



[Home](#) [Why Judicial Votes Count](#) [Ohio's Court System](#) [What Judges Do](#) [Know Your Candidates](#) [Voting In Ohio](#) [Resources](#) [FAQs](#) [News](#)

Andrea J. Clark



Office: Richland County – Richland County Court of Common Pleas, General Division

Age: 59

Residence: Mansfield, OH

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Occupation: Magistrate

Education: J.D. from the C. Blake McDowell School of Law at the University of Akron; B.S.B.A from The Ohio State university

Work Experience: Staff Attorney and Magistrate at the Richland County Common Pleas Court, 2009-present. Member of Carousel Magic LLC 1993-2010.

Family: Ross Clark and I have been married for almost 35 years. I am the mother of two adult sons, Joseph and Matthew and an adult daughter, Elizabeth. Our third son, Hyrum, was killed in a car accident at age eleven. I am the proud grandmother of Abraham, Charlie and Miriam.

Affiliations: I belong to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I am a member of the Richland County Bar Association and the Ohio Association of Magistrates.

Endorsements: Retired Judge James Henson; Richland County Commissioner Darrell Banks.

Bar Association Ratings: N/A

(1) List your judicial experience (courts and years):

While attending law school, I completed two internships with the Richland County Common Pleas Court in 2008. After I graduated in 2009, Judge James Henson and Judge James DeWeese hired me in as a full-time staff attorney. I was hired primarily to facilitate the Richland County Mortgage Conciliation Program, a program developed by Judge DeWeese and my predecessor staff attorney to move more foreclosure cases into mediation and negotiated settlements. Over nine years, I have refined the Richland County Mortgage Conciliation Program and added forms and procedures to make it more effective. I have helped hundreds of Richland County families work with their lenders to reach a home retention workout that allows them to keep their home and avoid a foreclosure judgment. When we can achieve a home retention workout, it is really a win-win. The home owner obviously wins by keeping their home. But if a lender takes a foreclosure judgment and then buys the property back at sheriff's sale, they end up paying taxes, insurance and maintenance on that property until they can sell it. Lenders are not in the property management business, they are in the business of lending money. If a modification can be reached that turns a non-performing loan into a performing loan, the bank wins too. It may seem insignificant that I have so much experience with one type of cases, foreclosures, but there are reasons why this experience is meaningful. First, foreclosures have been between 40% and 60% of the civil caseload every year since I started working at the court, so they affect a substantial number of people in our county. Second, I have learned the alternative dispute resolution skills that judges use daily in encouraging attorneys to reach settlements and plea agreements. Third, foreclosures hit people where they live quite literally. People are emotionally invested in their homes, as well as financially. I have skills in dealing with litigants in situations that are emotionally fraught, and experience in breaking bad news to those aren't going to be able to keep their homes. That experience has broad application in both civil and criminal cases. In April 2015, I was promoted from staff attorney to magistrate. I now conduct bench trials in foreclosures, collection actions, contract disputes and other civil cases. I have presided over criminal arraignments, extradition hearings, pretrial hearings, garnishment hearings, contempt hearings, and replevin hearings. I have researched and written hundreds of judicial decisions and orders that have gone out over the judges' signatures, and dozens of magistrate's decisions that went out over my own. I have the right experience in the right court. I have spent my entire legal career doing the kind of legal analysis that judges do-comparing the arguments of the parties to what the law actually says and reaching conclusions based on applying the

facts of the case to the law. I have never been an advocate for either plaintiffs or defendants, so I have never developed any pro-plaintiff or pro-defendant bias. My bias, if any, is for the law, and my motto is "Get the law right!" Getting the law right prevents me from falling into the grave error of trying to legislate from the bench. I am a firm believer that the proper, constitutional, role of a judge is to apply the law as written. Sometimes that means I don't particularly like the conclusions I reach, but I have no regrets about doing what the law requires.

(2) What about your non-judicial legal experience qualifies you to be a judge?

I have only judicial legal experience.

(3) Why are you running for this particular court seat?

I have been blessed and privileged to work with three great Richland County judges: Judge Henson, Judge DeWeese and Judge Robinson. Each has, in different ways, mentored me and taught me what it means to be a good, effective judge. The experience, knowledge, and wisdom I have gained from them is priceless and precious to me. The best way that I can pay forward what I have received working for the people of Richland County is to take that experience and follow in those judges' footsteps, take the next step in public service, and become a common pleas court judge who brings substantial justice to those who enter our court.

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