



**JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION  
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE  
2022**

Court, Position, and Seat # for which you are applying: Pickens County, Master-in-Equity

1. Name: Mr.  
Mrs.  
Ms. Kimberly Suzanne Newton

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

Are you currently serving in some capacity as a judge? If part-time, please note.  
(Includes Municipal, Magistrate, Etc.) No

Home Address: (Redacted)

County of Residence: Oconee

Business Address: 104 Pinnacle St., Clemson, SC 29631

E-Mail Address: (Redacted)

Telephone Number: (home):  
(office): 864-654-6042  
(cell): (Redacted)

2. Date of Birth: (Redacted) 1982  
Place of Birth: Anderson, South Carolina  
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.  
Divorced.

- (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.

Divorced on July 16, 2010, Richland County Family Court, State of South Carolina, Ms. Newton was the moving party, One Year's Continuous Separation, no children.

Divorced on May 6, 2019, Pickens County Family Court, State of South Carolina, Ms. Newton was the moving party, One Year's Continuous Separation, no children.

- (e) State the names of your children and their ages. If your children are old enough to work, include the occupation of each 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 Georgia, Fall 2000 (transferred to Clemson University)
- (b) Clemson University, 2000-2004, Bachelor of Science in Business Management
- (c) University of South Carolina School of Law, 2007-2010, Juris Doctorate

- 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) Academic Tutor, Torts I and II, 2008-2010
- (b) Associate Student Works Editor, South Carolina Law Review, 2008-2010

- 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.

South Carolina, 2010

- 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) August 2010-July 2011, Judicial Law Clerk, The Honorable John E. Waites, U.S. Bankruptcy Court. As a judicial law clerk, I assisted in legal research and drafting orders.
- (b) September 2011-March 2013, Associate, Nelson, Mullins, Riley & Scarborough, LLP. I worked in the litigation department in the Greenville office. I assisted with commercial foreclosures, general legal research, and drafting legal briefs, motions, complaints, answers and settlement agreements.
- (c) March 2013-Present, Attorney, Newton Law Firm of Clemson, LLC. I oversee all aspects of residential real estate closing, which includes overseeing the firm's escrow account. A small percentage of our practice also focuses on probate and estate planning and business formations.

**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.
- (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.

- (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.

For the past 9 years, my practice has been transactional in nature, so I have not appeared in court very often. I have handled a few quiet title actions in Master's court to clear the cloud on title when property is purchased at tax sale. The main issues addressed are to ensure that the tax sale procedure was followed correctly and that anyone who may be able to claim an interest in the property has been named as defendants and given notice of the quiet title action. While I was an associate at Nelson Mullins, I handled several commercial foreclosure actions in Master's court.

- (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.
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: none  
(b) state: once or twice a year
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: 5%  
(b) criminal: none  
(c) domestic: none  
(d) other: Real Estate, Probate, and Estate Planning: 95%
14. What percentage of your practice in trial court during the past five years or in the five years prior to your election to the bench involved matters that went to a jury, including those that settled prior to trial?  
(a) jury: none  
(b) non-jury: 100%

During the past five years, did you most often serve as sole counsel, chief counsel, or co-counsel? Sole counsel.

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.

In the cases I have handled, the defendants are generally in default or do not appear at the hearing so the issues have not had to be litigated.

(a) Willie Galloway v. Estate of Rebecca W. Blassingame, et. al, 2014-CP-39-42. Generally, quiet title actions deriving from tax sales are default actions. However, in this case, one of the defendants filed an answer. My clients had purchased the property at tax sale and filed the quiet title action to clear the title. One of the heirs that was named as a defendant filed an answer but was not represented by counsel. Discovery was requested in anticipation that the tax sale may be challenged. The defendant did not appear at the hearing so the judge ruled in my client's favor. This case was significant because I had to be prepared to question the defendant if she appeared at the hearing and had to prepare my clients in case they had to testify.

(b) Andrew Warren v. Carmen Natasha Dionne Reese, et. al, 2016-CP-39-01144. This Quiet Title action was significant because the bank that was named as one of the defendants filed an answer contesting that the tax sale procedure was done properly. The bank also filed a foreclosure action against the property in question at the same time the quiet title action was pending. I was able to work with the bank's attorney to resolve the issues and successfully move forward to complete the quiet title action.

(c) Timothy Edward Campbell v. Estate of Orestes r. Mora. et. al, 2019-CP-37-00781. This quiet title action had some complexities because the defaulting taxpayer was deceased. There were some extra measures that had to be taken to locate known heirs and give proper notice.

(d) Palmetto Pride Property Management, LLC v. Estate of Doretha Sanders, et. al, 2017-CP-39-01275. This was a quiet title action where the defendants named had expressed that they did not object to the action. As the Plaintiff's attorney, I explained to them why they were named in the action even though they did not object and advised them to seek their own counsel to advise them on the matter.

(e) Town of Central v. W. M. Phillips, et. al, 2017-CP-39-00940. This was a petition to close a portion of a road in the Town of Central. While no matters had to be litigated, it was important that all statutory procedures were followed to properly close the road.

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. None.

- (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. None.

- (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. No.
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. N/A
  - (a)
  - (b)
  - (c)
  - (d)
  - (e)
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 State Court, 2010
  - (b) South Carolina Federal Court, 2010
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 was an Adjunct Professor at Tri-County Technical College in 2016 and taught Introduction to Law.
  - (b) I have also spoken on real estate and landlord tenant issues for the Law for Non-Lawyers seminar that the SC Bar hosts each year.
  - (c) I have held seminars for several real estate agencies to educate them on various real estate topics.
22. Provide, as a separate attachment, your continuing legal or judicial education report from the past five years.
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.)

I have attached two orders which I contributed to significantly while clerking for Judge Waites. Judge Waites also contributed to these orders.

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.

N/A. I am not a member of any of these organizations.

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 Association

(b) Pickens County Bar Association

(c) Clemson Area Chamber of Commerce. Chairman of the Board, 2017-2018

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. No.

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. No.

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.

I have rental property that I own and manage for myself. I have been doing this since 2005.

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.)

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

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

- 34. Has a tax lien or other collection procedure ever been instituted against you by federal, state, or local authorities? Have you ever defaulted on a student loan? Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? If so, give details. Also, proof of satisfaction of any liens or defaults must be submitted with your application package. 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? None.
- 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 are a sitting judge, please include such contributions since your last screening. None.
- 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. None.
- 40. Describe any interest you or a member of your immediate family has in real property: N/A



- (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.

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. None.
- 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. N/A
- 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. N/A
- 44. For sitting judges, have you used the services of your staff, for which you did not pay, while campaigning for this office? N/A
- 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.

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) John E. Waites
  - (b) Jesse A. Renaud
  - (c) Shane Miller
  - (d) Sandy Hall
  - (e) BJ Skelton

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

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

- (a) Facebook
- (b) Instagram
- (c) LinkedIn

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

My current use of social media is to keep in touch with family and friends. My use of social media will not change much if I do serve in a judicial capacity. I am already cautious of what I post and always try to steer clear of political or opinionated posts.

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.
- (a) Clemson Area Chamber of Commerce. I served as Chairman of the Board in 2017. I was awarded Business Woman of the Year in 2016.
  - (b) Rotary Club of Clemson
  - (c) Leadership Clemson, Class of 2014
  - (d) Sertoma Club

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 had the privilege of working with some of the most talented judges and lawyers around South Carolina and I have learned so much from them. While in law school, I clerked for Nelson Mullins in Columbia. Their clerkship program allows clerks to work with several lawyers and they encourage attending court and client meetings, which is an amazing opportunity to observe and learn. I was fortunate to also work in their Greenville office after I finished my judicial clerkship. While there, I was mentored by many excellent lawyers.

My judicial clerkship with Judge Waites was such an amazing experience and gave me the unique opportunity to have a backstage pass to the court system and learn from one of the best judges around. Judge Waites led by example by being hard-working, scholarly, fair, impartial, and courteous to everyone that appeared before him. I recently attended his retirement ceremony and the legacy he left is one to be emulated.

For the past 9 years, I have had the privilege of working alongside my father. He is a pillar of the community and has been in private practice since 1976. He has taught me so much not only about real estate law, but also how to treat employees and clients.

I believe my clerkships, legal experience and extensive background in real estate will prove beneficial if given the opportunity to serve as Master-in-Equity for Pickens County.

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 \_\_\_\_\_, 2022.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Notary Signature)

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