

## HONORABLE ELIZABETH K. KELLY

Currently finishing her second term, Judge Elizabeth K. Kelly is a presiding member of the Family Division of the Sixth Judicial District of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. She attended Wellesley College and holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Georgetown University, which she earned as a 1980 *cum laude* graduate. In 1983 she received her J.D. from the University of Akron School of Law. Upon graduation, Judge Kelly immediately began her legal career as an Assistant City Prosecutor for Akron, Ohio. In 1985, she joined the Elderkin Law Firm, Erie, PA where she attained the status of Partner. She remained with the Elderkin Law Firm until her 1999 election to the Court of Common Pleas.

In 1999, Judge Kelly prevailed on both the Democratic and Republican ballots in the May primary election. Receiving over 25,000 votes, she prevailed over her opponents with more than a 7,000 vote lead. She was elected to her first term in November of 1999.

In 2009, Judge Kelly received an 88% approval rating from voting attorneys in the Erie County Bar Association Judicial Retention Plebiscite. With 83.4% of voters approving her retention in the Municipal Election, she was, in November of 2009, retained for a second ten-year term. According to the official results published by the Department of State (<https://electionreturns.pa.gov>), Judge Kelly received the second highest percentage of “yes” votes (with only a 0.27% differential) for retention among all Common Pleas Court judges across the Commonwealth in 2009.

Since taking her seat on the Bench, Judge Kelly has served Erie County as a member of the Family Division. She also currently presides over Orphans’ Court. She was the Administrative Judge of the Family Division from 2000 through 2005 and again from 2017 to 2018. She was elected by her peers to serve as President Judge of the Erie County Court of Common Pleas from 2005 to 2009. She was the second female President Judge in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Erie County’s only female President Judge. During her twenty years of service, she has devoted care and attention to innumerable custody, support, divorce, adoption, protection from abuse, and juvenile dependency and delinquency hearings. She has also presided over cases in the Trial Division (Criminal/Civil cases) during trial terms.

As a member of the judiciary, Judge Kelly has contributed to the legal community through her service on the Pennsylvania State Trial Judges Judicial Ethics Committee (2001-2003), the Family Law Section of the Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges and through her appointment by the Governor to the Juvenile Court Judges’ Commission (2003-2013). In addition, she has been an adjunct professor at Mercyhurst College where she taught courses in the graduate and undergraduate divisions. She is a member of the Pennsylvania Bar Association, where she has served on the Family Law Committee, as well as a member of the Erie County Bar Association, where she served as a past Chairperson of the Family Law Committee.

Her history of community service includes: Northwestern Pennsylvania Humane Society Board of Directors (1989-1995), Mercyhurst Preparatory School Board of Directors (1991-1999), City of Erie Planning Commission (1991-1996), Georgetown University Alumni Admissions Program (1994-1999), St. Vincent Health System Board of Corporators (1994-1999), Office of Children and Youth Advisory Board (1997-1999), Task Force on Domestic Relations of the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives – August 24, 1998, Hope on Horseback volunteer (2000-2018) and the City of Erie Historic Preservation Task Force – current.

Judge Kelly is the mother of one daughter. Her household members also include a Newfoundland, a Labrador Retriever, a rescue cat and an ancient horse.

In her spare time, Judge Kelly is pursuing a Masters in Museum Studies from Johns-Hopkins University. She is also an avid triathlete, and enjoys sailing, riding, cross-country and downhill skiing and reading.