



## ICJL 2012 Judicial Candidate Questionnaire

### Paul Lawrence 11<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court Judge – Prall Vacancy

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

**I have served as a judge in the Eleventh Judicial Circuit for ten years. Prior to serving as judge, I practiced law for 16 years. My practice was a general practice with emphasis on criminal defense. I tried 76 felony jury trials. In 2002, I was appointed as an Associate Judge and in 2010 the Illinois Supreme Court appointed me to the position of Circuit Judge. During my tenure on the bench I have presided in all of our court's divisions. I have presided over 105 jury trials. I serve as chair of the Eleventh Circuit Family Violence Coordinating Council and am a member of the Illinois Judicial Conference on Criminal Law.**

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.

**I was rated in the 2012 judicial advisory poll and received a 95.1% overall approval rating, including 96% for integrity, 95% for impartiality, 93% for legal ability, 97% for temperament, 97% for court management, 98% for health, and 97% for sensitivity to diversity and bias.**

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

**While practicing law, a public defender client of mine came to me and told me that she was pregnant and that she was unable to care for a baby. She asked me if I knew of anyone that was looking to adopt. She indicated that she thought very highly of me and that she would trust me in helping her find good adoptive parents. I was able to find a wonderful couple that was very excited about the prospects of adopting this child. I assisted them through the adoption process, and all the parties involved were very pleased.**

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

**We need to continue to implement innovative programs to address issues in our judicial system. The Eleventh Judicial Circuit has several programs including a Drug Court for addicts and a Recovery Court that assists those with mental health issues. I have presided over drug court proceedings on several occasions. I currently preside over**

**residential mortgage foreclosure cases. I have been instrumental in developing a foreclosure mediation program that has just been approved by the Illinois Supreme Court and will begin March 1, 2012. This program will use University of Illinois law students to assist borrowers in mediation proceedings in hopes of resolving cases in a more timely fashion.**

5. Are there civil litigation reforms that you would like to see enacted to 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?

**Reforms such as those mentioned in the answer to question 4 above, can be and are enacted by the Illinois Supreme Court. The legislature also has the ability to pass substantive laws that can provide reform.**

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

**There are Supreme Court Rules, including Rule 137, which if used effectively can adequately deter and penalize frivolous litigation.**

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?

**It is the responsibility of the Illinois Supreme Court to rule on the constitutionality of a statute and as a Circuit Judge I apply the law as determined by the Supreme Court.**