



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

Court, Position, and Seat # for which you are applying: Third Judicial Circuit, Circuit Judge,
Seat One

1. Name: The Honorable Stephen Bryan Doby

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

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

Home Address: [Redacted]

County of Residence: Lee County

Business Address: PO Box 106 (No. 1 Courthouse Square) Bishopville, SC 29010

E-Mail Address: [Redacted]

Telephone Number: (home): [Redacted]
(office): 803-484-5454
(cell): [Redacted]

2. Date of Birth: [Redacted] 1963
Place of Birth: Charleston, SC
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? No 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.

6. Family Status: Married on August 12, 1989 to Anna Margaret McDaniel Doby
Never divorced, one child.
[Redacted]

7. List each college and law school you attended, including the dates of your attendance, the degrees you received, and if you left an institution without receiving a degree, the reason for your departure.
 - (a) College of Charleston, 1981-1985, Bachelor of Science in Economics
 - (b) University of South Carolina School of Law, 1986-1989, 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.
 - (a) 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.
 - (a) South Carolina is the only state in which I took the bar exam. I only took it once, in 1989, and was admitted to the practice of law in South Carolina in 1989.

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) McDonald, McKenzie, Fuller, Rubin & Miller, 1989-1992; General practice with an emphasis on litigation. I was an associate with primary responsibility being litigation and specifically insurance defense. I was not involved with management of the firm in any manner.
 - (b) Jennings & Jennings, PA, 1992-present; General practice with emphasis on litigation. I have been partner charged with administrative and financial management of Jennings & Jennings, PA for approximately the past twelve years. I hold direct management responsibility for all trust accounts.

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.

I have extensive experience in both criminal and civil matters and have litigated both types of cases for the majority of time I have practiced law.

As to criminal matters, my experience included being a public defender for Lee County for approximately 16 years and have been retained to represent defendants in criminal matters since 1992. My experience as a public defender includes trying cases involving murder, kidnapping, rioting, burglary and other serious crimes.

As to civil matters, my experience is primarily representing plaintiffs but I have also defended cases as well. My experience includes trials involving personal injury, real property disputes, probate matters, family court trials and other matters which involve issues encountered in general practice.

I have also been Master-in-Equity for Lee County since 2008 and feel this experience has been invaluable in preparing me as a potential Judge of the Circuit Court.

I have, in the last five years, appeared regularly before Circuit Courts with an average of approximately one time per 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: None
 - (b) state: Extensive including on average appearances of at least once per month
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: 25%
 - (b) criminal: 25%
 - (c) domestic: 25%
 - (d) other: 25% (real property, probate, Magistrate's Court)

14. During the past five years
- (a) What percentage of your practice was in trial court, including cases that settled prior to trial? Approximately 25%
 - (b) What number of cases went to trial and resulted in a verdict? Approximately 20
 - (c) What number of cases went to trial and resolved after the plaintiff's or State's case? None (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? None

During the past five years, did you most often serve as sole counsel, chief counsel, or co-counsel? 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? Approximately 75%

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) Josey v. Josey, Appellant Case No. 2011-197626 Memorandum Opinion No. 2013- MO-024 (S.C. September 11, 2013); The issues in this case were numerous and dealt with issues of interpretation and application of partition statutes.
 - (b) State v. Freddie Gardner, not reported; The defendant, my client, was charged with murder and the case was tried by a jury. The defendant was found guilty
 - (c) State v. Adrian Branham, not reported; The defendant, my client, was charged with armed robbery and murder and was tried twice with a verdict of not guilty on the retrial.

(d) State v. Tyrone Singletary, Unpublished opinion No. 2008-UP-506; I was appointed to represent the defendant, Tyron Singletary at his trial, for charges of rioting, taking a hostage, assaulting a correctional officer, carrying a weapon, and inciting a riot. I did not represent the defendant in the appeal. This case was tried by a jury for approximately one week and resulted in a guilty verdict. The appeal was handled by another attorney.

(e) Strickland v. Strickland, 375 S.C. 76, 650 S.E. 2nd 465 (2007); A novel case involving principals of enforcement of an order and estoppel. I represented the wife at the trial and at the appellate level.

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) Josey v. Josey, Supreme Court of South Carolina, decision dated September 11, 2013, Appellate Case No. 2011-797626, Memorandum Opinion No. 2013-MO-024.

(b) Snow v. City of Columbia, Court of Appeals of South Carolina, decision dated September 23, 1991, 305 S.C. 544, 409 S.E.2nd. 797 (Court of Appeals 1991).

(c) Strickland v. Strickland, Supreme Court of South Carolina, decision dated August 27, 2007, 375 S.C. 76, 650 S.E.2nd 465 (2007).

(d) Dinkins-Robinson v. Ratner, South Carolina Court of Appeals, decision dated March 15, 2022, Unpublished Opinion No. 2023-UP-094.

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) None

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.

Jurisdiction of the Lee County Master-in-Equity is limited to matters referred to the Master-in-Equity but jurisdiction as to all cases referred is the same as a Circuit Judge.

Elected as Lee County Master in Equity January 2008 - December 2012;

January 2013 – December 2018;

January 2019 – present.

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) Progressive Church of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, Inc. by the Board of Bishops v. Elder Roscoe Black, et al individually & as Trustees of Progressive Church of Bishopville, which involved ownership of property. Not reported.

- (b) Ernestine N. Palmer, as Trustee of the Article IV Trust created under the will of Mary Denman Newman, deceased et al v. Hatcham Grove, Inc and David H. Lucas, which involved a complicated mortgage foreclosure. Not reported.
 - (c) United State of America, acting through the Farmers Home Administration, et al v. Maxie Lee Thomas, Jr., et al, which involved mortgage foreclosure. Not reported.
 - (d) Wateree Timberland Company v. Wilson, et al, which involved recovery of real property after a tax sale. Served as Special Referee for Sumter County. Not reported.
 - (e) ArborOne v. Drayton, which involved issues of foreclosure, receiver, and homestead exemption. Not reported.
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.
Federal District Court for South Carolina, 1989
South Carolina Court, 1989
21. Have you taught law-related courses or lectured at bar association conferences, educational institutions, or continuing legal or judicial education programs? If so, briefly describe each course or lecture.
I served as moderator for Master-in-Equity Bench Bar CLE for one year and served on a panel for a discussion at a CLE for Master-in-Equity Bench Bar concerning partition actions.
22. Provide, as a separate attachment, your continuing legal or judicial education report from the past five years. Attached
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.)
Attached
(a) South Carolina Court of Appeals, 2022
(b) South Carolina Court of Appeals, 2023
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.
Martindale-Hubbell, BV

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, no offices

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.
(a) None

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.
(a) Jennings & Jennings, PA, 1992 to present; General practice of law with responsibility of being managing partner for approximately the past twelve years. Practice is best described as a general practice.

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 term of your service.
Jennings & Jennings, PA law firm from 1992 to present; I have been managing partner for the past twelve (12) years.

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 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?
(a) None as of this date
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.
(a) 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:
- (a) in which there is a potential conflict of interest with your involvement in a South Carolina state or local public agency; None
 - (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; None or
 - (c) which was sold, leased, or rented to a state or local public agency in South Carolina. None

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; Not applicable.
- (b) nature and value of any public improvements; Not applicable, and
- (c) South Carolina state or local public agency which purchased or is leasing or renting such property. Not applicable.

Attach a copy of any contract or agreement.

None responsive to question.

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.

I own IRA or other tax deferred accounts and statements showing those values are attached. I do not own individual stocks.

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.

None

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.

Hunting migratory birds over a baited field, September 2006, in Newberry County, South Carolina, which resulted in a fine being paid.

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.
(a) A suit was filed against many defendants, including myself, by Blake Moore over my representation of the Department of Social Services as a result of a Family Court case. This suit was dismissed on a motion for summary judgment in 2009.
48. If you are in private practice, are you covered by malpractice insurance and, if so, how long have you carried malpractice insurance? Malpractice insurance since 1989. If applicable, have you ever been covered by a tail policy? No 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. \$1,000,000.00 coverage for each claim; \$2,000,000.00 aggregate with \$2,500.00 deductible for each claim.
49. Have you ever, in South Carolina or any other jurisdiction, as a lawyer, judge, or other professional, been cautioned with or without a finding of misconduct, sanctioned, or disciplined for lawyer, judicial, or other professional misconduct or has any jurisdiction found that you committed any misconduct? No 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? No If so, give the details and the resolution. Has your name ever been enrolled on the Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect? No If so, give the details.
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? No 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. I have introduced myself to several members of the Senate and House of Representatives, including going to the State House on several occasions but have not requested anyone campaign on my behalf.

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? No If so, give details.
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) Jacob H. Jennings, [Redacted]
 - (b) R. Perry McCutchen, Jr., [Redacted]
 - (c) Teresa A. Brown, [Redacted]
 - (d) Bruce Snipes, [Redacted]
 - (e) Daniel Simon, [Redacted]

56. Are you active on or a member of a social media or Internet site such as, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, etc.? No

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? Not affected as I do not use social media now and would not in the future.

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) None
58. Provide any other information that may reflect positively or negatively on your candidacy, or which you believe should be disclosed in connection with consideration of you for

nomination for the position you seek. This information may include how your life experiences have affected or influenced the kind or type of judge you have been or plan to be.

My experience as Master-in-Equity for Lee County since 2008 has been invaluable in teaching the values and demeanor necessary to be a Circuit Court Judge. The value of treating everyone with respect and courtesy would be an important part of my being a Judge in Circuit Court.

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: _____