

**JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE**

Court, Position, and Seat # for which you are applying:
Family Court, Eleventh Judicial Circuit, Seat 2

1. NAME: The Honorable Deborah Neese
BUSINESS ADDRESS: Saluda County Courthouse
100 E. Church Street
Saluda, SC, 29138
TELEPHONE NUMBER: (office): 864-445-4500 (Saluda)
(office): 803-785-8450 (Lexington)
2. Date and Place of Birth: 1951; Columbia, SC
3. Are you a citizen of SC? Yes.
Have you been a resident of this state for at least the immediate past five years? Yes.
5. Family Status: Divorced on July 13, 1982, Lexington County Family Court, one year's separation.
Divorced on June 3, 1997, Orangeburg County Family Court, one year separation.
6. Have you served in the military? No.
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, Clemson, SC, 1969-71, no degree, transferred to USC due to marriage;
 - (b) USC, Columbia, SC, 1971-73, BA in Social and Behavioral Sciences, *cum laude*;
 - (c) USC, Columbia, SC, mid-1970's, one graduate course in the Department of Education, was exploring graduate school options;
 - (d) USC School of Law, Columbia, SC, 1978-80, JD.
8. 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. If you took the bar exam more than once in any of the states listed, please indicate the number of times you took the exam in each state.
SC, 1981
9. List the significant activities in which you took part during your attendance at college, graduate, and law school. Give the dates you were involved in these activities and list any leadership positions you held.
 - (a) 1969-70: Freshman Senator; Freshman Honor Society; Angel Flight pledge; Delta, Delta, Delta sorority pledge;
 - (b) 1969-71: Angel Flight member and regional representative; Delta, Delta, Delta member and social chair;



(c) 1970-71: Homecoming Court.

During the years as a married undergraduate student through the following years while attending law school, (1971-80), my church and community activities included:

Member, Holland Avenue Baptist Church, church choir, choral group, Sunday School teacher (Primaries), Training Union teacher (Youth), member and president of Baptist Women, served on various youth and education committees

Member, American Business Women's Association

Speaker to community groups on issues related to child abuse and neglect

10. Describe your continuing legal or judicial education during the past five years.

<u>Conference/CLE Name</u>	<u>Date(s)</u>
(a) 2007 Family Court Judges Conference	04/25/2007;
(b) Orientation School for Family Court Judges	07/11/2007;
(c) 2007 Annual Judicial Conference	08/22/2007;
(d) 2007 Family Court Bench/Bar CLE	12/07/2007;
(e) 2008 SC Bar Annual Meeting: Family Law	01/25/2008;
(f) 2008 Family Court Judges Conference	04/23/2008;
(g) 2008 Annual Judicial Conference	08/20/2008;
(h) LCBA – Straight Talk, Family Court Judiciary Panel	10/02/1008;
(i) 2008 Family Court Bench/Bar CLE	12/05/2008;
(j) 2009 SC Bar Annual Meeting: Family Law	01/23/2009;
(k) 2009 Family Court Judges Conference	04/22/2009;
(l) 2009 Annual Judicial Conference	08/19/2009;
(m) 2009 Family Court Bench/Bar CLE	12/04/2009;
(n) 2010 SC Bar Annual Meeting: Family Law	01/22/2010;
(o) 2010 Family Court Judges Conference	04/22/2010;
(p) National Judicial College General Jurisdiction 2-week Course	05/15/2010;
(q) 2010 Annual Judicial Conference	08/18/2010;
(r) Hot Tips from the Coolest Domestic Law Practitioners	10/01/2010;
(s) Mini Summit on Justice for Children	12/02/2010;
(t) 2010 Family Court Bench/Bar CLE	12/03/2010;
(u) 2011 SC Bar Annual Meeting: Family Law	01/21/2011;
(v) 2011 SC Family Court Judges Conference	06/01/2011;
(w) 2011 Annual Judicial Conference	08/17/2011;
(x) 2011 Family Court Bench/Bar CLE	12/02/2011;
(y) 2012 SC Bar Annual Meeting: Family Law	01/20/2012;
(z) LCBA–Family Court Judiciary Panel	04/16/2012;
(aa) 2012 Family Court Judges Conference	04/18/2012.

11. 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. Yes.

- a) SC Bar Basic Skills CLE 1980's (presenter on appellate practice rules and procedures);
 - b) SC Bar CLE "20/20: An Optimal View of 2005" (presenter on family law issues);
 - c) Lexington County Bar CLE "Overview of Title IV-D Child Support Cases (presenter on the organization of the CSED, establishment and enforcement of child support orders, tools available for enforcement, incoming and outgoing cases under UIFSA);
 - d) SC State College, substituted as adjunct professor for eight weeks in 1990's in two classes of "Legal Environment of Business" (survey course for business students covering the types of legal issues that may arise in the court of operating a business and their implications as to both employees and clients);
 - e) Lexington County Bar CLE 2008 (participated in judges' panel on various topics and questions raised in the family law area);
 - f) Lexington County Bar CLE 2012 (moderated and participated in judges' panel on various topics and questions raised in the family law area and practice in the Eleventh Judicial Circuit);
 - g) Scheduled to speak to the Advanced Legal Profession class taught by Desa Ballard at USC School of Law in November 2012.
12. List all published books and articles you have written and give citations and the dates of publication for each.
- Sanders, Neese, & Nichols, Trial Handbook for SC Lawyers (Lawyers Coop. 1994).
13. 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.
- SC state courts, May 14, 1981, Bar. No. 4180
- (a) US District Court for the District of SC, August 04, 1986, Bar No. 2510;
 - (b) US Supreme Court, May 15, 2006.
14. Describe chronologically your legal experience since graduation from law school and include a list of all law firms with which you have been associated. Describe the general character of your practice and divide it into periods with dates if its character has changed over the years.
- 14.(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 has prepared you to preside over such matters as a Family Court Judge.
- (a) 1981-83: SC Supreme Court, Staff Attorney, Clyde N. Davis, Supervisor;

- (b) 1983-85: SC Court of Appeals, Law Clerk to Chief Judge Alexander M. Sanders, Jr.;
 - (c) 1985-87: McKay & Guerard, of Columbia and Charleston, associate, civil litigation. The firm focused on corporate litigation, although I did handle a small number of personal injury and domestic cases. The practice was in both state and federal courts;
 - (d) 1987-88: SC Court of Appeals, Law Clerk to Chief Judge Alexander M. Sanders, Jr. for three months while he was awaiting a new law clerk;
 - (e) 1988-89: SC Attorney General's Office, Assistant Attorney General
I assisted lead attorneys in filing the claim on behalf of the State of SC against members of the asbestos industry for damages related to the presence of the product in state-owned buildings, including the need for abatement or containment;
 - (f) 1989-89: SC State College, substitute adjunct professor for 8 weeks I taught two classes of "Legal Environment of Business" to undergraduate students;
 - (g) 1990-92: SC Court of Appeals, Law Clerk to Chief Judge Alexander M. Sanders, Jr.;
 - (h) 1993-95: Editor, *South Carolina Lawyer Magazine*, gratis position;
 - (i) 1996-2007: Child Support Enforcement Division, SCDSS, State Attorney. I represented the State of SC as assignee of child support enforcement rights of custodians in cases arising under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act. I was assigned to Lexington and Edgefield counties and, at various times, handled caseloads in Bamberg, Chester, Greenwood, Lancaster, McCormick, Manning, and York counties, with additional court dates in Aiken, Richland, Saluda, Spartanburg, and Union counties, as needed.
 - (j) Feb. 2007: Elected Family Court Judge, Eleventh Judicial Circuit, Seat 2, with term beginning July 01, 2007.
15. What is your rating, if any, by any legal rating organization, such as, Best Lawyers, Chambers, Legal 500, Martindale-Hubbell, Who's Who Legal, Super Lawyers, etc.? If you are currently a member of the judiciary, list your last available rating, if any. I was listed, but not rated.
22. Have you ever held judicial office?
- I was elected to Family Court, Eleventh Judicial Circuit, Seat 2, in February 2007, for a term July 01, 2007–June 30, 2013. The jurisdiction for family court in SC is delineated in S.C. Code Ann. Section 63-3-520. It is generally exclusive and covers such child and family issues as marriage and divorce, separate support and maintenance, TPR and adoption, adoption of adults, changes to names and birth certificates, support of spouse and children, child custody and visitation, equitable division, alimony, contempt, neglect and abuse of adults and children, juvenile offenses, and other issues. Jurisdiction is concurrent with probate court as to paternity, common-law marriage, and interpretation of marital agreements.

23. If the answer to question 22 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) Bodkin v. Bodkin, 388 S.C. 203, 694 S.E.2d 230 (Ct. App. 2010) (affirmed on appeal; divorce, equitable division, alimony, attorney fees);
 - (b) Folk v. Folk, In the Interest of minor child, Lexington County Case No. 2007-DR-32-1900X, appeal withdrawn and dismissed by Order of the Court of Appeals dated 01/12/2009 (in this adoption action brought by Plaintiff grandparents, the Supreme Court denied the supersedeas they sought; my order revoked mother's relinquishment due to duress and coercion);
 - (c) Wannamaker v. Wannamaker, 395 S.C. 592, 719 S.E.2d 261 (Ct. App. 2011) (affirmed on the contested issue of valuation of state retirements and reversed in part on the issue of alimony as to retroactivity not raised in the Motion to Reconsider; trial involved divorce, equitable division, alimony, and attorney fees);
 - (d) Moeller v. Moeller, 394 S.C. 365, 714 S.E.2d 898 (Ct. App. 2011) (reversed on appeal and petition for certiorari is pending; divorce, with custody the primary contested issue);
 - (e) Teeter v. Teeter, Lexington County Case No. 2009-DR-32-0130 (Motion to Reconsider denied for the most part, appeal pending (divorce, equitable division, attorney fees, with the marital or non-marital nature of property and tracing of assets the primary contested issue);
24. Have you ever held public office other than judicial office? No.
25. 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. None.
26. Have you ever been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial, or other public office? No.

27. 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? Yes.
- (a) 1973-74: Mid-Carolina Council on Alcoholism
For approximately 6-8 months following college graduation, I was employed as a court-worker for the Alcohol Safety Action Project (federal grant) and obtained referrals in General Sessions Court for participants for various treatment programs;
 - (b) 1974-78: Lexington County Department of Social Services I served as a Child Protective Services Worker in various parts of Lexington County and investigated child abuse and neglect. I left this position to attend law school;
 - (c) In high school and college I also worked summers and Christmas holidays for my mother in the accounting division of a NY-based garment manufacturing business with plants and offices in SC.
28. Are you now an officer or director or involved in the management of any business enterprise? No.
29. A complete, current financial net worth statement was provided to the Commission.
30. 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. Explain how you would resolve any potential conflict of interest. None.
31. 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?
No.
32. Have you, to your knowledge, ever been under federal, state, or local investigation for possible violation of a criminal statute? No.
33. 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? No.
34. Have you ever been sued, either personally or professionally, that is, have you ever been named as defendant or respondent in any court of law?
Only for no fault divorce granted as set forth in item No. 5 above.
36. Have you ever been investigated by the Department of Social Services? Has your name ever been enrolled on the Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect? No.
37. 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.
I am not in private practice.

38. 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)? No.
39. 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.
40. S.C. Code § 8-13-700 provides, in part, that "[n]o public official, public member, or public employee may knowingly use his official office, membership, or employment to obtain an economic interest for himself, a member of his immediate family, an individual with whom he is associated, or a business with which he is associated." Please detail any knowledge you have of any formal charges or informal allegations against you or any other candidate for violations of these provisions. None.
41. S.C. Code § 8-13-765 provides, in part, that "[n]o person may use government personnel, equipment, materials, or an office building in an election campaign." Please detail any knowledge you have of any formal charges or informal allegations against you or any other candidate for violations of these provisions. None.
42. 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.
During July 2012:
- (a) I used computer paper and ink which I had on hand, at home, to complete my application (less than \$10.00);
 - (b) I paid a printer to print hard copies of the documents for this application from the flash drive (\$14.06);
 - (c) I sent a facsimile from a UPS office to a CPA firm for completion of my financial statement (\$6.42);
 - (d) I have supplied postage for the mailing of letters related to this application (less than \$2.00).
43. List the amount and recipient of all contributions made by you or on your behalf to members of the General Assembly since the announcement of your intent to seek election to a judgeship. None.
44. 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? 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? No.

45. Have you requested a friend or colleague to contact members of the General Assembly on your behalf? Are you aware of any friends or colleagues contacting members of the General Assembly on your behalf? No.
46. 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.
47. Have you or has anyone acting on your behalf contacted members of the Judicial Merit Selection Commission about your candidacy or intention to become a candidate? No.
48. 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 Association;
 - (b) Lexington County Bar Association;
 - (c) Family Court Bench-Bar Committee.
49. 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) The Episcopal Church of the Ridge; Grace Church of Ridge Spring; Trinity of Edgefield; and Our Saviour of Trenton;
 - (b) The Ridge Heritage Association;
 - (c) Ridge Spring Arts Center;
 - (d) Saluda County Historical Society;
 - (e) Edgefield County Historical Society;
 - (f) Colonial Williamsburg Foundation;
 - (g) S.C. ETV.
50. 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.
- The organizational skills that I developed through the years have assisted me in addressing the endless flow of orders, paperwork, and activity on cases, as well as the duties of Chief Administrative Judge which I have this calendar year. A good work ethic was instilled in me in my early years, and I have not abandoned it since my election in 2007. I usually arrive early to the courthouse, leave late, and work on many weeknights and portions of weekends in an attempt to stay current on paperwork and other obligations of the position. Whenever possible, I try to accommodate attorneys and litigants by adding hearings before my regular docket in order to keep our cases moving toward final resolution. I have maintained an intellectual curiosity about the multitude of issues that may come before a judge in any given term of court, and I continue to find the job challenging, stimulating, and rewarding.
51. References:
- (a) Linda Hipps, Personal Banker

First Citizens Bank

P. O. Box 687

Saluda, SC 29138

Phone: 864-445-2128

- (b) The Rev'd Janet E. Tarbox
207 Country Club Road
Edgefield, SC 29824-4300
Phone: 803-637-5531; 803-315-3161
- (c) Dolores (Dee) Jameson
1025 Pitts Branch Road
Ridge Spring, SC 29129
Phone: 803-685-7219
- (d) Earl B. Forrest
101 N. Main Street
Saluda, SC 29138
Phone: 864-445-7080
- (e) D. Brent Wood
1825 St. Julian Place
14J Middleborough Condominium
Columbia, SC 29204
Phone: (803) 771-7747

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: Deborah Neese

Date: August 2, 2012