



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

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

Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, Circuit Court Judge, Seat #4

1. Name: Mr. William Eugene Grove

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

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: Greenville County, SC

Business Address: 100 Williams Street
Greenville, SC 29601

E-Mail Address: [Redacted]

Telephone Number: (home): [Redacted]
(office): (864) 516-2222
(cell): [Redacted]

2. Date of Birth: [Redacted] 1983
Place of Birth: Lumberton, NC
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 military service.

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 old enough to work, include the occupation of each child.

Family Status: Married on 01/30/2016 to Kathleen Lyall Grove. Lawyer.
Never divorced, three children.
[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) Winthrop University, August 2001-December 2005. Graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration.
 - (b) Charleston School of Law, August 2006 – May 2009. Graduated with a 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) Moot Court, 2008 & 2009. Competed in the Craven National Moot Court Competition in Chapel Hill, NC. Served on the Moot Court Board as Associate Justice of Internal Affairs. Served as a Moot Court coach for the Citadel Moot Court class.
 - (b) Student Trial Lawyer Association, Treasurer 2008-2009
 - (c) Phi Delta Phi, Charter member, 2009.
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. Admitted to the state court bar in 2009 after passing the bar on my first attempt. Admitted to the federal court bar in 2017. I am not admitted to practice in other states and have not taken a bar exam in another state.
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) November 2009 – August 2010. Litigation Attorney, Anastopoulos & Clore, LLC. I worked on civil cases which were in active litigation. I participated fully in the discovery process by requesting and responding to interrogatories, requests for production, requests to admit, conducting depositions, etc. I filed and argued motions and argued a civil case to verdict.
- (b) August 2010 – April 2012. Assistant Public Defender, Fourth Judicial Circuit. I represented clients in each county of the Fourth Judicial Circuit (Darlington, Dillon, Chesterfield, and Marlboro Counties), but my office and the majority of my clients were in Marlboro County. I handled all manner of General Sessions' offenses and represented clients at a variety of proceedings: bond hearings, preliminary hearings, motions hearings, arraignments, pleas, trials, etc.
- (c) April 2012 – July 2015. Assistant Public Defender, Twelfth Judicial Circuit. I represented clients in both counties of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit (Florence and Marion Counties), but my office and the majority of my clients were in Florence County. I handled all manner of General Sessions' offenses and represented clients at a variety of proceedings: bond hearings, preliminary hearings, motions hearings, arraignments, pleas, trials, etc.
- (d) July 2015 – February 2019. Assistant Public Defender, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit. Representing clients in Greenville County in both General Sessions' and Magistrate Court. Represented clients at a variety of proceedings: bond hearings, preliminary hearings, motions hearings, arraignments, pleas, trials, etc. Mentored incoming Assistant Public Defenders to the practice of law and, specifically, the intricacies of public defense.
- (e) February 2019 – May 2020. Senior Level Lawyer, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit. In addition to the duties described in section (d), I worked toward improving the efficiency with which our office handled court activities to include coordinating with the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Solicitor's Office and the members of the judiciary for the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit. Served as a team leader on a team with up to 5 lawyers and a legal assistant. Teams were created to improve intra-office efficiency with collaboration through regular meetings and better organizational structure.
- (f) May 2020 – May 2021. Deputy Public Defender, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit. In addition to the duties described in sections (d) and (e), during this time I worked in a managerial capacity and handled some administrative tasks. Through regular meetings with the Circuit Defender, an administrative assistant, our office manager, and the Deputy Public Defender for Pickens County, we discussed, managed, and planned for the future of the office circuit-wide and tried to anticipate needs while maintaining a client-centered approach. I provided input on administrative and budgetary decisions.
- (g) May 2021 – present. Co-Founder/Member, Grove Ozment, LLC. Together with my law partner, Matt Ozment, we run a general litigation practice. My practice areas cover personal injury, criminal defense, and some complex civil litigation. Matt's practice area is primarily employment law, both employee- and

employer-based. He also handles general civil litigation as well as some complex civil litigation. We practice in both state and federal court. We employ an administrative assistant, Penny Singer, fulltime. As co-owners, Matt and I work jointly to manage the health of the firm, discuss budgetary decisions, and control the firm's finances. We each handle matters which sometimes involve IOLTA funds, so we share in the responsibility of overseeing that the funds are received and disbursed in accordance with the Rules. We also share the responsibility for the regular reconciliation of our trust account.

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.

In my nearly 11 years as a public defender, I defended hundreds of clients and tried a multitude of different cases in the Court of General Sessions. The range of those charges tried to verdict as sole or lead counsel include: murder; armed robbery; burglary first degree; burglary second degree; criminal sexual conduct with a minor in the second degree; criminal domestic violence of a high and aggravated nature; felony DUI resulting in great bodily injury; reckless homicide; pointing and

presenting a firearm; trafficking in cocaine base; and distribution of cocaine base, among others.

I have had the opportunity to present a number of different issues to the Circuit Court, including but not limited to: challenging the admissibility of clients' statements under Jackson v. Denno; arguing for suppression based on violations of the Fourth Amendment; challenging an out of court identification pursuant to Neil v. Biggers; challenging the collection of DNA under Schmerber v. California; arguing for (and having granted) a mistrial based on comments made by a solicitor during closing arguments; challenging expert witnesses, and; preparing expert witnesses to testify.

While the middle of my career was dedicated exclusively to the practice of criminal law, my first year of practice and my past two years have included practicing in the area of civil litigation. I have had the opportunity to practice in the Court of Common Pleas arguing motions and trying a case to verdict. In my civil litigation practice, I also spend a significant amount of time managing files and either engaging in or preparing for litigation. I respond to discovery and conduct depositions. I interact with opposing counsel and discuss strategic legal decisions with my clients, my law partner and/or our co-counsel. In my civil practice, I have handled motor vehicle accidents, slip and falls, civil rights violations, civil forfeitures, and complex litigation including nuisance suits. In addition to handling primarily plaintiff's side civil litigation, my law partner and I have also represented defendants in civil litigation.

My practice in both civil and criminal law has created a multitude of different scenarios through which I have had to navigate. My experience has provided opportunities for me to establish an expansive base of knowledge from which I can draw if chosen to serve on the Circuit Court. In many instances, I have had to learn new areas of the law quickly to provide the best advice and representation to my clients. If selected to serve as a Circuit Court judge, I am sure I would draw upon this skill often to ensure I thoroughly assess the facts and apply the law appropriately in matters before me.

My practice over the past five years has required an appearance before the Circuit Court regularly. In addition to retained criminal defense work, I also work part time as an assistant public defender in the Pickens County branch of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Public Defender Office. Between my civil practice, my retained criminal practice, and my work as a part-time public defender, I appear in front of a Circuit Court judge several times a month. Prior to May 2021, when I was working as a full time public defender, I would appear in the Court of General Sessions as many as ten days a month.

- (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: I have appeared in federal court a few times in the past two years, mostly as *pro bono* co-counsel to other lawyers in criminal matters.
- (b) state: As a full-time public defender, I appeared several times a week, almost every week. In Greenville County, General Sessions Court operates two weeks per month, on average. During weeks when General Sessions Court was not open, other appearances might include Magistrate Court, preliminary hearings, Transfer Court, and General Sessions non-jury matters. The same is true since entering private practice in 2021. I have some Magistrate Court appearances, some General Sessions appearances, and some non-jury appearances, so I find myself in court frequently.

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: 15%
- (b) criminal: 80%
- (c) domestic:
- (d) other: 5%

14. During the past five years

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

Approximately 85% or more of my cases involve one kind of litigation or another, whether it be litigation in Common Pleas, General Sessions, or a Municipal or Magistrate Court.

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

One Circuit Court case, a trial in General Sessions, resulted in a verdict in the past five years.

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

None.

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

None.

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

Sole counsel, though on more significant cases it was common practice in the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Public Defender Office for lead counsel to select a second chair, so I have also frequently acted as either lead counsel on my own cases or co-counsel on matters where I was assisting a coworker.

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) State v. Wayne Albeon Scott, Jr., 2013-GS-21-0391. Mr. Scott was charged, indicted, tried, and convicted of murder. As sole counsel on this case, I raised a claim of immunity under the Protection of Persons and Property Act (the Act). At the time of the pre-trial hearing, there was very little case law available regarding the Act, which proved challenging. Ultimately, our motion for immunity under the Act was denied and we proceeded to trial. At a trial which lasted several days, we were able to present a self-defense claim and were able to block the State's request to charge for Voluntary Manslaughter, effectively creating an "all or nothing" scenario for the jury in its deliberation. This case was significant as it gave me experience in researching and presenting to a judge a defense in a then-new area of the law. It also provided an opportunity for creativity and critical thinking, to anticipate how the State would respond to our actions in presenting their case and simultaneously making sure Mr. Scott's defense was as clearly presented to the jury as possible.
 - (b) State v. Brian Lewis, 2016-GS-23-01737. I served as lead counsel in this case where Mr. Lewis was charged, indicted, tried, and convicted of Conspiracy, Armed Robbery, and Possession of a Weapon during a Violent Crime. Immediately prior to trial, the State notified me Mr. Lewis had, just a few days prior, been charged with Conspiracy and Solicitation of a Felony. Specifically, the State alleged Mr. Lewis was conspiring from the detention center to arrange a hit on a State's witness expected to testify against him in the trial (these new charges would later be transferred to federal court for prosecution where Mr. Lewis was tried and convicted). The solicitor, the judge, and I had a chambers meeting prior to trial. My main focus was making sure this new information did not compromise Mr. Lewis's 6th Amendment rights. I was also fortunate to witness firsthand the careful balancing given by the trial judge between allowing the State to maintain a heightened level of security in the courtroom due to the new allegations while also ensuring Mr. Lewis's rights to a fair trial were protected. An unpublished state court appeal affirmed Mr. Lewis's convictions.
 - (c) State v. Jason Lamont Andrews, 2013-GS-21-0726. A case which began as a charge of Felony DUI Resulting in Death went to trial as a Reckless Homicide where I acted as sole counsel. I inherited this case from an assistant public defender who left to enter private practice. A great amount of effort had already been put into this case prior to my assignment, and Mr. Andrews and I built upon that work. We were ultimately successful in convincing the solicitor he would be unable, due to

evidentiary issues, to successfully present the case as a Felony DUI and it was directly presented for indictment as a Reckless Homicide. Mr. Andrews elected to proceed to trial and, after a trial which lasted several days, he was acquitted. This case allowed me my first opportunity into the complex realm of DUI case law and the procedures required to acquire, preserve, and present evidence in a DUI case. This case also required me to call a witness and qualify him as an expert for the purposes of entering the deceased's toxicology report into evidence, which proved critical to our defense. My client in this case expressed continued confidence in my abilities, even after the trial as we waited for the verdict to be delivered. This, in turn, gave me confidence in myself as a young trial lawyer.

- (d) State v. Estella Ruiz Gomez, 2019-GS-01771A. This case involved an undocumented immigrant from a rural part of Mexico who was charged in the homicide of her newborn child. She was directly indicted for Voluntary Manslaughter and eventually entered a guilty plea and received an eleven year sentence. This case was significant as it was incredibly complex from many different angles: her native language was an indigenous Central American dialect which originally presented many challenges in our ability to effectively communicate; the nature of her original charge (Homicide by Child Abuse) is an incredibly sensitive charge with high emotions on every side, and; her undocumented status in this country created another challenge in advocating a suitable resolution for her and another layer of complexity to consider in terms of mitigation presented to the Court. As a parent of young children, I could have allowed the facts or circumstances of this case to interfere with my ability to advocate for my client or to pursue the best possible outcome on her behalf. Instead, this case proved I have the ability to focus my efforts on the facts and the law of a particular scenario, a trait I will gladly bring with me to the bench, if elected.
- (e) State v. Dontavius H. Jackson, 2010-GS-16-01974, -01975. Mr. Jackson was tried twice on these charges: I believe the first trial was in October 2010, which resulted in a hung jury, and again in December 2010, which resulted in a conviction for Burglary First Degree and Grand Larceny. I was a new assistant public defender in the Fourth Judicial Circuit and was allowed to serve as co-counsel in both trials. Having been a practicing attorney for about a year, and having worked as a public defender for only a couple months, I was initially intimidated at the thought of a trial of that magnitude. This trial gave me an opportunity to cross examine a State's expert, to vigorously defend my client, and to hold the State to its burden...twice. This case is also significant as it showed I have the ability to prepare for complex matters very quickly. This ability has only improved in the thirteen years since.

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) I have not handled any civil appeals.
- (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) I have not handled any criminal appeals.
 - (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.

I have never held judicial office.

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.
- (a) South Carolina state court, 2009.
 - (b) US District Court for the District of South Carolina, 2017.

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 worked on the faculty for PD 103, a multi-day CLE for assistant public defenders aimed at improving trial advocacy, in 2019 and again in 2021.
 - (b) I organized the criminal law afternoon session of the Greenville County Bar's Year End CLE in February 2023 and served as a moderator for a panel discussion on the new criminal docketing system.

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

These reports are attached separately.

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.)

These samples are attached. I am the sole author of Writing Sample A. I am the primary author of Sample B. My law partner, Matt Ozment, worked on some portions of this writing.

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.

I have not pursued a rating or membership by these legal 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) Greenville County Bar Association, member 2015-present; Legislative Liaison, 2018-present;
 - (b) South Carolina Bar Association, House of Delegates, Member, 2020-present;
 - (c) South Carolina Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, Member 2010-present; Board Member, 2021-present;
 - (d) Public Defender Association, Board Member, 2019-2021;
 - (e) Haynesworth Perry American Inns of Court, Member, 2019-present;
 - (f) Federal Bar Association, Member, 2023-present

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 public office.

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. I applied for election to the Circuit Court, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, Seat #3 in 2020. Following the screening process, I was found qualified but not nominated.

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.

My only profession to date has been as a lawyer. I waited tables and worked summer and/or seasonal jobs during college and law school.

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.

I am the co-owner of the law firm Grove Ozment, LLC. Together with my law partner, Matt Ozment, we manage the firm and handle all manner of legal matters, including criminal defense, personal injury, employment law, and complex litigation.

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?

As of the date of this application, I have not spent any money in furtherance of my campaign. I will update the House and Senate Ethics Committees when I incur applicable expenses.

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.

I have not made any contributions to members of the General Assembly within the past four years.

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.

(a) I am co-owner, along with my law partner Matt Ozment, of the law firm where I currently work. If I am chosen for a seat on the Circuit Court, interested parties may believe a conflict of interest exists. This would certainly be true for any cases or clients which were actively clients of our firm while I was practicing. I would recuse myself

from any matters involving cases where I worked as a lawyer or cases Mr. Ozment began working on while we were law partners. If an action came before me involving Mr. Ozment and a client or case he began working on after we stopped practicing together, I would disclose our previous business relationship and entertain from interested parties whether they believed a conflict existed. If the appearance of impropriety and/or conflict could not be resolved, I would recuse myself.

- (b) My wife, Kathleen Lyall Grove, is an equity partner practicing exclusively in workers' compensation defense in the Greenville, SC office of MGC Law. We share finances, so some of our household income is derived from MGC Law, which maintains a workers' compensation practice, a civil litigation defense practice, and a real estate practice. Because a part of my family's finances is derived from MGC Law, it would probably be most prudent to recuse myself from matters involving MGC, unless both parties were willing to waive any potential conflict of interest.

Other than these two business relationships, I do not believe I have any financial arrangements or business relationships which would result in a possible conflict of interest.

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.

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.

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.

Yes. A former client, Derrick L. Jones, whom I represented in a state court matter as an assistant public defender in the Fourth Judicial Circuit, filed 4:14-cv-00012-MGL in United States District Court for the District of South Carolina (Florence Division) asserting §1983 claims against me, the assistant solicitor who prosecuted the case, two other defense attorneys, and other parties. The action was filed *pro se* on January 3, 2014. Without perfecting service on any of the named defendants, the action was dismissed on March 19, 2014 without prejudice and was not subsequently refiled. That lawsuit was not known to me until I went through the screening process for the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, Circuit Court Seat #3 in 2020.

Other than the above, I do not believe I have ever been a named party or had a pecuniary interest in any civil or criminal proceedings.

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.

Grove Ozment, LLC has carried malpractice insurance with ALPS since we opened in May 2021. We have never been covered by a tail policy. Our current coverage is \$500,000/claim & \$500,000/aggregate with a \$5,000 deductible.

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. I have notified members of the General Assembly whom I know personally, and who are not members of the JMSC, of my intention to seek election to Circuit Court Seat #4 in the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit. As it is a Greenville County seat, I have also contacted many of the members of the Greenville County Legislative Delegation (GCLD), again, none of whom are members of the JMSC, to introduce myself and announce my intention to seek

election. I have also shared the news of my intention to run with members of both the local Bar and the statewide Bar. I have not sought a pledge or commitment, either directly or indirectly, and have restricted my comments to announcement of my intention to run and/or a general introduction.

I have not asked any individuals to campaign on my behalf and, to the best of my knowledge, no one is campaigning for me of their own initiative.

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) Frank Eppes, [Redacted]

(b) Matthew R. Ozment, [Redacted]

(c) Leigh Paoletti, [Redacted]

(d) Jeanmarie Tankersley, [Redacted]

(e) Marcelo Torricos, [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.

Yes. Instagram [Redacted] and Twitter [Redacted]

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

If I were serving in a judicial capacity, I would discontinue the use of social media.

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) The Poinsett Club
 - (b) The Greenville Country 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.

As a young public defender in the Fourth Judicial Circuit, I had a brief and altogether unremarkable experience which has positively impacted the way I practice law for well over a decade. In either 2010 or 2011, I was in the courtroom one morning making some last minute preparations before my trial resumed. The judge entered and, prior to calling for the jury, invited the assistant solicitor and me to approach the bench. "I just want to give you both an opportunity to straighten your ties before I bring in the jury," the judge said, hand covering the microphone. I looked down and realized my top button was undone and my tie was loosened. The judge could have called out across the courtroom and dressed us down for being so casual with our appearance, but instead took the opportunity to remind us privately and discretely (and in one short sentence) that we should hold ourselves to a high standard and project the importance of our responsibilities with how we carry ourselves – to include not appearing disheveled in court. To this day, I cannot enter a courtroom without checking my tie, just to make certain I am presenting myself to everyone (clients, courtroom staff, other lawyers, judges, opposing parties, or even members of the gallery), as a person who appreciates the significance of their duties.

The lesson I learned that day, twelve or thirteen years ago, could have been delivered any number of ways. It could have been delivered with anger, with sarcasm, it could have been delivered flippantly, or in an overbearing way. The gracious way the judge handled it has permanently impacted the way I conduct myself in court for the better and has created a conscientiousness in me that I believe will remain with me my entire practice and will take with me to the bench. I hope to be able to be as thoughtful, practical, and effective a jurist as that judge was for me and many others.

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: _____