



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

Court, Position, and Seat # for which you are applying:  
Circuit Court, Third Judicial Circuit, Seat 1

1. Name: Mr. Christopher Ryan DuRant

Name that you are known by if different from above: Chris

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: Clarendon

Business Address: 411 N. Brooks St., Manning, SC 29102

E-Mail Address: [Redacted]

Telephone Number: (home): [Redacted]  
(office): 803-435-0909  
(cell): [Redacted]

2. Date of Birth: [Redacted] 1982  
Place of Birth: Sumter, 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? 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: Married on April 21, 2012 to Ansley Toole DuRant, homemaker.  
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) Clemson University; August 2000 – May 2005; Bachelor of Science in Management;
  - (b) Charleston School of Law; August 2005 – May 2008; 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) Judicial Observation and Experience (JOE) Program (The Honorable Clifton B. Newman; 2L summer break);
  - (b) Externship at Ninth Circuit Solicitor's Office (3L fall semester);
  - (c) Legal intern for Land, Parker & Welch, P.A., Manning, SC (1L and 2L summer and winter breaks);
  - (d) Environmental Law Society (2L year).
  
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 in 2008. I took the bar exam one time.
  
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) Judicial Law Clerk to the Honorable R. Ferrell Cothran, Jr., Judge of the Circuit Court, Third Judicial Circuit; August 2008 – August 2009;
    - i. Performed legal research; drafted, edited and reviewed proposed orders.
  - (b) Assistant Solicitor, Eighth Judicial Circuit Solicitor's Office; August 2009 – July 2011;
    - i. Served as a special drug crimes prosecutor, handling the prosecution of all General Sessions level drug cases arising in Laurens and Newberry Counties; caseload later expanded to include a broader range of offenses.
  - (c) Assistant Solicitor; Third Judicial Circuit Solicitor's Office; August 2011 – March 2019;
    - i. Served as the senior prosecutor and manager of the Clarendon County office, responsible for scheduling, docket management, case assignments, and prosecution of an extensive General Sessions level caseload, including all homicides and most violent / serious offenses.

- (d) Associate, Law Office of William H. Johnson, LLC, Manning, SC; October 2011 – March 2019;
  - i. Concurrent with service as Assistant Solicitor.
  - ii. Developed a diverse law practice in civil litigation, family law, personal injury, real estate litigation, real estate transactions, estate planning, and probate.
  
- (e) Associate, Johnson DuRant, LLC, Manning, SC and Santee, SC; April 2019 – present.
  - i. Together with law partner, William H. Johnson, merged practice with Nester & Jackson, P.A. in Santee, SC, thereby adding a second office; Attorney Nester retired December 2021.
  - ii. Have maintained and expanded practice in civil litigation, family law, personal injury, real estate litigation, real estate transactions, estate planning, and probate, operating in and dividing time between two offices.
  - iii. Have expanded practice to include criminal defense, which now accounts for approximately 25% of overall practice.
  - iv. Participate in administrative and personnel / management decisions.
  - v. Responsible for individual fees and costs billing and utilization of real estate and litigation 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.

During my nearly ten (10) years of service as an assistant solicitor, including eight (8) years as the senior prosecutor for Clarendon County, I gained valuable criminal trial experience, having tried dozens of cases through to jury verdict. I have served as the sole attorney or first chair during jury trials for the following criminal offenses: murder; attempted murder; armed robbery; reckless homicide; felony driving under the influence resulting in death / great bodily injury; hit and run involving death; criminal sexual conduct with a minor, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> degree; threatening the life of a public official; intimidation of a court official; assault and battery of a high and aggravated nature; assault and battery, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> degree; assault and battery by mob; kidnapping; burglary, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> degree; bank robbery; grand larceny; forgery; financial transaction card fraud; shoplifting; receiving stolen goods; drug trafficking; possession with intent to distribute drugs; drug possession; failure to stop for blue light; and resisting arrest.

As a criminal prosecutor, I routinely encountered and litigated evidentiary and other legal issues arising during trial, including but not limited to, and Duncan / Protection of Persons and Property Act hearings, 4<sup>th</sup> amendment / search and seizure issues, Jackson v. Denno hearings regarding the admissibility of a defendant's statement, Neil v. Biggers hearings regarding the admissibility of eyewitness identification, Bruton issues, etc.

Having left the Solicitor's Office in March 2019, the bulk of my criminal trial experience predates the five-year modifier of the above inquiry. As a result, I include and ask the Commission to consider the following trial experience beginning in January 2018:

- (a) State v. Jeremiah Smith, Jr.; 2015-GS-14-189; January 2018. Mr. Smith was charged with and convicted of attempted murder following trial. This matter involved the application of Rule 613(b), SCRE as to the introduction of extrinsic evidence of a testifying codefendant's prior recorded statement, due to variations in such individual's testimony at trial.
- (b) State v. Tammy Dianne Brown, 436 S.C. 505, 873 S.E.2d 445 (Ct. App. 2022); May 2018. Ms. Smith was charged with and convicted of felony driving under the influence resulting in death and a second count resulting in great bodily injury. This matter involved complicated expert witness testimony regarding accident reconstruction, and issues regarding the sufficiency of an indictment, admissibility of a defendant's blood sample, and the video recording requirements of the implied consent statute.
- (c) State v. Justin Cameron; 2016-GS-14-161; August 2018. Mr. Cameron was charged with and convicted of criminal sexual conduct with a minor, 1<sup>st</sup> degree. I assisted another prosecutor during this trial which involved the utilization of a blind expert witness regarding child sex abuse and late disclosures.
- (d) State v. Ramell Thompson; 2016-GS-14-48, December 2018. Mr. Thompson was charged with murder. Following pretrial matters, jury selection, opening statements and testimony from several witnesses, this matter ended in a mistrial.

In addition to the above, since leaving the Solicitor's Office in 2019 in favor of the full-time private practice of law, I have developed a growing criminal defense practice. In furtherance of this practice, I have or am currently representing criminal defendants charged

with a wide range of criminal offenses, up to and including murder (three such pending cases).

As indicated above, in addition to my service as a prosecutor, I have been engaged in the private practice of law since 2011, during which time I have developed a diverse civil litigation practice, primarily in representation of plaintiffs. This representation has included varied personal injury matters, including automobile accidents and premises liability matters, actions for defamation, contractual disputes, interference with contract, breach of fiduciary duty, actions to set aside deeds, and other real estate litigation, including foreclosures, heirs' property matters, quiet title and partition actions. In furtherance of this practice, I have gained valuable experience in civil discovery and motions practices.

As an example of a complex legal issue encountered, my law partner and I represented the Plaintiffs in a negligent entrustment action against a sporting goods store that sold a firearm to a mentally defective person, who, the following day, used the firearm to shoot a hospital staff member. At the summary judgment stage, that action involved the application of the federal Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, which prohibits, subject to certain exceptions, civil liability actions against manufacturers and sellers of firearms.

As to the frequency of my appearances before a Circuit Court judge, while working as an assistant solicitor, I regularly appeared throughout the entirety of each monthly term of court. Since leaving the Solicitor's Office, I have had required appearances at least monthly, most often for guilty pleas and/or bond hearings in the Court of General Sessions, and motion and/or non-jury hearings in the Court of Common Pleas.

- (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: 2-3 total appearances.
  - (b) state: 5-10 appearances per month, including criminal, civil and domestic.
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: 20%
  - (b) criminal: 25%
  - (c) domestic: 20%

(d) other: 35% (real estate, probate, estate planning)

14. During the past five years

(a) What percentage of your practice was in trial court, including cases that settled prior to trial? Approximately 60%.

(b) What number of cases went to trial and resulted in a verdict? Approximately 75 cases. In the interest of transparency, I offer the following breakdown:

- i. General Sessions jury: 3 cases (January 2018 to present).
- ii. Common Pleas non-jury (e.g., quiet title/partition actions, foreclosure, breach of contract) and Magistrate's Court non-jury (e.g., eviction actions, criminal, breach of contract) requiring the presentation of testimony and documentary evidence: Approximately 40-50 cases.
- iii. Family Court: 5 cases resolved by judgment following final evidentiary hearings, including one in which I served as the guardian ad litem, but excluding temporary hearings, contempt hearings, and final hearings for the approval of a settlement agreement.
- iv. Administrative, Social Security and Workers' Compensation: Approximately 5 – 10 cases.
- v. Probate: Approximately 10-15 cases.

(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.) Approximately 3-4 cases.

(d) What number of your cases settled after a jury was selected but prior to opening statements? Approximately 3-4 cases.

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?

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) State v. Justin Jermaine Johnson, 422 S.C. 439, 812 S.E.2d 739 (Ct. App. 2018). This case arose out of a double murder in Clarendon County in which the Defendant brutally killed his nine-month-old son and the child's great grandmother. Solicitor Ernest A. Finney, III and I represented the State at trial over the course of two weeks in March

2014, following which the Defendant was convicted and sentenced to life in prison. The most significant issue presented involved the admissibility of the Defendant's confession, which was received near the end of approximately 11 hours of videotaped interviews by law enforcement and was complicated by the investigators' misrepresentations of evidence to the Defendant, and by the alleged exertion of improper influence.

- (e) State v. Tammy Dianne Brown, 436 S.C. 505, 873 S.E.2d 445 (Ct. App. 2022). As noted above, Ms. Brown was charged with felony driving under the influence resulting in death as well as felony driving under the influence resulting in great bodily injury following a two-car automobile accident which resulted in the death of one victim and significant injuries to another. I served as the lead prosecutor for the State at trial in May 2018. While the most significant appellant issues were that of the sufficiency of the indictment and the video recording requirements of the implied consent statute, significant trial issues included the presentation of complex expert witness testimony regarding accident reconstruction and the sufficiency of a search warrant probable cause affidavit bearing on the admissibility of the Defendant's blood sample.
  - (f) State v. Chad Morris; 2014-GS-14-329. Mr. Morris was charged with reckless homicide by operation of boat and failure to render aid resulting in death, following a boating accident on Lake Marion in Clarendon County on July 4, 2014, which resulted in the death of a 21-year-old college student. I served as the lead prosecutor for the State during this approximately 25-witness trial in July 2016.
  - (g) State v. Jeffrey Eady; 2013-GS-14-164. Mr. Eady was charged with two counts of murder and other charges following the killings of two women in Clarendon County, and a third murder in Charleston County, before he was eventually arrested in Florida. Mr. Eady was noticed for the death penalty but was eventually permitted to plead guilty to life without parole in consideration of mental health mitigating circumstances.
  - (h) Austin v. Phillips Sporting Goods, LLC; 2021-CP-38-1405. As referenced above, my law partner and I represented the Plaintiffs in this negligent entrustment action against a sporting goods store that sold a firearm to a mentally defective person, who, the following day, used the firearm to shoot a hospital staff member. Of significance, I handled the response to the Defendant's motion for summary judgment, which involved the application of the federal Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, which prohibits, subject to certain exceptions, civil liability actions against manufacturers and sellers of firearms.
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) Estate of Ellen Hillery v. Michael We. Pettigrew, as Personal Representative of the Estate of Webber Pettigrew; 2022-CP-08-2722. While not an appeal *from* the Court of Common Pleas, I represented the Appellant in this appeal from the Probate Court of Berkeley County *to* the Court of Common Pleas. The judgment of the Probate Court was

overturned and the matter remanded for a new hearing. I have attached the Final Brief of Appellant as a writing sample pursuant to question 24.

(b) Martha M. Coleman v. Jeffrey W. Coleman and Brooks Walters; Appellate Case No. 2022-001209. I currently represent the Respondent, Martha M. Coleman, in this appeal from the Sumter County Family Court which is pending before the Court of Appeals. I have attached the Initial Brief of Respondent as a writing sample pursuant to question 24.

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.

I have not handled any criminal appeals.

18. Have you ever held judicial office? If so, list the periods of your service, the courts involved, and whether you were elected or appointed. Describe the jurisdiction of each of the courts and note any limitations on the jurisdiction of each court.

No.

19. If the answer to question 18 is yes, describe or list five of your most significant orders or opinions and give the citations if they were reported. Also, list citations to any appellate review of these orders or opinions.

Not applicable.

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; November 17, 2008;

(b) U.S. District Court, District of South Carolina; July 1, 2016.

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.

On two (2) occasions, I have led free estate planning clinics in the community.

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

Please see 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.)

Please see attached:

- (a) Final Brief of Appellant; Estate of Ellen Hillery v. Michael We. Pettigrew, as Personal Representative of the Estate of Webber Pettigrew; 2022-CP-08-2722.
- (b) Initial Brief of Respondent, Martha M. Coleman v. Jeffrey W. Coleman and Brooks Walters; Appellate Case No. 2022-001209.
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.

None.

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;
- (b) Clarendon County Bar;
- (c) Orangeburg County Bar;
- (d) South Carolina Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers.
27. Have you ever held public office other than judicial office? If so, list the periods of your service, the office or offices involved, and whether you were elected or appointed. Also, state whether or not you have timely filed your report with the State Ethics Commission during the period you held public office. If not, were you ever subject to a penalty? If so, give details, including dates.

No.

28. For sitting or former judges, list all employment you had while serving as a judge (whether full-time or part-time, contractual or at will, consulting or otherwise) other than elected judicial office. Specify your dates of employment, employer, major job responsibilities, and supervisor.

Not applicable.

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.

(a) Board of Directors, Clarendon County Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse d/b/a Clarendon Behavioral Health Services; September 2021 – present. Clarendon Behavioral Health is Clarendon County’s alcohol and drug abuse authority, offering prevention, treatment, and recovery services.

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.)

Please see attached.

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

34. Has a tax lien or other collection procedure ever been instituted against you by federal, state, or local authorities? Have you ever defaulted on a student loan? Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? If so, give details. Also, proof of satisfaction of any liens or defaults must be submitted with your application package.

No.

35. Since filing with the Commission your letter of intent to run for judicial office, have you accepted lodging, transportation, entertainment, food, meals, beverages, money, or any other thing of value as defined by S.C. Code § 2-17-10(1) from a lobbyist or lobbyist's principal? If so, please specify the item or items you received, the date of receipt, and the lobbyist or lobbyist's principal involved.

No.

36. Itemize (by amount, type, and date) all expenditures, other than those for travel and room and board, made by you, or on your behalf in furtherance of your candidacy for the position you seek. If you have spent over \$100, have you reported your expenditures to the House and Senate Ethics Committees?

None at this time.

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) Former Representative Kimberly O. Johnson. I contributed \$500 to her campaign during the 2020 election cycle.

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 currently serve on the Board of Directors, an unpaid position, for the Clarendon County Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse d/b/a Clarendon Behavioral Health Services. Inasmuch as the organization receives primary funding from a State agency, DAODAS, in the event of my election to the bench, I would resign from this position to avoid the appearance of any impropriety and to minimize the risk of conflict with judicial obligations.

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; or

None.

- (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;  
(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.

Not applicable.

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.

Yes, I have been covered by malpractice insurance since becoming engaged in the private practice of law in 2011. Our firm's current malpractice policy carries limits of \$1,000,000 per claim and in the aggregate. The deductible is \$5,000. I have never been covered by a tail policy.

49. Have you ever, in South Carolina or any other jurisdiction, as a lawyer, judge, or other professional, been cautioned with or without a finding of misconduct, sanctioned, or disciplined for lawyer, judicial, or other professional misconduct or has any jurisdiction found that you committed any misconduct? If so, give the details and describe any final disposition. Include any and all confidential and public sanctions, disciplines, letters of caution, or findings of misconduct of any kind. Private or confidential dispositions will be redacted.

[Yes and no responses are redacted for all candidates unless there is a public discipline.]

50. Have you ever been investigated by the Department of Social Services? If so, give the details and the resolution. Has your name ever been enrolled on the Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect? If so, give the details.

No.

51. Have you directly or indirectly requested the pledge of any member of the General Assembly as to your election for the position for which you are being screened, or have you been offered a conditional pledge of support by any legislator pending the outcome of your screening? Have you received the assurance of any public official or public employee that they will seek the pledge of any member of the General Assembly as to your election for the position for which you are being screened? If so, give details.

No.

52. Have you requested any third parties to contact members of the General Assembly on your behalf before the final and formal screening report has been released? Describe the campaigning you have done for this election and include a list of those individuals you have asked to campaign on your behalf and, to the best of your knowledge, those who have campaigned for you on their own initiative.

No.

53. Are you familiar with the 48-hour rule, which prohibits a candidate from seeking pledges until after the draft report becomes final, which occurs on the day and time specified on the Commission's published screening schedule?

Yes.

54. Since submitting your letter of intent to become a candidate, have you or has anyone acting on your behalf contacted any member of the Judicial Merit Selection Commission about your candidacy or intention to become a candidate? If so, give details.

No.

55. List the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of five (5) persons from whom you are providing references. Also, provide the Commission with **original letters** of recommendation from each person listed herein, including their signature (preferably in blue ink). **The Commission will not accept a photocopy or electronic submission of a letter of recommendation and failure to include all five (5) original letters of recommendation in your packet when you submit it will render your packet incomplete.** Please **do not** have references mail your reference letters to the Commission directly. *You must return the five (5) original letters of recommendation to the Commission with your application.*

(a) The Honorable Beulah G. Roberts  
Clerk of Court for Clarendon County  
[Redacted]

- (b) William H. Johnson, Esq.  
Johnson DuRant, LLC  
[Redacted]
- (c) Reverend David H. Sanders  
New Harmony Presbyterian Church  
[Redacted]
- (d) Shaun C. Kent, Esq.  
Kent Law Firm  
[Redacted]
- (e) John C. Land, III, Esq.  
Land Parker Welch, LLC  
[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.

- (a) Facebook: [Redacted]
- (b) Instagram: [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?

My current use of social media is very limited. Upon review of my Facebook account, it appears it has been more than a year since my last posting or interaction of any sort. In fact, my primary purpose in maintaining a Facebook account is to maintain a business page for our law practice. If serving in a judicial capacity, I would think it wise and becoming of the office to maintain passive, if any, use of social media, substantially avoiding interactions or other observable activity.

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) Board of Directors; Clarendon County Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse d/b/a Clarendon Behavioral Health Services;
- (b) Top 20 Professionals under 40 – Sumter, Lee, & Clarendon; Sumter ITEM; 2019-2020.

58. Provide any other information that may reflect positively or negatively on your candidacy, or which you believe should be disclosed in connection with consideration of you for nomination for the position you seek. This information may include how your life experiences have affected or influenced the kind or type of judge you have been or plan to be.

I am fortunate to have been raised in a multigenerational farming family where hard work and long hours were the norm. Amongst the principles and values instilled through this experience that I appreciate most now is that of a strong work ethic. Any success that I have found in the practice of law has been a function of a related principle, that is, "there is no substitute for preparation." I believe my broad legal experience would prove to have prepared me well to serve as a circuit court judge.

While working as the senior assistant solicitor in Clarendon County, it was not only my responsibility to see that justice was done as to an annual caseload of approximately 500 warrants, but to manage the overall county docket, and to ensure that each term of court was utilized efficiently and effectively. Having had this experience, I appreciate the challenge of balancing these seemingly competing interests, but nevertheless value the effort required in doing so in order to maintain a healthy judicial system.

I believe my experience is unique in, first of all, having worked on both sides of the aisle in criminal matters. As a result, I have not only encountered the full gamut of constitutional and evidentiary legal issues but can appreciate the variety of factors that might impact just resolution. Secondly, I believe my experience is unique in having been engaged in private practice concurrent to my service in the Solicitor's Office. When asked in what area of law I specialize, I often respond that "it's hard to specialize in a small town." The benefit to this type of practice, however, is in becoming well-rounded in one's legal experience.

In my legal career, I have had the great pleasure of appearing before many different Circuit Court judges, often during the tense and adversarial midst of trial. Through this experience, I have grown to appreciate not only the wisdom and knowledge exuded by most in their application of the law, but also the patience, courtesy and dignity with which those who appear before them are treated. If elected, I would consider the latter values to be equally as important as the former.

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: \_\_\_\_\_