



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

Family Court
(New Candidate)

Full Name: Erika L. McJimpsey

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1. Why do you want to serve as a Family Court judge? I have dedicated my life, personal and professional, to public service. Much of my professional expertise has been related to domestic issues. I believe that I possess not only the legal skill and acumen to be a great Family Court judge; I also possess the compassion and temperament to deal with the sensitive matters that are confronted in this role. I have served in high stress environments my entire career: as the 1st full time domestic violence prosecutor for Spartanburg County as well as serving in the military during September 9, 2001. Not only was it important to have the skill set to solve the problems presented, but also a grace to see the pain of others and the wisdom to navigate a fair and just result. My life is committed to service and I believe that serving in this role will be an extension of my commitment to serve those who are most in need of fairness, justice, and compassion.

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? No, I do not.

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

5. What is your philosophy regarding *ex parte* communications? Are there circumstances under which you could envision *ex parte* communications being tolerated? *Ex parte* communications should be avoided, and all parties and their lawyers should be included in all communications. However, with the consent of all parties a judge may engage in an *ex parte* communication. Additionally, it may be permissible when the judge is dealing with a scheduling, administrative, or emergency situation.

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 treat this matter with great importance, and allow the other party to be heard. I would grant the motion because the appearance of bias could taint the independence and integrity of the court.
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 disclose the conflict, and recuse myself.
8. What standards would you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality? It is permissible to accept the token or items with little intrinsic value, however it is important to ensure that it does not compromise the integrity and judicial independence of the court. I would proceed with extreme caution and as a general rule not take any items to regardless of small or intrinsic value of the item.
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 this matter to the Office of Disciplinary Counsel if the conduct raises a substantial question as to their honesty, trustworthiness, or fitness to serve.
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.
11. Have you engaged in any fund-raising activities with any political, social community, or religious organizations? Please describe. No, I have not.
12. Do you have any business activities that you would envision remaining involved with if elected to the bench? No, I am not involved in any business activities.

13. Since Family Court judges do not have law clerks, how would you handle the drafting of orders? I will draft my orders independently as I have been required to do as a municipal judge.
14. If elected, what method would you use to ensure that you and your staff meet deadlines? It is important to closely supervise staff as a judge. A judge is responsible for ensuring that the conduct and actions of his/her subordinates are consistent with expectations of timeliness. I use Microsoft Calendar and shared calendars to effectively manage deadlines.
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 work closely with the Clerk of Court's office to set routine status update hearings to include reports oral or written from guardian ad litem.
16. What is your philosophy on "judicial activism," and what effect should judges have in setting or promoting public policy? I strongly disfavor judicial activism. As a judge, my role is to interpret the law and not to make decisions that inconsistent with the rule of 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 believe that it is important members of the legal community make an effort to participate in events and support efforts to give the public at-large more information about the legal system. I routinely speak to schools, churches, and other non-profit organizations. Equally, a judge is an ambassador for the legal system and should always make sure that his/her conduct serves as a positive reflection on the legal community, the judiciary, and his or her family.
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 family court judge would create a strain on my personal relationships. I will continue to effectively manage and balance my personal and professional duties.
19. Would you give any special considerations to a pro se litigant in Family Court? I strongly support efforts to make the Family Court more

accessible to pro se litigants. The public's access to justice should not be limited or impaired because they cannot hire a lawyer. I would ensure pro se litigants receive a fair and impartial hearing.

20. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality? No, I am not.
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, I would not. I would recuse myself.
22. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses for the past reporting period? Yes, I have.
23. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge and when do these rules apply? The rules are always applicable. A judge should endeavor to be temperate, courteous, and principled at all times.
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? Any display of anger is inappropriate. A judge must possess the ability to restrain his or her emotions.

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 20 day of July, 2020.

Ann M. John

(Signature)

ANN M. John

(Print name)

Notary Public for South Carolina

My commission expires: December 20, 2027