

JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION
Sworn Statement to be included in Transcript of Public Hearings

**Master-in-Equity
(Incumbent)**

Full Name: William B. Cox, Jr.
Business Address: 1111 Church Street, Camden, SC 29020
Business Telephone: 803-432-4391

1. Do you plan to serve your full term if re-appointed? I do.

2. Do you have any plans to return to private practice one day? I am currently a part-time Master and will continue my private practice.

3. Have you met the statutory requirements for this position regarding age, residence, and years of practice? I have.

4. What is your philosophy regarding *ex parte* communications? Are there circumstances under which you could envision *ex parte* communications being tolerated? I avoid *ex parte* communications in all matters where a defendant has appeared, pro se or not, after confirmed service or process and only in the effort to complete scheduling of hearings, content of Orders prepared by counsel at my request or to resolve procedural issues.

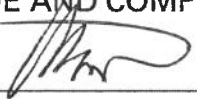
5. If you disclosed something that had the appearance of bias, but you believed it would not actually prejudice your impartiality, what deference would you give a party that requested your recusal? Would you grant such a motion? I would certainly consider such a motion and grant it if appropriate. The judicial office must represent the impartiality of the trier of fact and if either party doubted that impartiality, the process would suffer. I would have the option to refer the case to a Special Referee to hear the matter.

6. What standards have you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality? Gifts or extraordinary social hospitality from anyone who could be seen as influencing the judge is prohibited and would not be accepted.
7. How would you handle a situation in which you became aware of misconduct or appearance of infirmity of a lawyer or of a judge? Court Administration should be contacted for guidance.
8. Have you engaged in any fund-raising activities with any political, social, community, or religious organizations? Please describe. Local charities only. I serve on several boards but have declined to participate in any new direct solicitation of fundraising events since my election.
9. How do you handle the drafting of orders? Routine situations involve the drafting of Orders from party counsel. Any contested matters would involve both parties submitting Orders for consideration and my individual research and edits with my final Order, if necessary.
10. What methods do you use to ensure that you and your staff meet deadlines? We use Office 365 calendaring functions and routine communications with the Clerk of Court's staff to ensure obligations are met.
11. What is your philosophy on "judicial activism," and what effect should judges have in setting or promoting public policy? Judges should not set public policy in their courts but interpret the laws set by the appeal courts, if such precedents have been set. Political activism of any kind should be avoided in all instances.
12. Canon 4 allows a judge to engage in activities to improve the law, legal system, and administration of justice. What activities do you plan to undertake to further this improvement of the legal system? I plan to participate in as many law related educational opportunities as I can to broaden my knowledge to be a better trier of fact.

13. Do you feel that the pressure of serving as a judge strains personal relationships (i.e. spouse, children, friends, or relatives)? How do you address this? My position is part-time, and my children are grown. My wife and I do take personal time and vacation together. It has worked very well so far and I fully expect that to continue.
14. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality? I am not.
15. Would you hear a case where you or a member of your family held a *de minimis* financial interest in a party involved? I would not. I believe *any* interest would present a clear appearance of impropriety.
16. Are you a member of any organization or association that, by policy or practice, prohibits or limits its membership on the basis of race, sex, religion, or national origin? If so, please identify the entity and explain if this organization practices invidious discrimination on these bases. I am not.
17. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses for the past reporting period? I have only been MIE for two months but have met my full CLE requirements for private practice for the year 2023. I have attended the mandatory AI conference in Columbia and will attend the MIE Conference in October as well as any others available and appropriate.
18. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge and when do these rules apply? A judge should be restrained and calm during all proceedings. The judge is not a party to the action and should not influence it with emotion in any manner. These rules apply both in the courtroom and during out of court dealings with attorneys, both while representing parties and otherwise as legal professionals.

19. Do you feel that it is ever appropriate to be angry with a member of the public who would appear before you? Is anger ever appropriate in dealing with attorneys or a pro se litigant? The judge should maintain a level of calmness when dealing with the attorneys or litigants and showing anger loses control of the situation. Anger has no place on the bench. However, a judge must maintain control of the proceedings and be plain spoken and direct to maintain order if tensions arise between the parties.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ANSWERS TO THE ABOVE QUESTIONS ARE TRUE AND COMPLETE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.



Sworn to before me this 22 day of August, 2024.



(Signature)

Michelle L. Comfort

(Print Name)

Notary Public for South Carolina

My commission expires: 01/24/2034

