



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

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

1. Name:

Ms. Martha M. Rivers Davisson
Second Judicial Circuit Seat #2
Circuit Court

Name that you are known by if different from above

(Example: A Nickname):

Martha M. Rivers

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: Aiken

Business Address: 12923 Main St
Williston, SC. 29853
(mailing & physical)

137 York St SE
Aiken, SC. 29803
(physical address only)

E-Mail Address: [Redacted]

Telephone Number: (home): [Redacted]
(office): 803-266-2290
(cell): [Redacted]

2. Date of Birth: [Redacted] 1972
Place of Birth: Augusta, Georgia
Social Security Number: [Redacted]

3. Are you a citizen of South Carolina? Yes
Have you been a resident of this state for at least the immediate past five years?
Yes

4. SCDL# or SCHD#: [Redacted]
Voter Registration Number: [Redacted]

5. Have you served in the military? If so, give the dates, branch of service, highest rank attained, serial number (if applicable), present status, and the character of your discharge or release. Please provide a copy of your DD214 concerning your discharge.

No

6. Family Status:

- (a) State whether you are single, married, widowed, divorced, or separated.
- (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 August 5, 1995, to Douglas R. Davisson
 Global IT Director, Kyocera/AVX, Fountain Inn, SC
 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) 1989 - 1993 Furman University, Bachelor of Arts in English and History
 - (b) 1993-1996. University of South Carolina School of Law, 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) 1st Place Mock Trial competition at School of Law
 - (b) Intern South Carolina Legal Services Association (now Appleseed)
 - (c) Volunteer guardian through the Richland County Guardian ad Litem Program
 - (d) Established and managed a research service for attorneys in South Carolina with a classmate
 - (e) Served as a law clerk with Bedingfield & Williams in Barnwell, South Carolina and the South Carolina Department of Public Safety
 - (f) Served as legislative aide to Hon. Wilbur Cave of South Carolina House of Representatives
- 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 1996. The only time I took a bar exam was in August 1996.
- 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.

After graduation from the USC School of Law in 1996, I clerked for one year for the Honorable Thomas L. Hughston, Jr. of the Eighth Judicial Circuit. I then became an associate attorney at Bedingfield & Williams in Barnwell, SC. From 1997 to 2000, I assisted the partners, Daniel W. Williams and Walter Bedingfield, in the general practice of law. I developed my own caseload consisting of domestic litigation, civil litigation, real estate closings and continued to assist the partners in criminal defense and civil litigation. I was assigned a paralegal but had no management duties for the firm or its finances.

In 1999, my husband entered what was then known as the Masters in International Business (MIB) program at the Darla Moore School of Business at USC. In August 2000, I left Bedingfield & Williams to live with Doug in Zurich, Switzerland, during a portion of his required international internship. We returned in December 2000. I then began my practice as a sole practitioner in January 2001 in Williston, South Carolina. My practice developed much like my associate work. As a sole practitioner, I established and managed the trust accounts and operating accounts. I hired a part time assistant to help with the financial management. When I managed the closing of real estate loans, I maintained two trust accounts, one for real estate matters and one for general practice. In 2018, my solo practice was converted to a limited liability corporation, Rivers Law LLC. In 2020, I opened an office in Aiken, South Carolina.

My office has consistently had staff of one to three persons. I am the administrative manager as well as the financial manager.

In 2018, I ended my real estate practice and now focus on criminal defense, Family Court, and civil litigation. I have been a 608 (appointed defense attorney) in criminal and Family Court abuse and neglect cases for several years. I did not renew my criminal defense contract in 2022.

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.
Not applicable

- (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.

My first job was as a law clerk to a circuit court judge. I then began working at a small law firm, primarily for the local criminal defense lawyer in the Second Judicial Circuit. I assisted in preparing and defending clients with him for three years. For a multitude of reasons, we held trials during almost every term of court. Therefore, I quickly became experienced at researching case law, interviewing defendants, and assisting in felony trials from the beginning of my career. Being a small county and small town, I learned a respect for law enforcement, the judicial process and the families of both the victims and the defendant.

Until last year, I maintained a contract with the South Carolina Office of Indigent Defense and was appointed criminal cases through the public defender's office. Typically, these cases involved burglary, armed robbery, murder, and drug offenses. As the defense attorney, I collected and reviewed discovery information, attended preliminary hearings, filed and argued motions before the court, negotiated and attended pleas in criminal court and represented clients in trials. With the COVID protocols, the number of trials held within the past five years has been limited. I did not renew my contract after 2021.

In my career, I have represented defendants in felony and non-felony arrests that involve violent and non-violent crimes. The last criminal cases I handled involved the identification issues for a murder on a store camera recording. The defendant had also stated to multiple people in the legal system that he did not intend to shoot the victim. Had the trial proceeded, the issues of the case would have been malice aforethought and specific versus general intent. I also represented a gentlemen accused of multiple break ins and thefts while potentially using illicit drugs. The multiple arrests presented a challenge in determining potential pleas and sentencing issues. The alleged drug use also presented challenges to his ability to assist in his defense. As a criminal defense attorney, I have represented persons in cases involving Driving Under the Influence, Armed Robbery, Murder, Possession of drugs, Possession of Firearms, Firing into a Dwelling, Trafficking in drugs,

Possession with Intent to Distribute, and/or Assault and Battery (of various degrees and offenses).

As a small town general practitioner, I have also maintained a civil practice. My civil practice has primary been plaintiff's oriented and has involved contract disputes, land disputes, and personal injury. For the past decade, my practice became more family court oriented. Family Court has some unique procedural rules and does not allow for a trial by jury. Otherwise, I have utilized similar trial preparation and trial techniques for civil and family court. As a civil attorney in my career, I have been involved in class action litigation, mass tort litigation, wreck cases, property disputes, evictions, slip and fall cases and unfair trade practices.

I may appear before a circuit judge once a quarter to once a year depending on the status of cases. The frequency of appearances has reduced since 2020. I have a strong base of knowledge in both civil and criminal law, but intend to continue to strengthen and update that knowledge for service on the bench.

(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.

Not applicable.

(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.

Not Applicable.

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:

(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: 10%

(b) criminal: 25%

(c) domestic: 50%

(d) other: 15%

14. During the past five years

(a) What percentage of your practice was in trial court, including cases that settled prior to trial? 100% civil

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

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

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

I am the sole attorney in my firm, Rivers Law LLC. I handle all cases directly. In the past five years, my practice has continued to be a general practice offering simple estate planning, family law services, civil personal injury services, and criminal defense. In 2020, I opened an office in Aiken, South Carolina. This has helped me in serve clients throughout the Second Judicial Circuit. I regularly try cases in Family Court, which uses the same civil rules of procedure as civil court, with slight modification. I have not tried a civil case in circuit court within the past five years. I have had no cases settle after opening statements. I may not have had a criminal trial within the past five years as COVID protocols prevented trials for an extended period. In January 2022, I prepared a case for trial as one of the first return to court trials in my practice area. Jury selection could not be completed. The defendant ultimately pled guilty.

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?

Not applicable.

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) Deloach v. Norfolk Southern and Roosevelt v. Norfolk Southern (2005). My clients and their child were harmed individually and as the heirs of Mr. Tony Deloach who died during the Norfolk Southern train derailment in Graniteville, South Carolina. The mixture of chemicals release in the derailment resulted in mustard gas settling into the historic mill area known "The Valley." Mr. Deloach, his infant daughter, and his father were at home. His father died while he struggled to keep himself and his daughter alive. His wife was able to get through the emergency barricades and remove them from the affected area for medical treatment. Mr. Roosevelt was working at the Graniteville mill the night of the derailment. He and several co-workers were able to crowd into a car to leave the area. I, with co-counsel, handled this case from the day I was hired through the negotiations with Norfolk Southern and ensured that all settlements were properly approved. The derailment was caused when a prior train crew failed to manually reset a track switch.
- (b) Pennicuff v. Pennicuff (2005). I served as the guardian ad litem for two minor children who were in the physical custody of their mother. The mother moved from Georgia to Ohio without making provisions for father's visitation. The father brought an action for change in custody or to address his visitation. During the investigation, questions

arose regarding the stability of the children in mother's custody. With the assistance of an attorney in Ohio, we were able to present a full and accurate report of the status of these children to the South Carolina court which led to a change in custody. As the guardian, I pushed for court time to bring this matter to a hearing and brought out issues that neither attorney addressed for the mental and physical health of the children. The parties were limited financially and the docket was very limited. This case demonstrated the need for a guardian advocate for the minor children to move the case forward for the benefit and protection of the children. The attorneys are representing their individual clients and may have other issues to consider. This year, the father visited my office unexpectedly. He thanked me for my work and showed me pictures of his children who are now adults.

- (c) SC v. Workman, (2012). My client, Mr. Workman, was accused of robbing a local convenience store with two other young men. One of them pointed a gun at the store clerk's face. I found my client to be calm and intelligent. His case is remarkable to me not because of him personally but because I also came to know his siblings through a family court action. The family had a history of state involvement throughout their childhood. They were very capable young men and women, but their futures appeared limited. It was disturbing to see the course of their young lives, especially as each was involved with governmental systems designed to assist. Upon the jury's verdict, Hon. Clifton Newman sentenced Mr. Workman to thirteen years in the SC Department of Corrections. Mr. Workman's case is a reminder of the interplay and impact of different courts on a family.
- (d) Williams v. Walling, et al. (2019) I represented Ms. Walling who was a defendant following her purchase of a mobile home. The case involved a tax sale in Bamberg County. Another man bought the home through the county Forfeited Land Commission. He then sold it to Ms. Walling. This case shows the impact of civil disputes. For the plaintiff, it involved keeping a home where she had lived for several years. It was very clear that the taxes had gone unpaid although the home was very important to her. The property taxes associated with the land were paid, so she may have had a misconception of the legal result for non-payment of the mobile home taxes. For Ms. Walling, the home represented a future for her and her family. As an immigrant, she sought a non-traditional path to home ownership. Her cash purchase from the tax sale owner was a way for her and her family to live more securely. There are many instances where the matter in dispute seems legally straightforward and has great consequences for the lives of the litigants. I have represented clients in such litigation involving boundary disputes, mobile home purchase, land contracts, automobile purchases, and contract disputes throughout my career. This case also highlights the issues of delays in the court system. The case was filed in the fall of 2019. It was affected by the shutdown of court in 2020 and was not heard until February 2023.
- (e) State v. David M. McClure, Jr., SC Opinion No. 25193, 537 SE 2d 273 (2000). While I was an associate at Bedingfield & Williams, Walter Bedingfield was appointed lead defense counsel for the first death penalty trial in Barnwell County. As his associate, I assisted in all pre-trial matters, met with expert witnesses, met with the client, conducted research, and assisted in trial preparations. Even though I was not a named attorney on this case, I cannot think of a more significant case in my career. The

defendant was a young man convicted of killing his father and his father's girlfriend. As a litigator, this case was significant for me in learning the preparation required for such a case and the voluminous legal issues presented. Mr. McClure had confessed and was convicted by the jury. During the death penalty phase, he was sentenced to death. As an associate, I attended all client meetings, conducted research, prepared motions, attended all hearings, and assisted at trial. I met with experts and reviewed all evidence in this case. The penalty verdict was later overturned for improper comment upon the defendant's right to remain silent. Several years later, the appeal was resolved with Mr. McClure sentenced to life without parole. I did not work on the appeal in any manner. After practicing for twenty years, there are a number of Family Court cases or other criminal defense cases I could list as my fifth case, but this experience was unlike anything else I will encounter in my career. Although I am not an attorney of record in Mr. McClure's defense, I cannot list my significant trials or litigation without mentioning this case.

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). None
 - (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). None
 - (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 not 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) Not Applicable
 - (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, 1996;
(b) U.S. District Court for the District of SC, 2000.

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.

In April 2019, I presented the Law School for Non-Lawyers class sponsored by the South Carolina Bar in Aiken, South Carolina on the topic of Child Protection Hearings. This series of lectures is designed to provide an overview of the judicial system and its impact on citizens.

22. Provide, as a separate attachment, your continuing legal or judicial education report from the past five years.
See attached.
23. List all published books and articles you have written and give citations and the dates of publication for each.

“The Leaner and Meaner Youthful Offender Act,” South Carolina Lawyer, Volume 9, Number 3, November/December 1997.

24. Please furnish as a separate attachment, two examples of legal articles, briefs, orders, or other legal writings for which you can claim sole or primary authorship. If you cannot claim sole authorship, please explain the extent to which you are the primary author, to include a description of the other authors and their contributions. The writing samples are for the Commission’s use only and will not be published. (If you are a judge and are not seeking a different type of judgeship, this question is inapplicable.)

I am attaching the proposed order in the matter of Williams v. Walling, et al, 2019-CP-05-00199. Mr. Harvey, Special Referee, altered my proposed order stylistically and removed one paragraph. I am attaching his filed order for comparison.

I am also attaching my brief to the court regarding an interstate jurisdictional issues in a family court case.

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.

Distinguished, Martindale-Hubbell 4.4/5.0

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) SC Bar, Family Law Council (currently hold position)
 - (b) SC Women's Law Association
 - (c) Barnwell County Bar
 - (d) Aiken County Bar

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.
- Not applicable.

29. Have you ever been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial, or other public office? If so, give details, including dates.

I was a nominated candidate for SC Family Court At Large #5 in January 2013 following the Fall 2012 judicial screening. I withdrew as a candidate. The seat went to an election between the Hon. Melissa Buckhannon and Hon. Randall E. McGee. Judge McGee still holds that seat.

In 2016, I was a nominated candidate for SC Family Court At Large # 8. I withdrew as a candidate. Hon. Rosalyn Frierson-Smith was elected to that seat in 2017.

In 2019, I was a nominated candidate for SC Family Court At Large #1. I withdrew as a candidate. Hon. Kimaka Nichols Graham was elected.

I ran for the South Carolina House of Representatives District 91 seat in the special election held in April 1999. I lost to the Honorable Lonnie Hosey, who still serves in that seat. In 2014, I ran for Barnwell School District #29 school board and was defeated by Ms. Ferlecia Cuthbertson.

30. Have you ever been engaged in any occupation, business, or profession other than the practice of law, teaching of law, or holding judicial or other public office? If so, give details, including a description of your occupation, business, or profession, the dates of your employment, and the name of your business or employer.
- I have always practiced law and have no other business interests.

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.
My only business enterprise is my law firm.
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?
I have not had any expenses associated with this candidacy.
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 do not recall any contributions by me or my husband 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.

I would not hear any case involving a family member, my husband's employer or anyone with whom I have a close, personal relationship or with whom it may appear I have a close relationship, such as someone I attend church with regularly.

I am also a 608 attorney paid by the Office of Indigent Defense on a per case basis. I would not preside over any matter involving these clients.

As a sole practitioner, I have personally handled all cases in my office. I would not preside over any actions involving former clients.

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.

I do not know of any such property.

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.

Not applicable.

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.

Not applicable.

44. For sitting judges, have you used the services of your staff, for which you did not pay, while campaigning for this office?

Not applicable

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.

I have had malpractice insurance since opening my law firm in 2001. I currently have limits of \$1,000,000/\$2,000,000 with a deductible of \$5,000.00.

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 not asked anyone to 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, I am familiar with the 48-hour rule as I have been nominated for a judicial position three times.
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) Mr. Tommy Patterson [Redacted]
- (b) Ms. Alison C. Brady [Redacted]
- (c) Sheriff Steven W. Griffith [Redacted]
- (d) Mr. Michael Tanner [Redacted]
Michael Tanner, LLC
- (e) Ms. Jennifer Mook [Redacted]
Law Offices of Jennifer Mook

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.

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

Yes, I engage in social media personally and for business purposes.

- (a) Facebook [Redacted]
- (b) Instagram [Redacted]
- (c) LinkedIn [Redacted]

My engagement in social media would be changed significantly. If I maintained any account, it would be private and used for family purposes. For example, I belong to a family reunion page on Facebook for family members to upload photographs and discuss matters. I would not use social media for or comment on any subject, action, news or other item that may give any appearance of bias for any potential case before me.

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) Aiken Rotary Club
- (b) Aiken Symphony Orchestra Board Member
- (c) St. John's Methodist Church
- (d) SC Guardian ad litem Program Volunteer for Barnwell County

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.

For more than twenty years, I have sat beside clients in South Carolina courtrooms. I stood beside young men for sentencing and have given clients upsetting news about their civil cases. I have watched the court system evolve to address the population influx of our state and to tailor the system for efficient processing of cases by creating drug courts, business courts, and adopting alternative resolution practices. In the past few years, I have watched the effects of the opioid crisis in South Carolina ravage families who have loved ones incarcerated, must care of children of incarcerated parents, and/or are victims of the crimes drug addicts may commit. I have represented one family member in criminal court for possession of drugs while I assist another family member in family court trying to keep her family together in a DSS action.

This litany of experiences shows how my broad legal practice allows me to look at the legal system of South Carolina in a broad sense. Today, I believe it is imperative to preserve the rule of law, uphold the procedural standards of the court, and maintain the public trust in this branch of government. If elected as a trial judge, my goal would be to always maintain those pillars, confidence in the rule of law by striving for fair rulings and maintaining the public trust by working for a high standard of professionalism and integrity.

Serving as a South Carolina judge would be a privilege and an honor.

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: _____