

Chicago Voters Reelect Legally Insane Judge

by [HANS BADER](#) on JANUARY 2, 2013 · [0 COMMENTS](#)

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In November, Chicago voters [re-elected](#) a legally [insane](#) judge [charged](#) with a crime of violence. “The Cook County Democratic Party [supported her](#)” in her re-election bid. The day after Judge Cynthia Brim “won re-election to the Cook County Circuit Court” with 63.5 percent of the vote, she “showed up in court — not as a judge, but as [a defendant](#) in a battery case.”

Some “progressive” officials see psychological problems as no reason to deny troubled people access to positions of power over others. The Justice Department issued a 2012 directive to recruit people with “[psychiatric disabilities](#)” and “[severe intellectual disabilities](#).” Vexatious litigants and lawyers often have psychological troubles: why not give troubled lawyers massive government powers, the better to harass their victims — like allowing them to sue or prosecute their victims in the name of the American people? While psychological problems are not a barrier to obtaining such jobs, it is apparently disqualifying to lack a partisan political agenda when applying for a job with the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division. In making 113 hires for attorney positions there between 2009 and 2011, the Justice Department hired [zero apolitical applicants](#) (and also zero moderate, conservative, or libertarian applicants, reserving [all 113](#) slots for progressives — even for positions that were probably [attractive to qualified conservative](#) applicants).

While the government can be accommodating toward its own employees with psychological or intellectual impairments (at least when they are progressive), it can be quite [unforgiving](#) towards private sector employees and those who hire them.

Government regulations such as the [Dodd-Frank Act](#) [have](#) forced employers in the financial sector to fire “[thousands of employees](#),” including exemplary employees who once committed misdemeanors decades ago. As the Cato Institute’s Walter Olson [noted](#) earlier:

Thanks to new federal banking and mortgage guidelines with \$1-million-a-day penalties for noncompliance, banks are scrambling to fire any employee who has previously been convicted of a crime involving dishonesty. Among those tossed out: a bank employee with seven years’ service who used a slug in a washing machine in 1963, and a 58-year-old customer service representative with a shoplifting conviction forty years ago. A lawyer says thousands of employees have been fired.

Outside the financial sector, government rules can go to the opposite extreme, forcing employers to hire felons and ignore the content of their character. The Obama administration is [pressuring employers](#) outside the financial sector to hire [felons](#), arguing that refusing to hire felons has a “disparate impact” against African Americans. This demand is counterproductive: The administration wants most employers to stop conducting criminal background checks, [ignoring the fact](#) that employers who are prevented from conducting criminal background checks [sometimes respond](#) by covertly discriminating against black applicants in general, resulting in even fewer black hires. The EEOC recently [sued Pepsi for doing criminal](#) background checks on job applicants, forcing it to pay \$3.1 million to settle the lawsuit. It has previously [sued other employers who take serious criminal records into account](#), or [use criminal background checks](#), even

though employers who hire criminals end up getting sued when those employees commit crimes. Employers are trapped in a no-win position where they can be sued no matter what they do.