



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

Retired Judge

Full Name: ROBIN BULLINGTON STILWELL

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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.

No.

6. Have you engaged in any partisan political activity since your retirement? Please describe.

No.

7. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge? When do these rules apply?

A Judge must be fair and dispassionate. He/she must strive to ensure that he/she treats persons in the Courtroom, in the Courthouse, and in the larger community with dignity and respect. Those rules apply always.

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?

Any outstanding orders, requirements, or deadlines are catalogued on a list prepared for that specific purpose. Deadlines are then calendared with reminders programmed in advance. I believe that my record of Judicial service will demonstrate that I have consistently been timely and prompt in acquitting my duties.

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?

Anger and intemperance in the courtroom are counterproductive and can affect one's appearance of impartiality as well as suggest that personal animus is a factor bearing upon a decision. A Judge needs to maintain discipline and decorum when dealing with any person who appears before the Court. One can be stern or direct without being angry.

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

Misconduct:

If the misconduct were a minor infraction, not subject to discipline, I would address the issue directly with the attorney. If the misconduct rose to the level of an infraction under the Rules of Conduct, I would report the incident to the ODC or other appropriate authority. What action should be taken with respect to the specific case before the Court would be entirely situation dependent.

Infirmity:

I would first approach the attorney or Judge and inquire about the suspected infirmity directly. If the issue were being addressed adequately, I would simply continue to monitor the situation. I would also share the concern with my colleagues to advise them of my concern and to determine if they had observed similar symptoms. If the problem were beyond the control of the individual lawyer, I would refer him/her to an appropriate source of care and would concurrently advise the appropriate authority/authorities of my concern.

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

***Ex Parte* communications are inappropriate unless specifically allowed under the Rules (e.g., allowance of fees in criminal cases).**

12. 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 request posed a legitimate concern, notwithstanding my belief of impartiality, I would recuse myself. A Judge must be careful to avoid even the appearance of bias and be deferential to interested parties under those circumstances. If, however, the request were simply pretextual and intended to delay or gain advantage, I would be reluctant to grant the recusal.

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

I never accept anything greater than nominal value. I am very circumspect and reluctant about accepting anything of any value. I try to avoid accepting gifts without insulting the offeror.

14. 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?

No.

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