



Illinois Civil Justice League

ICJL 2018 Judicial Retention Questionnaire

**Colleen F. Sheehan
Cook County Circuit Judge**

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

I am a dedicated jurist with a good work ethic. In addition to my judicial duties I volunteer to serve on the board of directors of the Illinois Judicial College. I am passionate about providing quality continuing legal education for the judiciary and its partners. Additionally I consistently work towards finding ways to improve the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

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

I have designed and lead an initiative to create a Restorative Justice Community Court in Cook county. This court seeks to repair the harm from crime through defendant/victim circles and community engagement.

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

Create and fund innovative programs that help improve trust with the public and reduce reliance on incarceration. Provide more procedural justice and race and racism training for judges.

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 believe I have high personal integrity. I credit my upbringing in shaping my standards of integrity. Adherence to judicial ethics ensures that my professional standards match my personnel standards.

Impartiality. I work hard to be impartial and decide each case on the facts and law before me. I constantly review my decisions to make sure I remain impartial. I enroll in trainings that will continue to allow me to evaluate my decisions. I seek feed back from parties to ensure that I remain impartial on all cases. Additionally, I try to remain as accessible as possible to ensure open and honest communication.

Legal ability. I am very active in judicial education and often serve as a lecturer to legal professionals. Always seeking education is the greatest way to keep legal ability sharp.

Temperament. I am even tempered on and off the bench. It is a skill that needs to be continually honed. Being a Judge affords great power. One power is to take a recess at any time. If I feel that I am becoming angry while on the bench I pause and take a moment. I never make any decision if I feel anything but centered.