



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

**Administrative Law Court**  
**(New Candidate)**

Full Name: Honorable Bryan S. Jeffries

Business Address: City of Columbia Municipal Court  
811 Washington Street  
Columbia, SC 29201

Business Telephone: 803-545-3216

1. Do you plan to serve your full term if elected?  
Yes
2. Do you have any plans to return to private practice one day?  
No
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?

Ex Parte Communications should be avoided if at all possible. In the six years I have spent on the bench as a municipal judge I have never participated in ex parte communication with attorneys or parties to a matter, or ever been accused of doing so. As a prosecutor for seventeen years and as an attorney for twenty years prior to my time as a full-time judge I have never participated in ex-parte communications with a judge or been accused of doing so. I am not aware of any particular situation where it would be acceptable or tolerated.

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?

Yes. I would grant the motion and recuse myself if any of the parties presented a credible reason to believe I may be biased or if I believed I may even appear to be biased.

6. If elected, what standards would you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality?

As a sitting judge I do not accept gifts or social hospitality from individuals who I reasonably believe could come before me as attorneys or parties in a case. That standard would certainly continue if I were elected to the Administrative Law Court.

7. How would you handle a situation in which you became aware of misconduct or appearance of infirmity of a lawyer or of a fellow judge?

As a judge I am bound to the judicial canons. Ethical rules pursuant to those canons require reporting to the appropriate commission any such observations involving lawyer or judicial conduct. I would adhere to the appropriate rule and report it to either the Commission on Lawyer Conduct or the Commission on Judicial Conduct as appropriate.

8. Are you affiliated with any political parties, boards or commissions that, if you are elected, would need to be re-evaluated?

No

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

No

10. How would you handle the drafting of orders?

I have always been diligent in timely issuing Orders following decisions I have made as a judge or as a hearing officer. I would continue to do so.

11. What method would you use to ensure that you and your staff meet deadlines?

Calendar reminders and the strict enforcement of deadlines are tools I would continue to use to keep myself and support staff accountable.

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

A judge’s job is to enforce the law evenly without passion or prejudice. Activism has no place on the bench. However, in promoting the law and the Court, a judge can and should attempt to lift up the profession where he or she can.

13. Canon 4 allows a judge to engage in activities to improve the law, legal system, and administration of justice. What activities would you plan to undertake to further this improvement of the legal system

I would continue to speak to youth and young adults that are interested in the law in instructional spaces, church and community forums. I take every opportunity I am presented with to educate the public as to how the judicial process works. I believe strongly in the basic tenants of access to justice. I also believe in the importance of committing time to mentoring judges who are newer to the bench. I do this currently in my capacity as a Fifth Judicial Circuit Representative for the South Carolina Summary Court Judges Association.

14. Do you feel that the pressure of serving as a judge will strain personal relationships (i.e. spouse, children, friends, or relatives)? How would you plan to address this?

I do not. I have been a judge for 6 years and I have found that people generally respect the position and the responsibilities that come along with it.

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

No.

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

No. I would not.

17. 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.

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

Yes.

19. What percentage of your legal experience has dealt with cases that appear before the Administrative Law Court? Please describe to the Commission your experience in these areas.

Approximately 70% of my overall legal experience as an attorney in private practice has been appearing before administrative law judges. I appeared regularly, representing clients, in hearings 4-5 times a week from approximately January 2008 until February 2023. These were hearings before Administrative Law Judges assigned to the Social Security Administration in disability cases. I do not have significant experience with cases in the South Carolina Administrative Law Court. However, I worked as a contract hearings officer for the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Appeals and Hearings, from 2012 until 2023. In that role I acted in a quasi-judicial capacity hearing administrative appeals involving South Carolina Medicaid. 100% of this experience involved South Carolina administrative law. As hearing officer, I oversaw settlement negotiations in advance of hearings, ruled on preliminary motions, and conducted pre-hearing conferences. I also conducted hearings involving both written and oral testimony and allowing for cross-examination. I typically examined evidence, heard testimony and issued written decisions. I prepared and issued these decisions, along with written findings of fact and conclusions of law therein, upon consideration of the whole record, or those parts of it cited by a party and supported by and in accord with reliable, probative, and substantial evidence. My decisions could be reviewed upon appeal of any party by the South Carolina Administrative Law Court.

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

I believe the appropriate demeanor for a judge should be calm, even-tempered, rational and dispassionate at all times. The judge's demeanor can be relaxed somewhat when the judge is at home or in typical social settings. However, the judge should refrain from any behavior that is unbecoming of the position he or she holds at all times.

21. 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?

While anger is a natural human emotion, it should not be expressed outwardly towards attorneys, pro se litigants, members of the public, staff or anyone else while that judge is acting in the judge's official capacity.

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

\_\_\_\_ original signed and notarized \_\_\_\_\_

Sworn to before me this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public for S.C.  
My Commission Expires: \_\_\_\_\_