



Candidate: Kathleen G. Kennedy

First District, Appellate Court, McNulty Vacancy

Narrative

I am Judge Kathleen G. Kennedy, a candidate for the Illinois Appellate Court, First District, Justice McNulty vacancy. I believe that I am highly qualified for that position because I have been a Circuit Court Judge since 1996 and I was an appellate lawyer before I was elected as a judge. I am a 1982 graduate of Northwestern University School of Law and a 1974 graduate of DePaul University with a bachelor's degree in psychology. After law school I had the honor of serving as a judicial law clerk for Justice Dom J. Rizzi of the Illinois Appellate Court and for Judge Joan Humphrey Lefkow of the United States District Court. After my clerkships I joined the Office of the Cook County Public Guardian as the supervisor of the office's appellate and class action litigation section, a position that included writing appellate briefs and arguing appeals in the Illinois reviewing courts on behalf of abused and neglected children and disabled adults. I also worked as a hearing officer in juvenile court and as an adjunct professor teaching juvenile law at DePaul University College of Law.

Since my election in 1996 I have had three different assignments in the Domestic Relations Division of the Cook County Circuit Court. For six years I handled a high-volume call in the expedited child support section, ruling, often in written memorandums, on paternity, on child custody and visitation, and on child support establishment, modification and enforcement in cases in which the parties are not married. I then spent six years as an expedited trial judge conducting settlement conferences and trials in paternity and divorce cases and writing memorandum opinions and judgments. For the past year I have been assigned to an individual divorce calendar in which I manage divorce cases through the pre-decree, trial and post-decree stages. In addition to my day-to-day duties I was selected and trained as a mentor judge for new judges, and Chief Judge Evans recently assigned my fourth new judge to mentor.

The voters have retained me as a circuit court judge in 2002 and 2008. The bar associations that reviewed my judicial performance for the retention elections concluded that I should be retained, commenting favorably on my diligence and fine temperament. Over the past two weeks I have received evaluations for this appellate court election, which include: Highly Qualified -Chicago Bar Association and Illinois State Bar Association and Highly Recommended – The Decalogue Society of Lawyers. The Chicago Council of Lawyers wrote: "All respondents say she is regarded as well-informed in the law and thorough in her handling of all the matters coming before her. She is always well-prepared and conducts whatever research is necessary. She is praised for her legal ability..."