



**JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE
2024**

Court, Position, and Seat # for which you are applying:

Family Court Judge, Eleventh Judicial Circuit, Seat 3

1. Name: The Honorable Robert E. Newton

Name that you are known by if different from above
(Example: A Nickname): Rob Newton

Are you currently serving in some capacity as a judge? If part-time, please note.
(Includes Municipal, Magistrate, Etc.) Yes

Home Address: [Redacted]

County of Residence: Lexington

Business Address: 205 East Main Street
Lexington, SC 29072

E-Mail Address: [Redacted]

Telephone Number: (home): [Redacted]
(office): (803) 785-8451
(cell): [Redacted]

2. Date of Birth: [Redacted]1964
Place of Birth: Wurzburg, Germany
Social Security Number: [Redacted]

3. Are you a citizen of South Carolina? Yes
Have you been a resident of this state for at least the immediate past five years? Yes

4. SCDL# or SCHD#: [Redacted]
Voter Registration Number: [Redacted]

5. Have you served in the military? If so, give the dates, branch of service, highest rank attained, serial number (if applicable), present status, and the character of your discharge or release. Please provide a copy of your DD214 concerning your discharge.

No

6. Family Status:

- (a) State whether you are single, married, widowed, divorced, or separated.
- (b) If married, state the date of your marriage and your spouse's full name and occupation.
- (c) If widowed, list the name(s) of spouse(s).
- (d) If you have ever been divorced or are in the process of obtaining a divorce, state the date, name of the moving party, court, and grounds.
- (e) State the names of your children and their ages. If your children are NOT full-time students, also include the occupation and employer of each child.

Family Status: Married on June 6, 1986, to Caroline Steppe Newton who is employed as a Vice President in banking.

Never divorced, one child.

[Redacted]

7. List each college and law school you attended, including the dates of your attendance, the degrees you received, and if you left an institution without receiving a degree, the reason for your departure.
 - (a) University of South Carolina School of Law
August 1986 - December 1988
Juris Doctor
 - (b) University of South Carolina
August 1982 - May 1986
B.S. in Business Administration / Finance
8. List the significant activities in which you took part during your attendance at law school. Give the years you were involved in these activities and list any leadership positions you held.
 - (a) I worked for Professor Robert Felix in 1987 during the summer following my first year of law school and into my second year (part time) assisting in his work to update his treatise, The South Carolina Law of Torts.
 - (b) I began working as a law clerk for the firm I ultimately joined during the summer following my second year in 1988.
9. List the states in which you have been admitted to practice law and the year of each admission. Also list any states in which you took the bar exam but were never admitted to the practice of law. Please indicate the number of times you took the exam in each state.

- (a) South Carolina – May 1989. Passed SC bar on first attempt. I have not taken any other bar exams.
10. Describe chronologically, since graduation from law school, your legal experience. Please include a list of all positions held in which you worked in a legal capacity. Describe the general character of your practice and divide it into periods with dates if its character changed over the years. Please also describe the extent to which you were involved with the administrative and financial management of each of these entities, including management of trust accounts.
- (a) 1988 until 1992 – Coleman, Sawyer, Breibart, & McCauley. I began working as a law clerk during law school for this firm and joined as an associate after graduation. Our firm had offices in Saluda, SC and Lexington, SC. This was a litigation intensive firm where my practice was devoted to approximately 75% domestic / family court matters (including all aspects of divorce, child custody, visitation, child support, alimony, equitable division), 20% civil litigation (including personal injury), and 5% criminal defense (including juvenile matters). This firm dissolved its association when C. David Sawyer was elected to the Family Court bench in 1992.
- (b) 1992 until December 2003 – Breibart & McCauley, P.A. (subsequently Breibart, McCauley & Newton, P.A.). My practice remained essentially as described above divided between domestic / family court (approximately 75%), civil litigation (20%), and criminal defense (5%). I assisted in managing and maintaining the firm trust account related to my files. I left this firm and it was dissolved in December of 2003.
- (c) January 2004 until June 2012 - The Dooley Law Firm, P.A. This firm was comprised of 3 other attorneys upon my departure. My practice remained devoted to the areas as described above until approximately 2009 when I began to cultivate a practice limited to Family Court Mediation and Arbitration. At the time of my departure to become a Family Court Judge, my practice was almost exclusively devoted to Family Court Mediation and Arbitration which I conducted statewide. I managed and maintained my individual trust account as well as assisted in managing the firm operating account as a shareholder.
- (d) July 2012 until the present time - I am currently honored to serve as a Family Court Judge for the Eleventh Judicial Circuit, Seat 3, and have served continuously since my election in 2012.

Justices/judges applying for re-election to their current position may omit Questions 11–17. If you are a full-time judge seeking a judgeship different than your current position, Questions 11-17 should be answered based on your experience prior to serving on the bench.

11. Please answer the following:

- (a) If you are a candidate for Family Court, please provide a brief written description of your experience within each of the following Family Court practice areas: divorce and equitable division of property, child custody, adoption, abuse and neglect, and juvenile justice. Include information about cases you have handled in each of these practice areas, or if you have not practiced in an area, describe how your background and procedural knowledge has prepared you to preside over such matters as a Family Court judge. Please also indicate the frequency of your appearances before a Family Court judge within the past five years.

N/A

- (b) If you are a candidate for Circuit Court, please provide a brief written description of your experience in criminal matters, including any cases handled over the past five years, and include a brief description of the issues involved. Further, please provide a brief written description of your experience in civil matters, including any cases handled over the past five years, and include a brief description of the types of matters handled, issues involved, and procedural history. Please include information such as the primary areas in civil court in which you practice, and whether you represent plaintiffs or defendants, or both. You may go back further than five years if you feel it would assist the Commission with its assessment of your experience. If you lack experience in an area, describe how your background and procedural knowledge has prepared you to preside over such matters as a Circuit Court judge, or how you would compensate for your lack of experience in this area. Please also indicate the frequency of your appearances before a Circuit Court judge within the past five years.

N/A

- (c) If you are a candidate for Master-In-Equity, please provide a brief written description of your experience in the Master's court, including any cases handled over the past five years, and include a brief description of the issues involved. Please include the frequency of your appearances before a Master-In-Equity or a Circuit Court judge within the past five years.

N/A

- (d) If you are a candidate for Administrative Law Court, please provide a brief written description of your experience before an Administrative Law Judge, including any issues discussed and the frequency of your appearances before the Administrative Law or Circuit Court within the past five years.

N/A

12. What was the frequency of your court appearances during the past five years or in the five years prior to your election to the bench?

- (a) federal: N/A
- (b) state: N/A

13. What percentage of your practice involved civil, criminal, domestic, and other matters during the past five years or in the five years prior to your election to the bench?

- (a) civil: N/A
- (b) criminal: N/A
- (c) domestic: N/A
- (d) other: N/A

14. During the past five years

(a) What percentage of your practice was in trial court, including cases that settled prior to trial? N/A

(b) What number of cases went to trial and resulted in a verdict? N/A

(c) What number of cases went to trial and resolved after the plaintiff's or State's case? N/A (Resolved may include settlement, plea, by Judge's order during a motion hearing, etc.

(d) What number of your cases settled after a jury was selected but prior to opening statements? N/A

During the past five years, did you most often serve as sole counsel, chief counsel, or co-counsel? N/A

For sitting judges seeking a judgeship different than your current position, During the five years prior to your election to the bench, what percentage of your practice was in trial court, including matters that settled prior to trial?

N/A

15. List five of the most significant litigated matters you have personally handled in either trial or appellate court, or before a state or federal agency. Give citations if the cases were reported and describe why these matters were significant.

- (a) N/A
- (b)
- (c)
- (d)
- (e)

16. List up to five civil appeals you have personally handled. Give the case name, the court, the date of decision, and the citation if the case was reported.

- (a) N/A
- (b)
- (c)
- (d)
- (e)

17. List up to five criminal appeals you have personally handled. Give the case name, the court, the date of decision and the citation if the case was reported.
- (a) N/A
 - (b)
 - (c)
 - (d)
 - (e)
18. Have you ever held judicial office? If so, list the periods of your service, the courts involved, and whether you were elected or appointed. Describe the jurisdiction of each of the courts and note any limitations on the jurisdiction of each court.
- (a) Yes. I was elected by the General Assembly of South Carolina to serve as Family Court Judge for the Eleventh Judicial Circuit, Seat 3, in May 2012, and have served continuously since that time. The Family Court generally has exclusive jurisdiction over all matters involving domestic or family relationships to include validity of marriages, divorce, child custody, visitation rights, termination of parental rights, adoption, child support, alimony, equitable division of marital property, and change of name. Family Court has jurisdiction over child abuse and neglect proceedings as well as over issues involving vulnerable adults. The court also generally has exclusive jurisdiction over children under the age of eighteen alleged to have committed any criminal offense.
19. If the answer to question 18 is yes, describe or list five of your most significant orders or opinions and give the citations if they were reported. Also, list citations to any appellate review of these orders or opinions.
- (a) S.C.D.S.S. v. Freeman, et. al., Op. No. 2023-UP-286 (S.C. Ct. App. July 31, 2023). This case was a termination of parental rights action that involved a child who had been in foster care for approximately forty-eight months at the time of trial. The primary issue on appeal was the statutory ground of the child having been in foster care for fifteen of the most recent twenty-two months and whether DSS had met its burden of proof in that regard. This case had some complexity due to arguments involving the delay being attributable to issues in procuring and completing services due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, while it was not addressed on appeal, the decision also required an analysis of the alleged disability of the mother and the impact that would have on the decision to terminate her parental rights. Ultimately, I determined termination was in the child's best interest and the Court of Appeals affirmed that determination.
 - (b) S.C.D.S.S. v. Heath, et. al., Op. No. 2022-UP-318 (S.C. Ct. App. August 3, 2022). This matter was before me on a Motion to Compel Discovery filed by the Defendants against the Plaintiff, South Carolina Department of Social Services. I granted the Motion of the Defendant and ordered SCDSS to pay fees and costs incident to the Motion in the amount of \$1,070.05 pursuant to Rule 37, SCRCP. I found this appropriate based upon their failure to comply with the applicable

discovery rules finding that SCDSS, as a litigant, was subject to the rules of court just as any other litigant. SCDSS appealed the ruling and the Court of Appeals affirmed my decision.

- (c) S.C.D.S.S. v. Degnan, et. al., Op. No. 2020-UP-088 (S.C. Ct. App. March 26, 2020). This was a contested termination of parental rights action wherein the father appealed my decision at trial to terminate his parental rights in his child on various grounds. While various findings were contested, a primary point in contention was the investigation and testimony of the guardian ad litem. Father contended the guardian ad litem had failed to conduct an independent investigation. However, I found the investigation proper and considered the recommendations of the guardian ad litem which was determined by the Court of Appeals to be proper. I found the history of extensive drug use and other factors warranted termination of parental rights as being in the child's best interest.
- (d) S.C.D.S.S. v. Montiel, et. al., Op. No. 2017-UP-132 (S.C. Ct. App. March 24, 2017). This was a complex termination of parental rights action that was tried before me over the span of two days wherein SCDSS sought to terminate the parental rights of both the mother and the father. Both parents appealed the ruling. Mother's appeal was summarily dismissed and father's appeal resulted in the above cited unpublished opinion affirming the decision at trial. The mother had a total of 13 children that were the subject of this action. The father was the father of three of the thirteen children at issue in this case. Father required an interpreter at trial, as he was unable to speak and understand English. Therefore, this was a complicated trial with numerous parties and legal issues as well as the logistical issues of the language barrier. Ultimately, the ruling was affirmed.
- (e) In the Interest of Kevin R., 409 S.C. 297, 762 S.E.2d 387 (2014). This case involved a juvenile trial for the charge of carrying a weapon on school grounds. At the call of the case, the juvenile made a motion for a jury trial which I denied. Ultimately, the decision was affirmed on appeal by the Supreme Court in the above cited opinion. While the case is significant for the legal issues addressed in the opinion, it will always be significant for me because it was the very first contested trial before me as a Family Court Judge as the case was tried on only my second day of serving on the bench alone.

* In listing the above cases in response to this question, I feel compelled to note that having been honored to serve as a Family Court Judge for twelve years, I am keenly aware of the fact that every single case that has and will come before me is "significant" to the litigants it affects. My choice of these cases is due to their significance to me due to the legal issues they addressed and what I was able to learn from them to help me improve as a judge.

- 20. List all courts in which you have been admitted to practice and list the dates of your admission. Give the same information for administrative bodies that require a special admission to practice.

- (a) South Carolina Bar - May 17, 1989
- (b) United States District Court - September 5, 1989
- (c) Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals - December 29, 1989

21. Have you taught law-related courses or lectured at bar association conferences, educational institutions, or continuing legal or judicial education programs? If so, briefly describe each course or lecture.

- (a) I have presented at the Orientation School for New Family Court Judges on the topic of DSS Abuse/Neglect cases every year since 2015.
- (b) Since 2018, I have been privileged to have seven of our newly elected family court judges sit with me at various times for a week of court as part of their required training.
- (c) I have presented at the Lexington County Volunteer Juvenile Arbitrator Training Program every year since 2014 except one.
- (d) Since 2014, I have regularly presided over numerous ceremonies which included giving a speech and administering the oath to new guardian ad litem for the Lexington Guardian ad Litem Program. Thus far, I have administered the oath to over 100 volunteers who have offered to serve as guardian ad litem in DSS abuse / neglect actions.
- (e) I participated as a presenter at the Lexington County Bar Association Judicial Panel CLE on April 16, 2012, and September 28, 2016.
- (f) I served as moderator / presenter as an attorney with a panel of Family Court Judges at the Family Court Bench / Bar CLE in December 2011, on the topic of "How to settle cases in today's economy".
- (g) I served as a panel member for a presentation at the Family Court Bench / Bar CLE in December 2008, on the topic of "Blended Mediation and Arbitration in Family Court".

22. Provide, as a separate attachment, your continuing legal or judicial education report from the past five years.

Please see attached reports.

23. List all published books and articles you have written and give citations and the dates of publication for each.

N/A

24. Please furnish as a separate attachment, two examples of legal articles, briefs, orders, or other legal writings for which you can claim sole or primary authorship. If you cannot claim sole authorship, please explain the extent to which you are the primary author, to include a description of the other authors and their contributions. The writing samples are for the Commission's use only and will not be published. (If you are a judge and are not seeking a different type of judgeship, this question is inapplicable.)

N/A

25. What is your rating or membership status, if any, by any legal rating organization; such as, Best Lawyers, Chambers, Legal 500, Martindale-Hubbell, Who's Who Legal, Super Lawyers, Million Dollar Advocates Forum, etc.? If you are currently a member of the judiciary, list your last available rating, if any.

BV – Martindale-Hubbell

26. List all bar associations and professional organizations of which you are a member and give the titles and dates of any offices you have held in such groups.

- (a) South Carolina Bar
- (b) South Carolina Conference of Family Court Judges
- (c) South Carolina Family Court Judges Advisory Committee

27. Have you ever held public office other than judicial office? If so, list the periods of your service, the office or offices involved, and whether you were elected or appointed. Also, state whether or not you have timely filed your report with the State Ethics Commission during the period you held public office. If not, were you ever subject to a penalty? If so, give details, including dates.

I have never held any other public office other than judicial office. I have timely filed my reports and have never been subject to penalty.

28. For sitting or former judges, list all employment you had while serving as a judge (whether full-time or part-time, contractual or at will, consulting or otherwise) other than elected judicial office. Specify your dates of employment, employer, major job responsibilities, and supervisor.

N/A

29. Have you ever been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial, or other public office? If so, give details, including dates.

Yes. In 1992 I ran unsuccessfully for the South Carolina House of Representatives, House District 39 (Saluda and Lexington Counties). I ran unsuccessfully for the Lexington School District One School Board in 2002. In the Fall of 2006 (election February 2007) I ran unsuccessfully for Family Court Judge, Eleventh Judicial Circuit, Seat 2.

30. Have you ever been engaged in any occupation, business, or profession other than the practice of law, teaching of law, or holding judicial or other public office? If so, give details, including a description of your occupation, business, or profession, the dates of your employment, and the name of your business or employer.

None, other than my employment during my undergraduate education as a loss prevention officer with Macy's Department Store.

31. Are you now an officer or director or involved in the management of any business enterprise? Explain the nature of the business, your duties, and the term of your service.

No

32. Are you now or have you ever been employed as a "lobbyist," as defined by S.C. Code § 2-17-10(13), or have you acted in the capacity of a "lobbyist's principal," as defined by S.C. Code § 2-17-10(14)? If so, give the dates of your employment or activity in such capacity and specify by whom you were directed or employed.

No

33. Provide, as a **separate attachment**, a complete, current financial net worth statement that itemizes in detail:

- (a) the identity and value of all financial assets held, directly or indirectly, including, but not limited to, bank accounts, real estate, securities, trusts, investments, and other financial holdings; and
- (b) the identity and amount of each liability owed, directly or indirectly, which is in excess of \$1,000, including, but not limited to, debts, mortgages, loans, and other financial obligations.

(A net worth statement form is provided with this questionnaire and you must use this format for submission of your financial statement.)

NOTE: The Commission may require written confirmation that financial obligations have been satisfied or that the parties have agreed upon a payment schedule.

A complete, current financial net worth statement was provided to the Commission.

34. (a) Have you filed state and federal income tax returns for the last 5 years? If no, please provide details.

Yes

- (b) Have you or any business with which you are associated been delinquent in any local, state, or federal taxes? If yes, please provide details.

No

(c) Has a tax lien or other collection procedure ever been instituted against you by federal, state, or local authorities? If yes, please provide details.

No

(d) Have you ever defaulted on a student loan? If so, please provide details.

No

(e) Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? If so, please provide details, along with proof of satisfaction of any liens or defaults.

No

35. Since filing with the Commission your letter of intent to run for judicial office, have you accepted lodging, transportation, entertainment, food, meals, beverages, money, or any other thing of value as defined by S.C. Code § 2-17-10(1) from a lobbyist or lobbyist's principal? If so, please specify the item or items you received, the date of receipt, and the lobbyist or lobbyist's principal involved.

No

36. Itemize (by amount, type, and date) all expenditures, other than those for travel and room and board, made by you, or on your behalf in furtherance of your candidacy for the position you seek. If you have spent over \$100, have you reported your expenditures to the House and Senate Ethics Committees?

N/A

37. List the recipient and amount of all contributions made by you, a member of your immediate family, or by a business with whom you are associated, to members of the General Assembly within the past four years. If you participate in any employer-mandated contributions to a PAC or any other political entity, please describe and note your personal involvement in contributions. If you are a sitting judge, please include such contributions since your last screening.

N/A

38. Have you or has anyone acting on your behalf solicited or collected funds to aid in the promotion of your candidacy? If so, please specify the amount, solicitor, donor, and date of the solicitation.

No

39. Describe any financial arrangements or business relationships you have, or have had in the past, that could constitute or result in a possible conflict of interest in the position you seek or currently hold. Explain how you would resolve any potential conflict of interest.

N/A

40. Describe any interest you or a member of your immediate family has in real property:
- (a) in which there is a potential conflict of interest with your involvement in a South Carolina state or local public agency;
 - (b) in which there have been public improvements of \$200 or more that adjoins property in which there have been public improvements of \$200 or more; or
 - (c) which was sold, leased, or rented to a state or local public agency in South Carolina.

N/A

List the interest you hold and the value and location of the property. Identify as applicable the:

- (a) nature of any potential conflict of interest;
- (b) nature and value of any public improvements; and
- (c) South Carolina state or local public agency which purchased or is leasing or renting such property.

Attach a copy of any contract or agreement.

N/A

41. Identify any personal property interest you or a member of your immediate family sold, leased, or rented to a South Carolina state or local public agency. Identify the property, its amount or value, and the name of the agency. Attach a copy of any contract or agreement.

N/A

42. For sitting judges, if you currently hold an interest in stock or other securities or have held such an interest, list each stock you currently own or owned during the prior calendar year. If you prefer, you may attach broker or account records containing the requested information instead of listing it here.

Please see brokerage statement attached to Confidential Financial Statement provided in response to question #33 above.

43. For sitting judges, have you ever accepted anything of value from an attorney or litigant in a matter currently or previously before you or your court? If so, please give the details, including the name of the attorney or litigant and the thing of value you received.

No

44. For sitting judges, have you used the services of your staff, for which you did not pay, while campaigning for this office?

No

45. Have you ever been arrested, charged, or held by federal, state, or other law enforcement authorities for violation or for suspicion of violation of any federal law or regulation, state law or regulation, or county or municipal law, regulation, or ordinance, or any other law, including another country's law? If so, give details but do not include traffic violations subject to a penalty of \$125 or less. You must include any and all arrests, including, but not limited to, offenses for driving under the influence or similar traffic offenses. Include all arrests that resulted in expungement, which will be redacted. If you have questions regarding whether to include an offense, please contact the Commission.

[All answers have been received and considered by the Commission, and as noted above, any expunged matters are redacted from the record.]

46. Have you, to your knowledge, ever been under federal, state, or local investigation for possible violation of a criminal statute? If yes, explain.

No

47. Have you ever been sued by a client? Have you ever been a named party (personally or professionally) in or had a pecuniary interest in any civil or criminal proceedings? If so, give details, including, but not limited to, dates, and resolutions.

I have never been sued by a client. I was listed as a Defendant in a foreclosure action (1999-CP-32-0249) involving some marital property owned by a former client of mine (Brenda Zickgraf) and her husband. I was named as a Defendant as a result of the attorney fees I was awarded in a Temporary Order issued in the divorce case (#1998-DR-32-940) on June 8, 1998. I was listed as a possible lien holder on the property that was subject to foreclosure and the Plaintiff, First Union Mortgage Corp., was attempting to address my possible lien in the foreclosure proceeding. The foreclosure case was filed on January 29, 1999, and a Final Order was issued on June 10, 1999. The Final Order held that any lien created by the attorney fees order was deemed to be junior and subordinate to Plaintiff's first mortgage and allowed foreclosure of Plaintiff's first mortgage.

48. If you are in private practice, are you covered by malpractice insurance and, if so, how long have you carried malpractice insurance? If applicable, have you ever been covered by a tail policy? If so, please explain when you were covered by a tail policy. Also, if applicable, indicate your coverage and deductible for your current malpractice policy.

I was covered by a tail policy upon my departure from The Dooley Law Firm, P.A. in June 2012. The tail policy limits are \$2 million dollars per claim.

49. Have you ever, in South Carolina or any other jurisdiction, as a lawyer, judge, or other professional, been cautioned with or without a finding of misconduct, sanctioned, or disciplined for lawyer, judicial, or other professional misconduct or has any jurisdiction found that you committed any misconduct? If so, give the details and describe any final disposition. Include any and all confidential and public sanctions, disciplines, letters of caution, or findings of misconduct of any kind. Private or confidential dispositions will be redacted.

[Yes and no responses are redacted for all candidates unless there is a public discipline.]

50. Have you ever been investigated by the Department of Social Services? If so, give the details and the resolution. Has your name ever been enrolled on the Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect? If so, give the details.

No

51. Have you directly or indirectly requested the pledge of any member of the General Assembly as to your election for the position for which you are being screened, or have you been offered a conditional pledge of support by any legislator pending the outcome of your screening? Have you received the assurance of any public official or public employee that they will seek the pledge of any member of the General Assembly as to your election for the position for which you are being screened? If so, give details.

No, to both questions.

52. Have you requested any third parties to contact members of the General Assembly on your behalf before the final and formal screening report has been released? Describe the campaigning you have done for this election and include a list of those individuals you have asked to campaign on your behalf and, to the best of your knowledge, those who have campaigned for you on their own initiative.

No and none.

53. Are you familiar with the 48-hour rule, which prohibits a candidate from seeking pledges until after the draft report becomes final, which occurs on the day and time specified on the Commission's published screening schedule?

Yes

54. Since submitting your letter of intent to become a candidate, have you or has anyone acting on your behalf contacted any member of the Judicial Merit Selection Commission about your candidacy or intention to become a candidate? If so, give details.

No

55. List the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of five (5) persons from whom you are providing references. Also, provide the Commission with **original letters** of recommendation from each person listed herein, including their signature (preferably in blue ink). **The Commission will not accept a photocopy or electronic submission of a letter of recommendation and failure to include all five (5) original letters of recommendation in your packet when you submit it will render your packet incomplete.** Please **do not** have references mail your reference letters to the Commission directly. *You must return the five (5) original letters of recommendation to the Commission with your application.*

(a) Dr. Terry O. Norton, MD FACS
[Redacted]

(b) Ransom (Randy) H. Gibson
[Redacted]

(c) Adrienne Cooley
[Redacted]

(d) Rebecca P. Williams
[Redacted]

(e) Jason Williams
[Redacted]

56. Are you active on or a member of a social media or Internet site such as, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, etc.?

If so, please list the account names for each account and the relevant platform.

How would your use of social media or other similar types of Internet sites be affected if you were serving in a judicial capacity?

I have both a Facebook [Redacted]and Instagram [Redacted]account. Since becoming a judge, I have limited my contacts on both sites to only family and close personal friends who I would not have appearing before me in the courtroom. I primarily use these sites to follow information regarding my hobbies of music, kayaking, and woodworking.

57. List all civic, charitable, educational, social, and fraternal organizations of which you are or have been a member during the past five years and include any offices held in such a group, and any professional honors, awards, or other forms of recognition received and not listed elsewhere.

None

58. Provide any other information that may reflect positively or negatively on your candidacy, or which you believe should be disclosed in connection with consideration of you for nomination for the position you seek. This information may include how your life experiences have affected or influenced the kind or type of judge you have been or plan to be.

I have been a member of the South Carolina Bar for 35 years and have spent the majority of my professional life involved in the Family Courts of South Carolina. I began as a lawyer who practiced in Family Court and have been honored to serve as a Family Court Judge for the past 12 years. I truly believe that my life experiences as a judge for 12 years, a practicing attorney for 23 years, a husband for 38 years and a father for 28 years have all combined to make me very well qualified to continue to serve.

I would respectfully submit that I am more qualified now than when I was previously found “qualified and nominated” by this Commission in 2007, 2012, and 2019. I have matured and worked hard to improve both my knowledge of the law and my courtroom conduct and demeanor. I feel compelled to note that, at this time, there are only ten actively serving family court judges in the State of South Carolina who have served longer. Therefore, I believe I have a depth of experience and a record of dedicated, faithful service that I am hopeful will be deemed worthy of the honor of continuing to serve for another term.

Since I began in 2012, I have approached being a Judge much the same as I did the practice of law. I work each day to be a better Judge than the day before. I carry with me every day the belief that the Family Court is one of the most important courts in the State, since our decisions affect the lives of so many people in real time at what is often the most emotional and difficult time in their lives. As a result, I work hard to treat every case as the most important case I will hear that day because to the litigants involved, it is the most important case.

During my tenure as a Judge, I have worked hard to improve not only the job that I do and the role I play in the Family Court system, but to also improve and elevate the system as a whole and maintain the professionalism and integrity of the process and all those involved. I am immensely proud of the work done in the Family Courts. I hope the work I have done both in the courtroom and by involvement in other areas to improve the system, shows my level of commitment to continue to improve what we all do and maintain the highest standards of professionalism and integrity that the citizens are entitled to expect from the judiciary.

I sincerely hope that I will be given the opportunity and privilege of serving another term to continue the work I have come to enjoy and value so much.

YOUR SIGNATURE WILL BE HELD TO CONSTITUTE A WAIVER OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF ANY PROCEEDING BEFORE A GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE OR ANY INFORMATION CONCERNING YOUR CREDIT.

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

Signature: _____

Sworn to before me this ____ day of _____, 2024.

(Notary Signature)

(Notary Printed Name)
Notary Public for South Carolina
My Commission Expires: _____