

## Inquirer Judicial Candidate Questionnaire

### **Jonathan Q. Irvine**

Court of Common Pleas  
[www.irvine4judge.com](http://www.irvine4judge.com)



#### **1. Why are you qualified and well-suited to serve as a judge on the court for which you are running?**

Compared to other judicial candidates in this election, I am uniquely qualified and well-suited to serve as a judge on the Court of Common Pleas because I have more than fifteen years experience preparing, analyzing, organizing and resolving cases from the perspective of both sides of the bench.

On one side of the bench I sit as an experienced litigator, specializing in family, dependency and criminal defense cases. In this capacity I am responsible for the management of almost 300 cases per year, some of which are assigned by current Judges who have observed my handling of cases before them.

On the other side of the bench I sit as a Hearing Master in both the Court of Common Pleas and Municipal Court. In this capacity I have presided over thousands of truancy, adoption and domestic abuse cases and in which I was called upon to make decisions that have a direct impact on the lives of others.

I aspire to be a Judge on the Court of Common Pleas not only because of my passion for the law, but because of my strong belief that everyone should have access to a court system that is fair, honest, respectable and practical in its application of the law.

#### **2. Did you receive a rating of "recommended" or higher from the state or local bar association? If not, why not?**

Yes. On April 4, 2011, the Philadelphia Bar Association announced that it has given me a "recommended" rating for the Court of Common Pleas.

#### **3. If you are an incumbent judge, what's a recent instance in which you acted to preserve your judicial independence? If you are an inspiring judge, how do you plan to remain independent if elected to the bench?**

As an judge elected to serve on the Court of Common Pleas I will take an oath of office promising to uphold the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Like the oath I

have taken as a member of the Pennsylvania Bar, I will take this oath seriously and will not be influenced by any political or ideological agendas. My campaign slogan, prominently displayed on my website and used in campaign literature, is "Integrity and Independence Philadelphia Expects and Deserves." These characteristics are mandated under the Code of Judicial Conduct and reflective of who I am as a person. If elected as a Court of Common Pleas Judge I will be committed to upholding this ethical obligation.

**4. A number of Pennsylvania judges have been sanctioned for campaign activities, ex parte dealings, and other alleged misconduct. How can the state's judiciary promote ethical behavior among judges and court staff?**

An effective way for the state's judiciary to promote ethical behavior among judges and the court staff is to require that they participate in mandatory continuing education. These courses, offered no less than bi-annually, would reacquaint judges and staff with their ethical obligations, reinforce their importance, discuss recent ethical violations and give guidance and practical advice on how to respond to situations that may lead to misconduct within the judicial system.

**5. If you believe that gender, racial, ethnic, class or other forms of bias can infect the justice system, How will you work to keep your courtroom as bias-free as possible?**

This election is about the selection of qualified individuals who are committed to ensuring that all residents of Philadelphia -- regardless of race, gender/gender orientation, age, religion or economic class -- and all organizations -- regardless of political or ideological affiliation -- have equal access to the courts, as well as an opportunity to have their disputed issues heard by an arbiter who not only comprehends the laws, but is willing and able to apply those laws in a manner that makes them meaningful and effective in our everyday lives. Biases have absolutely no place in our judicial system and as a judge on the Court of Common Pleas I will have zero tolerance for such activity in any proceeding before me. Furthermore, I will make full use of the court's resources to ensure that the system provides equal access to all citizens of Philadelphia.