



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

Master-in-Equity
(Incumbent)

Full Name: **Roy R. Hemphill**

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1. Do you plan to serve your full term if re-appointed? **Yes.**

2. Do you have any plans to return to private practice one day?
Yes. I intend to discharge my duties as Master-in-Equity concurrently with remaining in private practice.

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

4. What is your philosophy regarding *ex parte* communications? Are there circumstances under which you could envision *ex parte* communications being tolerated?
As a civil litigator, I understand the importance of avoiding ex parte communications in order that all sides are fairly heard. Only in circumstances of an emergency would I consider ex parte communications with one side.

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?
Since the appearance of impropriety or bias should be avoided at all costs, I would grant a party's motion for recusal in such circumstances.

6. What standards have you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality?

Because the appearance of impropriety or bias is paramount, my personal philosophy is to refuse to accept gifts or social hospitality from parties and their attorneys.

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?

Regarding misconduct or infirmity of a lawyer, I would alert the South Carolina Bar as to the attorney's conduct/infirmity. Regarding misconduct or infirmity of a fellow judge, I would alert South Carolina Court Administration.

8. Have you engaged in any fund-raising activities with any political, social, community, or religious organizations? Please describe.

I have not engaged in any fundraising activities for non-profit organizations in over fifteen years, nor do I have plans to do so.

9. How do you handle the drafting of orders?

I believe that parties who have matters presented to a court are entitled to receive a timely decision from the presiding judge. As a litigant, I have seen delayed orders unduly frustrate litigants. I believe that parties are entitled to an order from the court within thirty days of the hearing. If the prevailing party is represented, I request the attorney prepare a proposed order. If the parties are unrepresented, I draft the order.

10. What methods do you use to ensure that you and your staff meet deadlines?

Strict calendar management.

11. What is your philosophy on "judicial activism," and what effect should judges have in setting or promoting public policy?

I do not believe in "judicial activism", but instead believe that judges should constrain themselves to interpreting the facts and law and

ruling on only the issues that are presented to them at a full and fair hearing.

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?

When called upon by fellow judicial officers, the local bar or lay bodies that are interested in aspects of the judicial system, I would be willing to speak about processes and procedures of which I am familiar in order to educate those groups.

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?

I do not feel that pressure of serving as a master-in-equity will strain my personal relationships.

14. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality?

No.

15. Would you hear a case where you or a member of your family held a *de minimis* financial interest in a party involved?

No.

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.

No.

17. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses for the past reporting period?

Yes.

18. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge and when do these rules apply?

I believe that a judge should have a professional demeanor and give all parties and their attorneys a fair opportunity to present the issues that need to be decided. I believe that all litigants are entitled to be treated in a kind and courteous manner. I believe a judge needs to be even-tempered, but be able to firmly maintain civility and decorum in their court.

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?

I do not believe anger is appropriate to use with members of the public appearing at a hearing. It is, however, important at times to be firm in maintaining civility and decorum in a courtroom.

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: _____