



Illinois Civil Justice League

Candidate: Kate Gorman

10th Judicial Circuit, Barra Vacancy

1. State the qualifications and experiences that make you qualified to serve on the bench in Illinois.

Answer: In November of 2007, I was sworn in as an Associate Judge having been selected by the Circuit Court Judges from a pool of forty-four applicants. Since being appointed I have had the following experiences: managing my courtroom, ruling on evidentiary matters, presiding over jury trials and bench trials, authoring rulings, and handling countless pro se litigants (individuals not represented by a lawyer). I have presided over felonies and misdemeanors. Currently, I hear the following types of cases: emergency and plenary orders of protection, child support, mental health, adoptions, small claims first appearances, forcible entry and detainers and ordinance violations.

During my fourteen years of practicing law with Prusak, Winne and Gorman, I was able to hone my legal skills. In addition, as a partner, I was involved in the decisions that impact a successful law practice. I represented clients in a wide variety of matters including: civil law, probate, real estate, foreclosures, guardianships, adoptions, family law, workers compensation and bankruptcy. In those cases, I was solely responsible for all aspects of preparation and trial. In those cases that were appealed, I handled all matters relating to the appeal including authoring the brief and arguing before the appellate tribunal. Those experiences afforded me the opportunity to appear before the Circuit Judges regularly. The Circuit Judges were familiar with the quality of all aspects of my legal work and I was selected to be an Associate Judge.

Given the combination of my judicial experience, legal experience, temperament, and background, if elected, I will be an asset to the Circuit Bench as the first elected female Circuit Judge.

2. 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 they make you qualified to serve on the bench.

Answer: I believe Question 1 adequately answers the question.

3. Describe the case in which you are most proud of your work as a lawyer.

Answer: In addition to my civil case load, I acted as a Guardian ad Litem for the children in family law matters. A Guardian ad Litem is an attorney who is appointed to represent the children's interests and give them a voice. In those situations I donated my time and made a difference in improving the situation for the children. Often times, I was able to provide a workable solution within the boundaries of the law. I also acted as a mediator for parties who were unable to

resolve their differences. In those instances, I made a positive difference for the benefit of the children.

4. Name the change you would make in the Illinois court system.

Answer: My answer to question 6 adequately answers the question.

5. Are the civil litigation reforms that you would like to see enacted to the remedy particular problems that you have detected, either as a practicing lawyer or as a sitting judge? Are there reforms that would benefit the civil justice system? What needs to be changed? Should the enactment of any such changes be the province of the legislature, the Supreme Court or by Constitutional amendment?

Answer: In our Area, I believe that the civil system operates on a fair and consistent basis. Case Management Conferences help to expedite cases and bring many to speedy resolution due to the Court's involvement. The main area of concern in the civil area involves family law cases, but recent Supreme Court Rules have helped to rectify many of the problems regarding custody and visitation by requiring mandatory and expeditious mediation. Most substantial changes in the system will have to come from the legislature working with the Illinois State Bar Association and the Illinois Supreme Court. Obviously, any changes in the State Constitution must come by Constitutional Amendment which is very difficult to achieve.

6. Do you believe that our judicial system adequately deters and penalizes frivolous litigation? If not, what reforms would you like to see?

Answer: No. Courts should not be reluctant to impose sanctions against litigants and their counsel for spurious and frivolous law suits and pleadings. Also, courts should be given more discretion to impose attorney fees against losing parties.

7. Do you believe the Illinois Constitution precludes legislative establishment of limitations on civil damages? Are there or should there be distinctions among economic, non economic and punitive damages?

Answer: No comment since this issue may come before me in the future.