



2020 Judicial Retention Questionnaire

John Michael Allegretti Cook County Circuit Judge

1. State the main reason why voters should return you to the bench.

I am asking the voters to retain me because I have a proven track record of being an excellent good judge. Having won my primary election, the Illinois Supreme Court appointed me to the judiciary in May, 2014. From the beginning, I have always demonstrated the highest integrity, a great temperament, freedom from bias and sound legal knowledge. I make fair, legally supported, and informed decisions. I treat all litigants, attorneys, and participants with respect, dignity and kindness.

Outside the courtroom, I actively participate and volunteer in bar associations, teaching, community activities, charitable causes, legal education, mentoring, and outreach programs to improve the legal profession, judiciary and our community. This active engagement translates into a more personal and trusting relationship between the judiciary and the people it serves.

All of the major legal bar associations have repeatedly found me highly recommended, recommended and/or qualified. In 2014, the Chicago Tribune endorsed me, stating, "He is well regarded and possesses the depth and breadth of legal knowledge and experience to serve as a Circuit Court Judge."

The Chicago Counsel of Lawyers found:

Judge Allegretti was elected to the bench in 2014, and now sits in the First Municipal District, Non-Jury Civil Section. Before becoming a judge, John Allegretti served as General Counsel to the Office of the Cook County Assessor's Office, as a hearing officer for the Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board, as a Cook County Assistant State's Attorney doing civil rights and tort litigation defense work, and in private practice doing domestic relations and bankruptcy work.

Judge Allegretti is generally praised for his substantive knowledge of the law and patience in managing a call that includes a substantial number of litigants unrepresented by legal counsel. He is considered to have a calm demeanor and is reported to treat litigants fairly and with respect. The Council finds him Qualified for retention to the Circuit Court.

2. What actions have you taken as a judge of which you are most proud?

I am proud that I have earned a reputation as being a very fair and competent judge, who seeks feedback and constructive criticism from stakeholders, in order to improve courtroom procedures and efficiencies.

I am proud of my contributions to improve the judiciary. These include: teaching at the Illinois Supreme Court Judicial College; mentoring new judges, training new judges; and revising and updating the Court's Civil Section Judge's Bench Book.

As set forth above, I am proud of my ongoing community engagement and contribution to the legal community.

3. Name and describe one change you would make in the Illinois court system.

Having practiced in both federal court and state court, prior to becoming a judge. In my opinion, the Illinois Court System would benefit from implementing technology similar to that used in the Federal Court System.

The Pandemic has resulted in the implementation and reliance on technology in the court system. For example, Circuit Court of Cook County has secured "Zoom" licenses, enabling attorneys and litigants to participate in proceedings remotely. This type of technology results in greater efficiencies for attorneys, litigants and the courts. It is especially useful for routine matters.

Utilizing available technology, the Illinois Court System could increase access and efficiency by implementing a unified statewide record keeping system, similar to the Federal Court's "Racer/Pacer" record system. Easy access to court records is paramount to increasing the court's efficiency. The ongoing Pandemic has clearly demonstrated the need for a unified record system, which would permit easy remote electronic access to court records.

4. One prominent Illinois judicial evaluation survey asks attorneys to evaluate candidates on Integrity, Impartiality, Legal Ability and Temperament. Critique yourself in these four areas as to how you personally approach your job as a judge?

Integrity

I have unquestionable integrity, an essential characteristic for a judge. Both on the bench and in my personal life, I continuously strive to always show respect, sensitivity and understanding to all who I encounter.

Impartiality, Objectivity and Fairness

As judge, I am impartial, objective and fair. These are fundamental characteristics of a good judge. While raising nine children, my parents managed to be objective and impartial. As a parent of two

children, I learned to listen before dispensing advice or answering questions. I have learned lessons of patience, objectiveness and impartiality. I value the importance of kindness, tolerance, listening, and withholding judgment until all the facts are known. These are characteristics of a good person and are especially important attributes for a good judge.

Legal Ability

I keep apprised of changes in the law and procedure to ensure that I have the necessary legal knowledge to make fair, legally supported, and informed decisions. I have practiced in the public and private sectors. I have litigated cases in federal court, state court and before administrative agencies. As a college professor, I taught business law and management to a diverse student body. My well-rounded experience translates to me being a more effective judge. Prior to being elected to the judiciary, my professional experience includes the following:

- **Administrative Law Judge/ Hearing Officer for the Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board;**
- **Assistant Cook County State's Attorney in the Civil Actions Division;**
- **General Counsel to the Cook County Assessor;**
- **General Counsel to the Cook County Treasurer;**
- **Corporate Counsel – Napleton Automotive Group;**
- **Private Practitioner; and**
- **College Professor.**

Temperament

In addition to being punctual, prepared, and patient, I have a very good temperament, effective communication skills, and proven court management skills. These attributes help ensure that all litigants, attorneys, and participants who appear before me are treated with respect, dignity, and kindness.