



**JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION**  
**Sworn Statement to be included in Transcript of Public Hearings**

**Family Court**  
**(New Candidate)**

Full Name: Shawn L. Reeves

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1. Why do you want to serve as a Family Court Judge?

I believe that I have the legal background, courtroom experiences, values, and life experiences necessary to make clear decisions with humility after hearing all the evidence and applying the law. My legal career has primarily focused on strengthening and helping families through difficult circumstances and on safety, permanency, and well-being for children, and I want to take that experience and knowledge into a judicial role.

2. Do you plan to serve your full term if elected?

Yes.

3. Do you have any plans to return to private practice one day?

Not at this time, but I enjoyed private practice and would be open to returning to private practice in the future.

4. Have you met the statutory requirements for this position regarding age, residence, and years of practice?

Yes.

5. What is your philosophy regarding *ex parte* communications? Are there circumstances under which you could envision *ex parte* communications being tolerated?

I believe that all communications with a judge relating to a case should include all attorneys to that case (and any pro se parties). Such communications should be limited to meetings where all attorneys are present, conference calls where all attorneys are on the telephone, and emails and letters copied to all attorneys simultaneously. The only exceptions would be where the Children's Code and Family Court Rules allow *ex parte* orders in very limited circumstances.

6. If you disclosed something that had the appearance of bias, but you believed it would not actually prejudice your impartiality, what deference would you give a party that requested your recusal? Would you grant such a motion?

I would avoid the appearance of impropriety by recusing myself.

7. How would you handle the appearance of impropriety because of the financial or social involvement of your spouse or a close relative?

I would avoid the appearance of impropriety by recusing myself upon request for recusal.

8. What standards would you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality?

I would follow the clear limitations set forth in Cannon 4.D of the Code of Judicial Conduct. If there is the appearance of impropriety of accepting a gift or social hospitality, even if technically allowed under the Code of Judicial Conduct, I would decline.

9. How would you handle a situation in which you became aware of misconduct or appearance of infirmity of a lawyer or of a fellow judge?

I would report pursuant to the Rules of Professional Conduct and the Code of Judicial Conduct.

10. Are you a member of any organization or association that, by policy or practice, prohibits or limits its membership on the basis of race, sex, religion, or national origin? If so, please identify the entity and explain if this organization practices invidious discrimination on any basis.

No, I am not a member of any such organization.

11. Have you engaged in any fund-raising activities with any political, social, community, or religious organizations? Please describe.

I am a board member of the Midlands Mediation Center and have participated in fundraising activities relating to that position. If I am elected to serve as a judge, I would resign from that position and refrain from such fundraising activities.

12. Do you have any business activities that you would envision remaining involved with if elected to the bench?

No.

13. Since family court judges do not have law clerks, how would you handle the drafting of orders?

I am adept at drafting my own orders and am well-acquainted with the technology to do so. In many cases, I would request that the attorneys prepare orders and send those orders to be edited by me for the final draft. For simpler orders such as form orders, uncontested divorce orders, and approval of agreements, I would request that attorneys submit a final version of the order, approved by all parties, for my review.

14. If elected, what method would you use to ensure that you and your staff meet deadlines?

I would implement a clear calendaring system with automatic reminders.

15. If elected, what specific actions or steps would you take to ensure that the guidelines of the guardian ad litem statutes are followed during the pendency of a case?

I would review the guardian ad litem's work and recommendations at each hearing, ask pointed questions, and include specific requests of the guardian ad litem in court orders.

16. What is your philosophy on "judicial activism," and what effect should judges have in setting or promoting public policy?

I believe that judges must apply the law to the facts of the particular case. Judges apply the law; they do not create the law.

17. Canon 4 allows a judge to engage in activities to improve the law, legal system, and administration of justice. What activities would you plan to undertake to further this improvement of the legal system?

I would engage in educating both legal professionals and the general public through participation in conferences and classes as I am able. However, I believe the best way a judge can improve the law, legal system, and administration of justice is to take great care as to each and every case that comes before the judge. Doing justice in each particular case is in incredible responsibility.

18. Do you feel that the pressure of serving as a judge would strain personal relationships (i.e. spouse, children, friends, or relatives)? How would you plan to address this?

I do not believe that serving as a judge would restrain my personal relationships. I have a strong marriage and a supportive family. My wife and I both have professional careers and share in the responsibilities of caring for our three children. Over the years, we have learned to balance all of these responsibilities, and I do not expect that to change.

19. Would you give any special considerations to a pro se litigant in family court?

I would not bend any court rules or laws in favor of a pro se litigant.

20. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality?

No.

21. Would you hear a case where you or a member of your family held a *de minimis* financial interest in a party involved?

No.

22. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses for the past reporting period?

Yes.

23. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge and when do these rules apply?

A judge should be professional and polite, in charge of the courtroom but also humble.

24. Do you feel that it is ever appropriate to be angry with a member of the public who would appear before you, especially with a criminal defendant? Is anger ever appropriate in dealing with attorneys or a pro se litigant?

Anger is not helpful in dealing with attorneys or litigants. That said, judges are human and have human emotions. So it is important for judges to control anger and to correct any situations where anger shows in order to avoid the appearance of impropriety.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ANSWERS TO THE ABOVE QUESTIONS ARE TRUE AND COMPLETE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sworn to before me this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2019.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print name)

Notary Public for South Carolina

My commission expires: \_\_\_\_\_