

# Inquirer Judicial Candidate Questionnaire

*Name:* Cheryl Lynne Austin

*Judicial Post for which you are running:*  
Montgomery County Common Pleas Court

*Political Party:* Democratic

*Campaign e-mail and Website:*  
info@cherylaustinfoforjudge.com (e-mail)

Cherylaustinfoforjudge.com (website)

Questions

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

I have spent the last decade of my legal career in a courtroom, at least on a weekly basis – first as a county Assistant District Attorney and more recently, as an Assistant Public Defender. My private practice cases very often place me in civil courts and Orphan’s Court. This long-term experience has impressed upon me the importance of fairly evaluating presented cases and objectively applying the law.

As a retired U.S. Navy Captain, my military leadership skills equip me with a temperament that treats all parties respectfully, while maintaining a courtroom decorum that facilitates administrative efficiency.

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

The Montgomery Bar Association recommended my judicial candidacy.

**3. If you are an aspiring judge, how do you plan to remain independent if elected to the bench?**

I believe that all parties in any court action deserve to be fairly heard by an independent judge, who is not unduly influenced. To achieve that goal, I will not associate with advocacy organizations. I will always offer to disqualify myself as a judge in cases where a potentially compromising relationship with the parties or attorneys existed.

**4. How can the state’s judiciary prevent discipline scandals of the type seen recently?**

The disciplinary system for attorney misconduct in Pennsylvania has evolved to the point where it is less intimidating by offering greater transparency and easier access. A similar



effective system for judges could serve as a deterrent. Another preventative measure is establishing a process for anonymously resolving the ethical nature of potentially-questionable judicial behavior before the conduct occurs or progresses.

**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?**

As one who has personally encountered biased behavior throughout my life, I am particularly sensitive to biased behavior in the courtroom. My courtroom would be staffed with individuals who share my sensitivity. Biased behavior will not be tolerated by anyone present in the courtroom.