

Judicial Inquiry Commission

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The Judicial Inquiry Commission has considered your request for an opinion concerning disqualification of a judge under certain circumstances. You state that you and your wife, while shopping in a local department store, signed up for a prize to be awarded by the store upon a random drawing. You were not required to be present in order to be awarded a prize. Later you were notified that your name had been drawn and that you had won a portable sewing machine. Your specific question is whether your receipt of the sewing machine would disqualify you from sitting as a judge in future legal proceedings in which the department store is a party.

It is the opinion of the Commission that the fact that a judge receives a prize awarded by a random drawing would not disqualify the judge from sitting in future legal proceedings in which the donor of the prize is a party.