



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

**Retired Judge**

Full Name: Donald Bruce Hocker

Business Address: Post Office Box 972, Laurens, SC 29360

Business Telephone: 864-984-2076

1. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses for the past reporting period?  
Yes
2. Do you have any plans to return to private practice?  
No
3. Are you engaged in any legal activities other than your service as a retired judge, such as acting as an arbitrator or mediator?  
No
4. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality?  
No
5. 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 any basis.  
No
6. Have you engaged in any partisan political activity since your retirement? Please describe.  
No
7. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge? When do these rules apply?  
Treat all lawyers, litigants and court personnel with civility and respect. Applicable at all times.

8. In your position as a retired judge, what methods do you employ to ensure that deadlines for the timely issuance of orders are met?  
Calendars and notes
9. Do you feel that it is ever appropriate to be angry with a member of the public, especially with a criminal defendant? Is anger ever appropriate in dealing with attorneys?  
Anger is never appropriate. Judicial firmness is. Never criticize lawyer in front of their client.
10. How would you handle a situation in which you became aware of misconduct or appearance of infirmity of a lawyer or fellow judge?  
Talk with the lawyer and family members. Consider resources through Bar Association. Failing that, make necessary report.
11. What is your philosophy regarding *ex parte* communications? Are there circumstances under which you could envision *ex parte* communications being tolerated?  
Ex parte communications shall be avoided except in scheduling matters or extreme emergency situations.
12. 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?  
More often than not I would grant the Motion to avoid the appearance of impropriety. I do consider however the merits of the Motion with the actual disclosure I had made.
13. What standards have you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality?  
Avoid at all costs.
14. In order that we might advise court administration on steps that need to be taken, are there any limitations on your sight, hearing, or mobility that should be addressed by the court administrator?  
No

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 \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_

(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_

(Print name)

Notary Public for South Carolina

My Commission Expires: \_\_\_\_\_