios (Tom) S. Sianis was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2004. He was elected in 2018, and, since 2021, he has been Supervising Judge of the Traffic Division and previously served in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, he was a Special Assistant Attorney General and an Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney.

Judge Sianis is very well respected by his colleagues and attorneys. He appears to value ongoing education, not simply in case law, but also in case management, diversity, and access to justice. His rulings are characterized as fair and well-reasoned, and he is described as both patient and exemplary. Respondents remarked that he takes his role as judge seriously and is an excellent judge.

The Council finds him **Well Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Rosa Maria Silva—Qualified

Hon. Rosa Maria Silva was admitted to practice in 2001. She was elected in 2018 and, since 2022, has been assigned to Domestic Relations. Previously, she served in the First Municipal District and in the Traffic Division. Prior to becoming a judge, she was an Assistant Public Defender in both Cook County and Will County, and also worked in private practice.

Judge Sliva is generally considered to be knowledgeable, prepared, and sharp. She is universally praised for her judicial temperament, with interviewees noting that she treats those before her respectfully and fairly. She is also praised for her diligence, impartiality, integrity, and character with no concerns being raised about her sensitivity to bias and diversity.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for the Circuit Court.

Hon. Maura Slattery Boyle—Qualified

Hon. Maura Slattery Boyle was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1993. She was elected in 2000 and, since 2018, has been in the Law Division. Previously, she was assigned to the Criminal Division,

First Municipal District and the Traffic Division. Prior to becoming a judge, she was an Assistant State’s Attorney and also worked at the City of Chicago’s Department of Law.

Judge Slattery Boyle is considered by most lawyers interviewed to have good knowledge of the law, but a few respondents say more nuanced or complicated legal issues are difficult for her. While most respondents consider her demeanor calm and appropriate, several disagree.

The Council had significant concerns about Judge Slattery Boyle’s evidentiary rulings, appellate reversals and demeanor toward defendants while she served in the Criminal Division. However, after balancing those concerns with the judge’s reassignment to the Law Division in 2018, and positive reports from a number of lawyers, the Council finds Judge Slattery Boyle qualified.

On balance, the Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Kathryn M. Vahey—Qualified

Hon. Kathryn M. Vahey was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1998. She was elected in 2018 and, since 2019, has been assigned to the Juvenile Justice Division. Previously, she was assigned to the Traffic Division. Prior to becoming a judge, she worked as an Assistant Public Defender in the Cook County Public Defender’s Office.

Judge Vahey is considered to have excellent legal knowledge and reportedly takes the time to research complex issues and stay up to date on developments in the law. She is “not only personable, but impartial” and is reported to treat each child who appears before her as an individual.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. James Michael Varga—Qualified

Hon. James Michael Varga was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1978. He was elected in 1994 and, since 2002, has been assigned to the Law Division. Previously, he was assigned to the First Municipal District and the Traffic Division. Prior to becoming a judge, he was a supervisor in the Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office, as well as in private practice.

Judge Varga is considered to have very strong legal knowledge. He is praised for his thorough research and described as a legal scholar. Lawyers report that he does a good job on complex matters and is fair to all sides. Although previously criticized for his temperament, Judge Varga reports that he has taken action to remedy this perceived shortcoming and several respondents state that his temper has improved.

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Andrea M. Webber—Qualified

Hon. Andrea M. Webber was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2002. She was elected in 2018 and, since 2021, has been assigned to the Domestic Relations Division. Previously, she served in the First Municipal District. Prior to becoming a judge, she was an Assistant Public Defender at the Cook County Public Defender’s Office and in private practice.

Judge Webber is reported to have good legal ability and knowledge, with her comfort level and knowledge of the law reportedly improving in the years since she was elected. She receives uniformly high marks for her sensitivity to bias and diversity, diligence, punctuality, character, impartiality. She receives particularly high praise for her judicial temperament, with one practitioner observing that “[h]er temperament is perfect for the bench.”

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Arthur W. Willis—Qualified

Arthur W. Willis was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1994. He was elected to the bench in 2018. Since August 2021, he has served as a Felony Trial Judge in the Criminal Division of the Circuit Court of Cook County. Previously, he was in the Pretrial Division and the Traffic Division. Prior to becoming a judge, he was an Assistant Public Defender in Cook County.

Judge Willis receives positive reports for his legal knowledge and ability. He is also praised for his character, integrity, and temperament. He is reported to command respect and give it to those in his courtroom, though he reportedly can be “strict.”

The Council finds him **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. Jeanne Marie Wrenn—Qualified

Hon. Jeanne Marie Wrenn was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2003. She was appointed in 2018 and elected later that year. She is presently assigned to the Domestic Violence Division. Prior to becoming a judge, she was general counsel and an Ethics/Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) officer, as well as serving in the Office of the State's Attorney.

Judge Wrenn is reported to have strong legal knowledge and ability. She is praised for her initiative in creating the first Domestic Violence Mental Health Diversion Call in the country. She is generally described as having a calm and patient demeanor.

The Council finds her **Qualified** for retention to the Circuit Court.

Hon. E. Kenneth Wright, Jr.—Qualified

Hon. E. Kenneth Wright, Jr. was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1977. He was appointed in 1994 and elected the same year. Since 2003, he has served as Presiding Judge of the First Municipal District. Previously, he was assigned to traffic court in the First Municipal District and the Probate Division. Prior to becoming a judge, he was in private practice as a solo practitioner.

Presiding Judge Wright is praised generally for his extensive legal knowledge and ability. He is considered a strong leader in the division, diligent, and even-tempered. In the courtroom, he is also considered respectful, impartial, and well-prepared.

It was recently reported that Judge Wright claims a senior homestead tax exemption on a residence in Will County, Illinois, while maintaining residency in Cook County for purposes of meeting residency requirements to be a judge of the Circuit Court of Cook County. Judge Wright fully participated in the Alliance's investigation process concerning this matter, and reported that he has corrected his tax exemption status.

Judge Wright's forthright handling of the matter, coupled with a strong history of professionalism on the bench, leads the Council to find him **Qualified** for retention.