



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

**Retired Judge**

Full Name: Roger L. Couch

Business Address: P.O. Box 2614, Spartanburg, SC 29304

Business Telephone (864) 680-7086

1. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses for the past reporting period? Yes
  
2. Do you have any plans to return to private practice? No
  
3. Are you engaged in any legal activities other than your service as a retired judge, such as acting as an arbitrator or mediator? No
  
4. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality?  
No
  
5. 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.  
None
  
6. Have you engaged in any partisan political activity since your retirement? Please describe.  
None
  
7. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge? When do these rules apply? A judge should remain calm but firm in managing the courtroom. He should refrain from being overbearing to or abusive

of both litigants and attorneys. A firm confidence is necessary to assure respect and decorum in the courtroom.

8. In your position as a retired judge, what methods do you employ to ensure that deadlines for the timely issuance of orders are met? I keep a list of mater under advisement and deadline to be met and check it regularly.

9. Do you feel that it is ever appropriate to be angry with a member of the public, especially with a criminal defendant? Is anger ever appropriate in dealing with attorneys? No anger is not appropriate at any time.

10. How would you handle a situation in which you became aware of misconduct or appearance of infirmity of a lawyer or fellow judge? That behavior should be reported to the appropriate disciplinary commission

11. What is your philosophy on recusal, especially in situations in which lawyer-legislators, former associates, or law clerks are to appear before you? I would make all parties aware of the situation and allow the other side to raise any issues that they feel I should consider concerning my participation in the case or raise any recusal issues.

12. What is your philosophy regarding *ex parte* communciations? Are there circumstances under which you could envision *ex parte* communications being tolerated? I do not have a law clerk or an administrative assistant so I have had to schedule my own special hearings. I only discuss procedural matters at those times. There are no occasions when ex-parte communications concerning the merits of a case should occur.

13. 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? If the situation was such that it appeared that I might be biased, I would grant the motion of recusal.

14. What standards have you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality? I accept only gifts and social hospitality in situations where it may involve a group of lawyers usually at bar functions where entire groups of lawyers are invited and large groups of judges are included.
15. In order that we might advise court administration on steps that need to be taken, are there any limitations on your sight, hearing, or mobility that should be addressed by the court administrator? I do wear glasses, but am not aware of other physical limitations or problems that need to be brought to their attention.

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 \_\_\_\_\_, 2017.

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

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

Notary Public for South Carolina

My Commission Expires: \_\_\_\_\_