



**JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION  
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE  
2023**

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

Honorable Alex Kinlaw, Jr. Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Seat #4

1. Name: Mr. Isaac Louis Johnson, Jr.  
Mrs.  
Ms.

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

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

Home Address: [Redacted]

County of Residence: Greenville

Business Address: Office of Hearing Operations, 475 N. Main Street, Mauldin, SC 29622

E-Mail Address: [Redacted]

Telephone Number: (home): [Redacted]  
(office): (866) 827-6721 (ext. 29356)  
(cell): [Redacted]

2. Date of Birth: [Redacted] 1958  
Place of Birth: Greenville, 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

- (b) If married, state the date of your marriage and your spouse's full name and occupation.

August 15, 1987

Cheryl Deborah Johnson

Retired Municipal Court Assistant Clerk of Court, City of Greenville, SC

- (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.

No

- (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.

University of South Carolina 1978-1981 B.A. Journalism,

University of South Carolina School of Law 1983-1986 Juris Doctor

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.

None

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 1986, Took the bar exam on one occasion.

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.

1986-1987

Law Offices of the Honorable Alex Kinlaw, Jr.

Associate Attorney for Judge Kinlaw. Handled a variety of matters. Performed title searches and helped to prepare documents for closings. Attended bankruptcy court proceedings. Represented clients in divorce proceedings. Represented clients in General Sessions court. I attended a parole hearing, and our client was paroled after serving 20 years in prison for murder.

1987-1992

Eighth Circuit Solicitor's Office

Assistant Solicitor. Prosecuted juveniles in Family Court. Handled waiver hearings which involved the waiver of juveniles to General Sessions court. Represented the Department of Social Services in Family Court. Prosecuted criminal offenses ranging from driving offenses to murder.

1992-1996

Thirteenth Circuit Solicitor's Office

Assistant Solicitor. Prosecuted criminal offenses ranging from driving offenses to murder. During my tenure in the Solicitor's Office, I was appointed the lead prosecutor of the violent crimes unit, and I prosecuted numerous homicides and violent offenses.

1996-1997

Mitchell Bouton Duggan Yokel and Childs

Associate Attorney. I represented Wal-Mart in civil actions. I attended depositions. Also, I represented clients as plaintiffs in civil actions. Further, I represented clients in General Sessions court. I prosecuted criminal cases in municipal court.

1997-1998

Code Law Firm

Associate Attorney. Represented clients in family court in divorce and custody matters. Represented the Department of Transportation in civil actions. Represented clients in General Sessions court for various criminal offenses.

1998-1999

Thirteenth Circuit Solicitor's Office

Assistant Solicitor. I was the first Assistant Solicitor to be located in the Greenville County Law Enforcement Center and acted as the liaison and advisor to all law enforcement agencies in Greenville County.

1999-2001

Greenville Technical College, Greenville, South Carolina

Adjunct Instructor. I was an instructor in the paralegal department, and I taught Constitutional Law, Family Law, Contracts and Civil Liability.

1999-2007

United States Attorney's Office

Assistant United States Attorney. Prosecuted federal offenses including violent crimes, child pornography, international drug trafficking crimes, bank robbery cases and firearm offenses. Oversaw numerous wiretaps. Prosecuted Organized Crime Enforcement Task Force (OCDEFT) cases. Argued twice before the United States Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals.

2007-2009

McAngus Goudelock and Courie

Member (partner). Insurance defense. Represented Ingles Grocery Stores, Bank of America, Allstate, State Farm, Nationwide, and Bojangles restaurants.

2009-Present

Social Security Administration (Office of Hearings Operations)

Attorney/Advisor. Advise Administrative Law Judges on policies, regulations and codes governing the Social Security Administration. Draft disability decisions.

2009-2020

Chief Municipal Judge for the city of Fountain Inn

Presided over jury trials. Conducted pretrial conferences. Held bond hearings. Issued search warrants and handled alleged violations of civil ordinances.

2012-2017

Chief Municipal Judge for the city of Travelers Rest

Chief Judge

2015-Present

Assistant Municipal Judge for the city of Greer

Assistant Municipal Judge

2018-Present

Chief Judge for the town of Gray Court

Chief Judge

2022-Present

North Greenville University

Adjunct Instructor in the online criminal justice program.

2022-Present

South Carolina Office of Indigent Defense

Represent indigent clients in General Sessions where there exists a conflict of interest issue with the Public Defender's Office. Represent clients in Post-Conviction Relief actions.

**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.

Regarding my experience in criminal matters over the past five years, I have presided over criminal cases in municipal court. I have also represented defendants in General Sessions, and I currently represent clients in Post-Conviction Relief actions in Common Pleas court. Within the last five years, I represented a client charged with attempted murder, and because of his prior record, he was facing life imprisonment. After negotiations with the Assistant Solicitor, my client pleaded guilty to Assault and Battery First Degree and received a five-year sentence.

As for my experience in civil matters, as a partner at McAngus from 2007 through 2009, I practiced civil defense and represented numerous corporations. Participated in the discovery process. Participated in several mediations. Tried a premises liability case in Common Pleas court that involved the defense of no actual or constructive knowledge and received a defense verdict. I also tried a negligence case involving an automobile accident and received a defense verdict. Further, I tried several negligence cases issued in Magistrate's court and received defense verdicts. Moreover, I participated in numerous civil cases that resulted in a settlement.

Within the last five years, I have made approximately 15 appearances before a Circuit Court judge.

- (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.
- (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: 0%
- (b) state: 100%

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: 0%
- (b) criminal: 100%
- (c) domestic: 0%
- (d) other: 0%

14. During the past five years

- (a) What percentage of your practice was in trial court, including cases that settled prior to trial? 20%
- (b) What number of cases went to trial and resulted in a verdict? 0%
- (c) What number of cases went to trial and resolved after the plaintiff's or State's case? 0% (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? 0%

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

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?

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) May 2004 Conspiracy to possess and possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine, possess with intent to distribute 50 grams or more of crack cocaine, two counts of being a felon in possession of a firearm, two counts of using and carrying a firearm during and relation to a drug trafficking crime. Carlos Robinson was sentenced to 960 months imprisonment as a career offender.

Fourth Circuit affirmed Robinson's conviction and sentence No. 07-4638, 2008 WL 398245, at \*2 (4<sup>th</sup> Circuit February 14, 2008 (unpublished))

This matter was significant because the defendant was a major drug trafficker in the Upstate of South Carolina and received a substantial prison sentence.

(b) State v. Brian Williams Scott

February 1997. Scott strangled and stabbed his roommate and dumped his body in a trash bin. Scott was convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison.

(c) 1994 State v. David Paul Atkinson. The victim died two days after being admitted to Greenville Memorial Hospital in November 1992 with second-degree burns over 15 to 20 percent of her body. Mr. Atkinson burned the victim with a steam iron, but the victim actually died in the hospital due to morphine intoxication. The hospital never located the morphine pump. However, I charged the defendant with murder. The jury convicted the defendant of involuntary manslaughter. The Honorable C. Victor Pyle told me after the verdict that the State presented one of the best cases he had ever tried as a trial judge.

(d) State v. Lawrence Merle Bruno

November 1994 Mr. Bruno was convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison.

(e) State v. Christopher Jermaine Wells December 1992

Wells was 19 years old and was convicted of manslaughter in a shooting that grew out of a squirt gun fight between rival gangs.

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) United States v. Carlos Desmond Robinson, United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit decided February 14, 2008

(b) United States v. Edward Lewis Whitlow, decided December 17, 2002.

(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.

2009-2020 Chief Municipal Judge for the city of Fountain Inn – Appointed

2012-2017 Chief Municipal Judge for the city of Travelers Rest – Appointed

2015-Present Assistant Municipal Judge for the city of Greer – Appointed

2018-Present Chief Judge for the town of Gray Court – Appointed

Jurisdiction is limited based on the applicable statutory penalties as set out in the South Carolina Code of Laws.

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) N/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.

South Carolina Bar, admitted November 14, 1986

United States District Court for the District of South Carolina, admitted December 23, 1992

United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, admitted May 27, 1998

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.

Greenville Technical College. Constitutional Law, Family Law, Law Contracts and Civil Liability.

North Greenville University

Teach the following courses: Report Writing for Criminal Justice, Conflict Resolution and Mediation, Criminal Law, Judicial Process, Legal Issues.

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. None



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.)

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

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) Greenville County Bar

(b) Upstate Judicial Association, President since 2022

(c) Municipal Association of South Carolina

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.

City of Fountain Inn Supervisor: Edward Case, City Administrator and Shawn Bell

City of Travelers Rest Supervisor: Dianna Gracely, City Administrator

City of Greer Honorable Henry Mims, Chief Judge

Town of Gray Court Garry R. Smith, Town Consultant

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.

No

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 terms of your service.  
Yes.  
SHARE (Sunbelt Human Advancement Resources). It is a nonprofit federally funded community action agency. It employs almost 400 employees. Board member since April 2017, and board chairman since January 2022.

Member of Board of Trustees, North Greenville University  
Board member since 2020

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.**

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?

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 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.

None

40. Describe any interest you or a member of your immediate family has in real property:

None

- (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.

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.

None

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.

No

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.

Yes. Covered since July 1, 2022

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

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

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. Gene Fant [Redacted]

(b) Kirsten Pressley [Redacted]

(c) Tim Sorrells [Redacted]

(d) Thomas Epting [Redacted]

(e) Pamela Sims, [Redacted]

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

Facebook: [Redacted]

LinkedIn: [Redacted]

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? It would not be affected at all because I do not post on any social media sites.

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) Gideons International

(b)

(c)

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.

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 \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

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

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