

JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE



Court, Position, and Seat # for which you are applying: SC Family Court At Large Seat #1

1. Name: Ms. Martha McCright Rivers Davisson

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]

Business Address: 12923 Main St
Williston, SC 29853

E-Mail Address: [REDACTED]

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

2. Date of Birth: [REDACTED] 1972
Place of Birth: Augusta, GA
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.

I have not served in the military.

6. Family Status: In the space below, (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 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; and (d) state the names of your children and their ages. If your children are old enough to work, include the occupation of each child.

- (a) Married
- (b) 8/5/1995 Douglas Raymond Davisson, IT Manager/Director/Consultant
- (c) Not applicable
- (d) [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) Furman University August 1989 to May 1993 B.A. in History/English
- (b) University of South Carolina August 1993 to May 1996 J.D.
School of Law

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.

During law school, I volunteered with the Richland County Guardian ad Litem program, receiving training as a volunteer and serving as the guardian ad litem for a child who had spent most of his youth in the foster care system. This program was available to law students through the law school pro bono office in 1995.

I also participated in the mock trial competition held at the law school. My competition partner and I received first place in April 1996.

I clerked for the South Carolina Legal Services Association (1995), the Department of Public Safety (1995-1996), the law firm of Bedingfield & Williams (1995-1996), and a classmate and I founded a business to conduct research for attorneys (1995-1996).

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.

I have been admitted to practice law in South Carolina in 1996. I took the South Carolina bar exam in late July 1996 and have not sat for any other exam. I am also admitted to practice in the District of South Carolina.

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 has 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 of predominantly domestic cases. I also learned the procedures for real estate closings and litigated criminal cases with Mr. Bedingfield. I developed a civil litigation caseload as well. From my initial days as a litigating attorney, I handled divorces involving equitable division, alimony, child support and custody issues. 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. Until this year, we managed two trust accounts and an operating account. One trust account was strictly for real estate transactions, an area I no longer practice. In 2018, my solo practice was converted to a limited liability corporation, Rivers Law LLC.

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 continue to serve as a guardian ad litem in private cases. I have also volunteered as a guardian ad litem in abuse and neglect cases involving DSS.

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.

I have practiced family law for twenty-two years. In that time, I have appeared as counsel in all of the practice areas mentioned above. I have handled multiple divorces involving equitable division of property, contested child custody and visitation issues. As the sole practitioner, I am the attorney for these cases. My case experience ranges from a division of cast iron pans for a family with no real property to division of significant assets saved over a twenty-year marriage. I have been involved in a myriad of custody and visitation issues as a practitioner and as a guardian ad litem.

I have represented adoptive parents on several occasions. The cases have been DSS related and non-DSS related. Early in my career, I handled the adoption for a couple and the adoptive mother later came to work with me. It was a pleasure to know how I had assisted that family and to watch the child, who was an infant on that day in court, grow up with his family.

I am regularly in Family Court as a defense attorney in cases brought to court by the SC Department of Social Services (DSS). These cases involve either allegations of abuse or neglect of a child or allegations that an adult is vulnerable to exploitation or harm. There are a number of ways I am involved in these cases as I may be assisting the alleged vulnerable adult, representing the person accused of harming a child, or representing another person in the child's life. I have also been appointed guardian ad litem for defendants when there are issues of mental illness or intellectual disability. Mental health, poverty and education, and drug addiction issues are often involved in DSS cases. I have visited the homes of defendants and discussed their personal issues with them in detail. I have advised parents regarding termination of their parental rights and stood by mothers and fathers as each loses legal authority over their children.

In matters of equitable distribution, it is my common practice to verify property valuations, provide proof of valuations in cases as feasible, and to require my clients to produce documentation to me regarding the values of property. This helps my client make an informed decision during an emotional process. It helps me to explain the division of assets to my client and in negotiating with the opposing attorney. Another key element in representing clients in divorce actions is to identify all assets. Parties often do not think of retirement assets or know how to differentiate between pre-marital and marital assets.

As a guardian ad litem, I conduct home visits and interview relatives and friends regarding custody and visitation issues. I believe this work has given me invaluable experience that I can bring to the judiciary. As a guardian, I am not advocating for either parent. I am reviewing the evidence presented by both parents. My guardian work has made my legal practice stronger. Parents share with guardians very practical barriers they do not always relay to their attorneys. I have been able to apply this knowledge to my legal practice in advocating for parents.

I have appeared in court for defendant children in juvenile justice actions. The matters involving these children can overlap with DSS court and private Family Court litigation. My experience in General Sessions court has given me a general knowledge of criminal law. Juvenile justice differs in the status offenses applicable to minors and the pre-trial procedure. Once, I represented a juvenile charged with armed robbery. I saw no logical reason a young man like him should be in the juvenile justice system as much as he had been. He was intelligent, had a caring family, and had the opportunity to excel in school. For the armed robbery charge, we reached a reasonable plea deal given the severity of the crime and the evidence presented. In this case, I saw how the juvenile justice system tries to rehabilitate juveniles to avoid adult criminal activity.

Finally, I am a certified Family Court mediator. I have found this work to be very rewarding because I have used my experience as a practitioner to help craft resolutions that are family specific.

I appear in Family Court several times a month. My experience has taught me that well intentioned and expedient rulings do not always lend positive results. As a Family Court judge, I want to craft a solution to the problem presented before me rather than creating future problems. I believe I have the life experience and professional experience to understand the financial and emotional impact of Family Court. I hope to give each case its due time and rule in a respectful manner designed to prevent repeat trips to the courthouse steps.

- (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, 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.
- (c) If you are a candidate for Master-In-Equity, please provide a brief written description of your experience in the Master's court, including any cases handled over the past five years and include a brief description of the issues involved. Please include the frequency of your appearances before a Master-In-Equity or a Circuit Court Judge within the past five years.

(d) If you are a candidate for Administrative Law Court, please provide a brief written description of your experience before an Administrative Law Judge, including any issues discussed and the frequency of your appearances before the Administrative Law or Circuit Court within the past five years.

12. What was the frequency of your court appearances during the past five years or in the five years prior to your election to the bench?

(a) federal:0

(b) state: Circuit Court 2-4 times per year
Family Court 2-4 times 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: 10

(b) criminal: 20

(c) domestic: 50

(d) other: 20

14. What percentage of your practice in trial court during the past five years or in the five years prior to your election to the bench involved matters that went to a jury, including those that settled prior to trial?

(a) jury: 10

(b) non-jury: 90

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

Sole counsel

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) DSS v. Hiers (2017) & DSS v. Roberts (2017) I have listed these cases together because I represented each defendant father in the same year and with the same issue. Each father had been acknowledged by the biological mother to be the biological father of the minor children being removed from their mother's care. Each father had been involved in his child's life prior to removal and regularly visited and cared for his children. Each promptly contacted DSS upon learning of the investigation and removal; and each was denied access to their child until having an additional hearing in court. During the delay, each child was in a foster care placement or placement of the alleged perpetrator's choosing other than the child's biological parent. I was successful in assisting each father who ended up with an order of custody and placing that child in a familiar, safe, and loving home environment.

(b) Baltzegar v. Baltzegar (2004). This case involved the separation and divorce of a thirty-six year old marriage. Although the property division was important, the

significance of the case was that Ms. Baltzegar had medical conditions that were potentially very serious in the future. The uncertainty of her medical needs made health insurance imperative for her. Mr. Baltzegar had medical issues as well, making retirement seem more appealing. Neither party was close to social security age at the time of the litigation and all non-employer based health insurance was not financially possible due to the wife's medical condition. Both parties wanted a divorce. This case demonstrated that the most important asset may not be a physical asset held by either party. Furthermore, the court is often limited in how it can assist. A settlement was reached with an attempt to address the health insurance issue. Ten years later the matter came up again and was resolved with finality. The Family Court is a court where litigated matters are not final in all circumstances. It is important to be thoughtful and purposeful in these matters as the issues may continue for many years.

- (c) 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.
- (d) Thomas v. Thomas (2004) I represented the plaintiff/wife in this action for divorce. The parties were married in 1971. Defendant/husband had been employed and managed the family farm. There were allegations of psychological and physical spousal abuse by the defendant who appeared in court claiming to have several physical disabilities. With the help of local law enforcement, we were able to prove that defendant's physical condition did not prevent the stalking and harassment that plaintiff continued to allege. This was essential in reaching a favorable settlement that involved support and a marital property settlement. I believe my client's physical safety was seriously threatened. The defendant/husband was presenting himself to the court and his attorney as unable to accomplish the acts he was accused of. Thankfully, my client remained physically safe during the time it took to prove her husband's deceit to the court.
- (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. 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.

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.
 - (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.

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.)

See attached a final custody order and a final report as guardian ad litem.

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 – newly elected to the House of Delegates
 - (b) Aiken County Bar
 - (c) Barnwell County Bar
 - (d) SC Women’s Law Association

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.

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.

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.

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.

My law office, Rivers Law LLC, is the only business enterprise that I am involved in.

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.)

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.

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

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.

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.

I practiced as an associate with Bedingfield & Williams until 2000. Mr. Dan Williams, who was a partner, practices law in Barnwell County and the surrounding area. Mr. James D. Mosteller was another associate attorney with the firm at the same time I was. I do not know of any active cases from my time at Bedingfield & Williams. If elected to this seat, I would recuse myself from any action involving cases in that firm during my time of employment (August 1997 to August 2000). I have referred clients to Mr. Williams and would treat these clients as my own for purposes of recusal in Family Court.

My husband has worked for several large corporations. He is a consultant at Crane, Inc., headquartered in Williston, South Carolina. I would not preside over any action involving his immediate co-workers or persons for which he has supervisory responsibilities. I also would not preside over any action involving his superiors.

I currently receive referrals from South Carolina Legal Services which serves indigent clients in certain civil cases. In this arrangement, the legal services office refers cases to me and pays for my services as an independent contractor according to its pay scale. I do not foresee a particular conflict of interest presented by this referral contract. Any case that I handle for that office is treated as a client of Rivers Law LLC. I would not be eligible to hear any cases for former clients referred from that office.

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.

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.

None

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

which are 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 had continuous coverage until 2018 when coverage lapsed while I was hospitalized. I chose to change carriers and have been covered with my current policy since March 2018. I have not purchased a tail policy. My current policy has limits of \$500,000/\$1,000,000.00 with a deductible of \$2,500.00 per claim.

49. Have you ever, in South Carolina or any other jurisdiction, as a lawyer, judge, or other professional, been 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 sanction, discipline, or finding of misconduct of any kind.

[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

Note: The flash drive with your application materials contains (1) Section 2-19-70(c); (2) JMSC Rule 24, (3) Memo of Guidance, and (4) informal opinions and letters

concerning pledging prohibitions, with which third parties acting on your behalf, as well as you, must comply.

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 packet.*

(a) (a) Mr. Clint Collins, First Citizens Bank, [REDACTED]

(b) Mr. Grant Gibbons, Second Circuit Public Defender, [REDACTED]

(c) Ms. Jennifer Mook, Jennifer Mook Law Office LLC,
[REDACTED];

(d) Sheriff Ed Carroll, Barnwell County Sheriff, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

(e) Ms. Phyllis Sorensen, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

56. Are you active on or a member of a social media or Internet site or have you, to your knowledge, been featured or depicted on a social media or Internet site, such as, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.? If so, how would your use of social media or other similar types of Internet sites be affected if you were serving in a judicial capacity?

I am a Facebook user with a personal and office account. I may have a Twitter account that I have not used. I also have a LinkedIn account that I log on to every few months.

I use Facebook to maintain relationships with distant relatives and friends. I also have an office Facebook account. This platform is frequently used for scheduling children's birthday parties and other school events. I would delete the account, to the extent possible, upon election to the bench.

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, any professional honors, awards, or other forms of recognition received and not listed elsewhere.
- (a) Williston United Methodist Church, Board of Trustees
 - (b) Aiken Civic Ballet Board Member
 - (c) Williston-Elko School District Facilities community board
 - (d)

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.

Regardless of your background, Family Court is a place where many litigants lack foresight into his/her situation and succumb to the emotional nature of the litigation. I hope to present a calm and friendly demeanor to each litigant who comes into court.

For almost twenty years, I have maintained a general practice law firm in rural South Carolina. Although this is not a unique practice in our state, it has been an interesting perspective on life in South Carolina. I have advised families with their child or grandchild facing charges through juvenile justice. I have represented children before the local school board, and participated in DSS hearings as an advocate for a parent accused of abuse or neglect and as a volunteer guardian ad litem. Many of my clients live in poverty conditions and have provided me insight into the struggles of raising families on such limited incomes.

When I have represented clients of more fortunate means, I find their issues in Family Court are not widely divergent. Each person wants to raise their children, wants their children safe, and wants to prosper as best he or she can after the devastation of the events that brought them to court. In the past few years, I have watched the effects of the opioid crisis in South Carolina compound all of these issues and require more intervention to protect children touched by this crisis. Most litigants fear the judicial system and have many misconceptions as to the workings of the court. My Family Court experience will aid me in serving the litigants who come before me, and I will strive to be both respectful and fair in all of my actions.

During my career, I have watched the Family Court docket increase steadily. As a judge, I would strive to respect the law and provide pragmatic solutions to the family disputes presented to me. My law practice has given me insight into problems faced by families in South Carolina and the limits of the court system in protecting children and helping families. I hope to become part of the solution and address the needs of South Carolinians in Family 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 _____, 2019.

(Notary Signature)

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