

JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE
2020



Court, Position, and Seat # for which you are applying: Circuit Judge, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit,
Seat # 3

1. Name: Mr.G.D. Morgan Jr.
Mrs.
Ms.

Name that you are known by if different from above
(Example: A Nickname): Doc Morgan

Are you currently serving in some capacity as a judge? If part-time, please note.
(Includes Municipal, Magistrate, Etc.) No

Home Address: [REDACTED]

Business Address: 55 E. Camperdown Way, Suite 300, Greenville SC 29607

E-Mail Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone Number: (home): [REDACTED]
(office): 864-239-4028
(cell): [REDACTED]

2. Date of Birth: [REDACTED] 1960
Place of Birth: Greenville SC
Social Security Number: [REDACTED]
3. Are you a citizen of South Carolina? Yes
Have you been a resident of this state for at least the immediate past five years? Yes
4. SCDL# or SCHD#: [REDACTED]
Voter Registration Number: [REDACTED]
5. Have you served in the military? No. If so, give the dates, branch of service, highest rank attained, serial number (if applicable), present status, and the character of your discharge or release. Please provide a copy of your DD214 concerning your discharge.
6. Family Status:
(a) State whether you are single, married, widowed, divorced, or separated.--married

- (b) If married, state the date of your marriage and your spouse's full name and occupation.

Married on December 2, 2000 to Julia Davidson Morgan, who is a stay at home mom. Two children

- (c) If widowed, list the name(s) of spouse(s).

- (d) If you have ever been divorced or are in the process of obtaining a divorce, state the date, name of the moving party, court, and grounds.

- (e) State the names of your children and their ages. If your children are old enough to work, include the occupation of each child.



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) The Citadel, 1978-1982, BA Political Science
- b) USC School of Law, 1982-1985, Juris Doctor

8. List the significant activities in which you took part during your attendance at law school. Give the years you were involved in these activities and list any leadership positions you held.

Delta Theta Phi Legal Fraternity 1984-1985

9. 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. Please indicate the number of times you took the exam in each state.

- a) South Carolina 1985-present. I took the bar exam once and passed and have not taken the bar exam in any other state.

10. Describe chronologically, since graduation from law school, your legal experience. Please include a list of all positions held in which you worked in a legal capacity. Describe the general character of your practice and divide it into periods with dates if its character changed over the years. Please also describe the extent to which you were involved with the administrative and financial management of each of these entities, including management of trust accounts.

- a) McCutchen, Blanton, Rhodes & Johnson, 1985-2001
- b) McAngus, Goudelock & Courie, LLC, 2001-present

I have had a very busy trial practice for 35 years in both firms. I mainly handle the defense of personal injury cases, civil arson and insurance fraud, bad faith, products liability, trucking, health care, premises liability, insurance coverage, contract, and business litigation. I have also represented plaintiffs in personal injury and property damage cases. I have handled and tried many cases to verdict in both state and federal court.

I have been in the Greenville office of McAngus, Goudelock & Courie since 2006 and have managed the office all 14 years. We currently have a total of 58 employees.

Justices/judges applying for re-election to their current position may omit Questions 11–17. If you are a full-time judge seeking a judgeship different than your current position, Questions 11-17 should be answered based on your experience *prior to serving on the bench*.

11. Please answer the following:

- (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 and procedural knowledge has prepared you to preside over such matters as a Family Court judge. Please also indicate the frequency of your appearances before a Family Court judge within the past five years.
- (b) If you are a candidate for Circuit Court, please provide a brief written description of your experience in criminal matters, including any cases handled over the past five years, and include a brief description of the issues involved. Further, please provide a brief written description of your experience in civil matters, including any cases handled over the past five years, and include a brief description of the types of matters handled, issues involved, and procedural history. Please include information such as the primary areas in civil court in which you practice, and whether you represent plaintiffs or defendants, or both. You may go back further than five years if you feel it would assist the Commission with its assessment of your experience. If you lack experience in an area, describe how your background and procedural knowledge has prepared you to preside over such matters as a Circuit Court judge, or how you would compensate for your lack of experience in this area. Please also indicate the frequency of your appearances before a Circuit Court judge within the past five years.

I have been a trial lawyer in the courtroom for 35 years, and have tried an estimated 70-80 civil jury trials to verdict in both state and federal court. I have tried an additional estimated 10 civil non-jury trials and have argued cases in the South Carolina Supreme Court, the South Carolina Court of Appeals and the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals. I have argued probably close to 300 motions in state and federal

court and have taken over 1000 depositions. I have been involved in over 100 mediations as primary counsel. I have tried cases all over the entire state and have appeared in every single state courthouse in the state. I have tried workers compensations cases as well as domestic and probate cases early in my career. Although, I do not handle criminal cases at this time, I did handle minor criminal cases many years ago at the beginning of my career. As noted in #10 above, I mainly handle the defense of personal injury cases, products liability, civil arson and insurance fraud, bad faith, premises liability, health care, insurance coverage and trucking. I have also handled cases for the plaintiff as well. With mediation, the number of jury trials in civil court has diminished over the last 5 years, but I still seem to be able to appear before a Circuit Court judge a couple of times a month for motions or trial.

Although, I handle mainly civil cases, my experience of 35 years in the courtroom has prepared me for both civil and criminal cases as a judge. A significant amount of rulings in both criminal and civil cases are evidentiary, and although there are some differences in criminal cases, such as Rule 404 character/propensity evidence, the issues that normally arise are similar. In addition to evidentiary issues, a judge has to be familiar with the courtroom dynamics and be able to handle juries, witnesses, lawyers, and parties in both criminal and civil cases. I believe my courtroom experience for all of these years will allow me to handle criminal cases as effectively as civil cases. I've been around the block.

- (c) If you are a candidate for Master-In-Equity, please provide a brief written description of your experience in the Master's court, including any cases handled over the past five years, and include a brief description of the issues involved. Please include the frequency of your appearances before a Master-In-Equity or a Circuit Court judge within the past five years.
 - (d) If you are a candidate for Administrative Law Court, please provide a brief written description of your experience before an Administrative Law Judge, including any issues discussed and the frequency of your appearances before the Administrative Law or Circuit Court within the past five years.
12. What was the frequency of your court appearances during the past five years or in the five years prior to your election to the bench?
- (a) federal: once every 5 months
 - (b) state: twice a month
13. What percentage of your practice involved civil, criminal, domestic, and other matters during the past five years or in the five years prior to your election to the bench?
- (a) civil: 100%
 - (b) criminal:
 - (c) domestic:
 - (d) other:

14. What percentage of your practice in trial court during the past five years or in the five years prior to your election to the bench involved matters that went to a jury, including those that settled prior to trial?
- (a) jury: 15%
 - (b) non-jury: 5%

During the past five years, did you most often serve as sole counsel, chief counsel, or co-counsel?

Sole counsel in all of my cases.

15. List five of the most significant litigated matters you have personally handled in either trial or appellate court, or before a state or federal agency. Give citations if the cases were reported and describe why these matters were significant.

(a) Ridgeway v McLean Trucking-This case involved a tragic accident on I-95 involving the deaths of two people with several other people injured when a tractor-trailer collided with a van full of family members on the way to see their son/brother graduate from Paris Island. I represented the defendant trucking company who was alleged to have caused the accident and was fortunate to win the case. What makes it significant for me is that I tried the case by myself and I had only been out of law school for maybe 5 years at the time. The case was tried in a very plaintiff friendly venue and against a well known plaintiff's law firm.

(b) Strange v Mitchum-I represented the defendant in an automobile accident case involving a death and brain damage injuries. The plaintiff and other co-defendants were pointing the fingers against my client and all attorneys we well known plaintiff and defense attorneys. I received a defense verdict after a week long trial.

(c) Batson v Comfort Air-I represented the plaintiff, whose home was damaged by fire, and received a large verdict, which I was told at the time was one of the largest in that county. It was a tough liability argument and I was offered only \$5000 to settle before trial. We had no choice but to try the case.

(d) Jones v Winn-Dixie of Greenville-I represented the plaintiff and received a significant verdict. It was significant because of the verdict amount, after being offered a low amount to settle, and we also established some law on election of remedies on appeal.

(e) Gurganious v. Hudson-I represented the defendant in this wrongful death automobile accident where a young man tragically died. His estate brought an action against my client for the death. What made it significant to me is that I won the case despite the facts stacked against my client, namely that the plaintiff's fiancé was in the car behind the plaintiff and witnessed the accident, it was Christmas Day, they were on their way to visit his ill mother, and there were allegations of drinking and speeding on the part of my client.

16. List up to five civil appeals you have personally handled. Give the case name, the court, the date of decision, and the citation if the case was reported.

(a) Willie Jones v. Winn-Dixie Greenville, 318 S.C.171, 456 S.E.2d 425 (Ct. of App. 1995)

(b) Auto-Owners Ins. Co. v. Carl Brazell Builders, Inc. 356 S.C. 156, 588 S.E. 2d 112 (2003)

(c) Frankie Barber v Whirlpool Corporation 34 F3d 1268 (4th Cir. 1994)

(d) Nancy M. Taylor v Lowe's Home Centers, Opinion No. 18-1435, February 6, 2019, unpublished, United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit

(e) Auto-Owners Ins. Co. v. Essex Homes Southeast 136 Fed. Appx. 590 (4th Cir. 2005)

17. List up to five criminal appeals you have personally handled. Give the case name, the court, the date of decision and the citation if the case was reported.

(a)

(b)

(c)

(d)

(e)

18. Have you ever held judicial office? If so, list the periods of your service, the courts involved, and whether you were elected or appointed. Describe the jurisdiction of each of the courts and note any limitations on the jurisdiction of each court.

No

19. If the answer to question 18 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)

(b)

(c)

(d)

(e)

20. 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.

a) South Carolina, 1985

b) US District Court for the District of SC, 1985

c) US Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, 1987

21. 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.

(a) I spoke at the South Carolina Paralegals Association in 2012

(b) I participated in the ABOTA Masters in Trial in 2016

(c) I spoke and presented at the South Carolina Paralegals Association in 2019

22. Provide, as a separate attachment, your continuing legal or judicial education report from the past five years.

23. List all published books and articles you have written and give citations and the dates of publication for each.

None

24. Please furnish as a separate attachment, two examples of legal articles, briefs, orders, or other legal writings for which you can claim sole or primary authorship. If you cannot claim sole authorship, please explain the extent to which you are the primary author, to include a description of the other authors and their contributions. The writing samples are for the Commission's use only and will not be published. (If you are a judge and are not seeking a different type of judgeship, this question is inapplicable.)

- (a) Greenville County Court of Common Pleas 2016
(b) Anderson County Court of Common Pleas 2018

25. What is your rating or membership status, if any, by any legal rating organization; such as, Best Lawyers, Chambers, Legal 500, Martindale-Hubbell, Who's Who Legal, Super Lawyers, Million Dollar Advocates Forum, etc.? If you are currently a member of the judiciary, list your last available rating, if any.

AV Martindale-Hubbell
Best Lawyers

26. 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) South Carolina Bar Association-1985-present
(b) American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA)
(c) South Carolina Defense Trial Attorneys Association-1986-present
(d) Federation of Defense and Corporate Counsel (FDCC)-2001-present

27. Have you ever held public office other than judicial office? If so, list the periods of your service, the office or offices involved, and whether you were elected or appointed. Also, state whether or not you have timely filed your report with the State Ethics Commission during the period you held public office. If not, were you ever subject to a penalty? If so, give details, including dates.

No

28. For sitting or former judges, 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.

29. Have you ever been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial, or other public office? If so, give details, including dates.

No

30. 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? If so, give details, including a description of your occupation, business, or profession, the dates of your employment, and the name of your business or employer.

No

31. Are you now an officer or director or involved in the management of any business enterprise? Explain the nature of the business, your duties, and the term of your service.

No

32. 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)? If so, give the dates of your employment or activity in such capacity and specify by whom you were directed or employed.

No

33. Provide, **as a separate attachment**, a complete, current financial net worth statement that itemizes in detail:
- (a) the identity and value of all financial assets held, directly or indirectly, including, but not limited to, bank accounts, real estate, securities, trusts, investments, and other financial holdings; and
 - (b) the identity and amount of each liability owed, directly or indirectly, which is in excess of \$1,000, including, but not limited to, debts, mortgages, loans, and other financial obligations.

(A net worth statement form is provided with this questionnaire and you must use this format for submission of your financial statement.)

A complete, current financial net worth statement was provided to the Commission.

NOTE: The Commission may require written confirmation that financial obligations have been satisfied or that the parties have agreed upon a payment schedule.

34. 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? If so, give details. Also, proof of satisfaction of any liens or defaults must be submitted with your application package.

No

35. 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

36. 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. If you have spent over \$100, have you reported your expenditures to the House and Senate Ethics Committees?

None

37. List the recipient and amount of all contributions made by you, a member of your immediate family, or by a business with whom you are associated, to members of the General Assembly within the past four years.

- a) Ross Turner-\$500
- b) Bruce Bannister-\$500
- c) Ronnie Sabb-\$500

38. 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

39. 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 or currently hold. Explain how you would resolve any potential conflict of interest.

None

40. Describe any interest you or a member of your immediate family has in real property:
- (a) in which there is a potential conflict of interest with your involvement in a South Carolina state or local public agency;
 - (b) in which there have been public improvements of \$200 or more that adjoins property in which there have been public improvements of \$200 or more; or
 - (c) which was sold, leased, or rented to a state or local public agency in South Carolina.

List the interest you hold and the value and location of the property. Identify as applicable the:

- (a) nature of any potential conflict of interest;
- (b) nature and value of any public improvements; and

(c) South Carolina state or local public agency which purchased or is leasing or renting such property.

Attach a copy of any contract or agreement.

41. Identify any personal property interest you or a member of your immediate family sold, leased, or rented to a South Carolina state or local public agency. Identify the property, its amount or value, and the name of the agency. Attach a copy of any contract or agreement.

None

42. For sitting judges, if you currently hold an interest in stock or other securities or have held such an interest, list each stock you currently own or owned during the prior calendar year. If you prefer, you may attach broker or account records containing the requested information instead of listing it here.

43. For sitting judges, have you ever accepted anything of value from an attorney or litigant in a matter currently or previously before you or your court? If so, please give the details, including the name of the attorney or litigant and the thing of value you received.

44. For sitting judges, have you used the services of your staff, for which you did not pay, while campaigning for this office?

45. 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? If so, give details but do not include traffic violations subject to a penalty of \$125 or less. You must include any and all arrests, including, but not limited to, offenses for driving under the influence or similar traffic offenses. Include all arrests that resulted in expungement, which will be redacted. If you have questions regarding whether to include an offense, please contact the Commission.

[All answers have been received and considered by the Commission, and as noted above, any expunged matters are redacted from the record.]

46. Have you, to your knowledge, ever been under federal, state, or local investigation for possible violation of a criminal statute? If yes, explain.

No

47. Have you ever been sued by a client? Have you ever been a named party (personally or professionally) in or had a pecuniary interest in any civil or criminal proceedings? If so, give details, including, but not limited to, dates, and resolutions.

No

48. 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. Also, if applicable, indicate your coverage and deductible for your current malpractice policy.

I am presently covered by malpractice insurance through our law firm's malpractice carrier. I have been covered for all 35 years of practice. The coverage amount is \$5 million per claim, \$10 million aggregate with a \$50,000 deductible per claim/aggregate.

49. Have you ever, in South Carolina or any other jurisdiction, as a lawyer, judge, or other professional, been cautioned with or without a finding of misconduct, sanctioned, or disciplined for lawyer, judicial, or other professional misconduct or has any jurisdiction found that you committed any misconduct? If so, give the details and describe any final disposition. Include any and all confidential and public sanctions, disciplines, letters of caution, or findings of misconduct of any kind. Private or confidential dispositions will be redacted.

[Yes and no responses are redacted for all candidates unless there is a public discipline.]

50. Have you ever been investigated by the Department of Social Services? If so, give the details and the resolution. Has your name ever been enrolled on the Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect? If so, give the details.

No

51. 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, or have you been offered a conditional pledge of support by any legislator pending the outcome of your screening? 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? If so, give details.

No

52. Have you requested any third parties to contact members of the General Assembly on your behalf before the final and formal screening report has been released? Describe the campaigning you have done for this election and include a list of those individuals you have asked to campaign on your behalf and, to the best of your knowledge, those who have campaigned for you on their own initiative.

No

53. Are you familiar with the 48-hour rule, which prohibits a candidate from seeking pledges until after the draft report becomes final, which occurs on the day and time specified on the Commission's published screening schedule?

Yes

54. Since submitting your letter of intent to become a candidate, have you or has anyone acting on your behalf contacted any member of the Judicial Merit Selection Commission about your candidacy or intention to become a candidate? If so, give details.

No

55. List the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of five (5) persons from whom you are providing references. Also, provide the Commission with **original letters** of recommendation from each person listed herein, including their signature (preferably in blue ink). **The Commission will not accept a photocopy or electronic submission of a letter of recommendation and failure to include all five (5) original letters of recommendation in your packet when you submit it will render your packet incomplete.** Please **do not** have references mail your reference letters to the Commission directly. *You must return the five (5) original letters of recommendation to the Commission with your application.*

(a) Gary Popwell, [REDACTED]

(b) Rusty Goudebeck, [REDACTED]

(c) Tom Stephenson, [REDACTED]

(d) Jimmy King, [REDACTED]

(e) James Gullede, [REDACTED]

56. Are you active on or a member of a social media or Internet site such as, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, etc.?

Yes

If so, please list the account names for each account and the relevant platform.

(a) I have a Facebook account in the name of Doc Morgan

(b) I have an Instagram account in the name of Doc Morgan

How would your use of social media or other similar types of Internet sites be affected if you were serving in a judicial capacity?

I rarely use or post anything on social media, so my use would not be affected if I were to serve as a circuit court judge.

57. 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, and any professional honors, awards, or other forms of recognition received and not listed elsewhere.

(a) Formerly a longtime member of both the Forest Acres and Vista Rotary clubs

(b)

(c)

58. 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. This information may include how your life experiences have affected or influenced the kind or type of judge you have been or plan to be.

I really believe my life experiences the past 60 years and my 35 years as a lawyer have prepared me for the bench if I am fortunate to be elected as a judge. I started out with a small firm in Columbia and practiced there for the first half of my career. In those early years, I not only had an active trial practice, but I handled a variety of legal matters including preparing wills, closing real estate loans, domestic litigation and giving legal advice to clients who just walked in the door. It gave me a good foundation in the law and helped me to get to where I am today and will play a role on the bench. It exposed me to different areas in the practice of law and helped me deal with all kinds of people and situations, and to develop longstanding relationships with lawyers and judges across the entire state. While practicing those years in Columbia, it allowed me to handle cases in the Midlands, the Pee Dee and up and down the Coast. The second part of my career led me back to Greenville where I was born and raised, and I have handled and tried numerous cases in the Upstate. As a result, I have been very lucky to have had a statewide practice and continue to do so today. Although I have tried cases in both state and federal court, the majority of my practice has been in the state courts of South Carolina. The state courts are where I have spent my time and developed the relationships with both the bench and bar across the entire state, as well as being around the people in the communities who serve on juries. And I have been fortunate to appear in every state courthouse in the state over the past 35 years. Based on all of these life and legal experiences, I am confident it will enable me to be a well rounded judge in our state.

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: _____

Sworn to before me this ____ day of _____, 2020.

(Notary Signature)

(Notary Printed Name)
Notary Public for South Carolina
My Commission Expires: _____