

Judge James G. Collins (Ret.) served for 20 years as a Juvenile Court Judge, sitting in Hampden, Hampshire, Berkshire and Worcester counties. He presided over some of the most complex and difficult cases before the court and was respected for his impartial, thoughtful and informed demeanor. He respectfully assisted parties in settling disputes, regularly bringing litigants together for the best interests of children and their families.

During his tenure, Judge Collins served two terms as President of the Massachusetts Judges Conference, the association of trial and appellate judges. He successfully advanced the cause of justice by negotiating initiatives with the Massachusetts Legislature, the Governor and with private entities, all in support of an independent judiciary able to serve and protect the rights of the people.

Prior to his judicial service, Attorney Collins practiced for 14 years as partner with Ritchie, Ennis, Seewald & Collins, P.C., and in his own firm in Amherst, MA, and of counsel to Growhoski, Callahan & Miles, P.C., in Northampton, MA. In addition to criminal cases in state and federal courts, his representations in civil practice involved municipal, education, family, employment and personal injury and medical malpractice law. His firms represented the Town of Amherst and numerous public entities and school districts, as well as a statewide private educational association and private businesses. Attorney Collins represented the public owners in the renovation and new construction of town libraries and public schools and the Amherst Town Hall and police station. For many years, he served as a faculty member in Massachusetts Continuing Legal Education seminars focusing on both school law and employment law.

During the 14 years he served as Massachusetts State Representative (1973-1986), he was House Chair of the Joint Committee on Education, a Member of the Special Commission on Unequal Educational Opportunity and a Member of the House Committee on Ways and Means. With Massachusetts Senator Walter Boverini, he co-sponsored a bill that was the largest local aid initiative for education to date. Representative Collins mediated and negotiated the local aid requests of the 351 towns and cities of the Commonwealth to achieve passage of the legislation. He also co-sponsored with Representative Barbara Gray the first provisions in Massachusetts outlawing sexual harassment. In addition, he was an initial co-sponsor of legislation in 1973, banning discrimination based on sexual preference.

As an attorney, he is admitted to appear before all Massachusetts courts, the United States District Court, the United States Court of Appeals, First Circuit and the Supreme Court of the United States.

He holds certificates in Mediating Disputes and in Negotiation and Leadership from the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School. He is a graduate of Suffolk University Law School and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.