



**JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE
2020**

Court, Position, and Seat # for which you are applying: Master-in-Equity, Spartanburg County

1. Name: The Honorable Jason Thomas Wall

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

Are you currently serving in some capacity as a judge? Yes. If part-time, please note. (Includes Municipal, Magistrate, Etc.) Magistrate, Spartanburg County

Home Address:

[REDACTED]

Business Address:

Spartanburg County Courthouse
180 Magnolia Street
Spartanburg, SC 29306

E-Mail Address: work: [REDACTED]
Personal: [REDACTED]

Telephone Number: (home): [REDACTED]
(office): (864) 596-2566
(cell): [REDACTED]

2. Date of Birth: [REDACTED] 1967
Place of Birth: Spartanburg, South Carolina
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. Not applicable.

6. Family Status: Divorced

Divorced on May 16, 2000, Spartanburg Co., S.C. Family Court, I was the moving party, One Year's Continuous Separation.
Two Children



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) University of South Carolina, 1985 – 1989, B.A. Journalism
 - (b) University of South Carolina School of Law, 1990 – 1993, 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.
 - (a) South Carolina Environmental Law Journal, 1992 – 1993.

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, 1993.
 - (b) None
 - (c) Once in South Carolina

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.

Associate, Kenneth G. Goode and Associates, Winnsboro, SC.
August 1993 – September 1994

I assisted with or completed legal matters assigned by Mr. Goode, including real estate closings, attending preliminary hearings, and assisting clients with accounts receivable collection.

I did not have any involvement with the financial management of this entity.

Assistant Solicitor, Seventh Judicial Circuit Solicitors Office.
October 1994 – January 2005

My responsibilities included reviewing and negotiating cases, arguing motions, and trying cases before a jury. Representative cases include successfully prosecuting persons charged with murder, homicide by child abuse, criminal sexual conduct with a minor, kidnapping, drug trafficking, armed robbery, and burglary.

I did not have any involvement with the financial management of this entity.

Judge, Spartanburg County Magistrate Court, Spartanburg, SC. February 2005 – present

In this position, I conduct jury trials, bench trials, and motion hearings for magistrate level civil and criminal cases. My duties include issuing arrest warrants and search warrants, when probable cause exists, for all levels of offenses and conducting preliminary hearings on charges ranging from shoplifting to murder. Additionally, I preside over General Sessions cases that are heard in Transfer Court.

In my current capacity as chief magistrate, I have significant involvement with the administrative and financial management of this entity. This includes managing and bearing sole responsibility for all the accounts associated with the Spartanburg Magistrate Court's central court and bond court. Additionally, I am responsible for reviewing the accounts and records of the district magistrate courts in Spartanburg County.

Judge, Seventh Judicial Circuit Adult Drug Court Program.
January 2010 – present.

In this position, I accept guilty pleas on charges ranging from shoplifting to burglary, encourage participants as they seek stable recovery, conduct hearings when there are alleged violations of the terms of drug court, and determine the appropriate sanction or sentence for violations of the terms of drug court.

I do not have any involvement with the financial management of this entity.

Adjunct Professor, Spartanburg Methodist College. August 2019 - present.
I teach one course, Introduction to Criminal Law, each fall.

I do not have any involvement with the financial management of this entity.

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. Not applicable.
- (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. Not applicable.
- (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.

While I have significant experience appearing before Circuit Court judges, I have not made any appearances before a Master-In- Equity. In the five years prior to becoming a magistrate, I regularly appeared before Circuit Court judges to argue motions, present guilty pleas, and prosecute defendants in jury trials. Representative cases include successfully prosecuting persons charged with murder, homicide by child abuse, criminal sexual conduct with a minor, kidnapping, drug trafficking, armed robbery, and burglary.
- (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. Not applicable.

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: none.
 - (b) state: High. Virtually every business day when General Sessions Court was convened.
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: 0
 - (b) criminal: 100
 - (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: 20
 - (b) non-jury: 80
- This is an estimate. I did not maintain a statistical record regarding the information listed above.

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

I most often served as sole counsel. At times, I served as co-counsel to assist less experienced prosecutors.

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) *State v. Thomas Thompson, State v. Marco Bates*
Jury trial wherein two defendants were convicted of murder. Both received life sentences.
 - (b) *State v. Eddie Dean Dogan, Jr.*
Jury trial wherein the defendant was convicted of criminal sexual conduct with a minor, kidnapping, and contributing to the delinquency of a minor. The defendant received a sentence of forty-five years.
 - (c) *State v. Michael Coffin, State v. Coffin*, 331 S.C. 129, 502 S.E.2d 98 (1998).
Jury trial wherein the defendant was convicted of murder, first degree burglary, use of a weapon during the commission of a violent crime, and assault and battery with intent to kill. The defendant received a life sentence.
 - (d) *State v. Randy Michael Cole, State v. Cole*, 338 S.C. 97, 525 S.E.2d 511(2000).

Jury trial wherein the defendant was convicted of murder and use of a firearm during the commission of a violent crime. The defendant received a life sentence.

(e) State v. Chad Severance

Jury trial wherein the defendant was convicted of lewd act on a minor and was sentenced to ten years.

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.

I have not personally handled any civil appeals.

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.

I have not personally handled any criminal appeals.

18. Have you ever held judicial office? Yes. 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.

(a) Spartanburg County Magistrate Court, Spartanburg, SC. February 2005 – present, appointed.

Magistrate Court jurisdiction may be generally described as civil matters wherein the matter in controversy does not exceed \$7,500 and criminal matters wherein the possible penalty does not exceed 30 days or \$500. The criminal jurisdiction for magistrates is set forth in Sections 22-3-540 and 22-3-550 of the South Carolina Code of Laws. There are several crimes with possible penalties that exceed 30 days or \$500 wherein the legislature confers jurisdiction upon magistrate court. Certain General Sessions cases may be transferred to Magistrate Court pursuant to 22-3-545. The civil jurisdiction for magistrates is set forth in Sections 22-3-10 and 22-3-20 of the South Carolina Code of Laws.

(b) Seventh Judicial Circuit Adult Drug Court Program. January 2010 – present.

This court has jurisdiction over criminal cases wherein the state consents to a defendant's case being heard in drug court and the defendant enters a guilty plea.

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) Atwood Rentals, Inc. v. Shannon D. Black.

Bench trial wherein the plaintiff was awarded damages for breach of contract.

(b) Chrishema Leggett v. Brandon Moss.

Bench trial wherein the plaintiff was granted a restraining order against the defendant.

(c) State v. Napoleon Miller.

Bench trial wherein the defendant was found guilty of domestic violence, third degree.

(d) State v. Jackie Todd Fisher.

Jury trial wherein the defendant was found guilty of domestic violence, third degree.

(e) Drug Court graduation orders.

The orders that I sign finding that a defendant has successfully completed the drug court program and their suspended sentence has been satisfied are some of my most significant orders.

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.

South Carolina, November 15, 1993.

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 gave a presentation on cross examining expert witnesses at the South Carolina Solicitors Convention.

(b) I co-presented on the topic of domestic violence at the South Carolina Solicitors Convention.

(c) I gave a presentation on criminal and civil trial practice to newly appointed magistrate and municipal judges at the 2019 Summary Court Orientation School.

(d) I taught a criminal law course at Spartanburg Methodist College during the fall semester of 2019.

(e) I have given presentations about Magistrate Court to numerous classes of the Spartanburg Citizenship Academy.

(f) I have given presentations about Magistrate Court to numerous classes of students as they toured the courthouse.

(g) I have given presentations to members of the Institute for Youth Justice program and presided over a mock trial for the Institute for Youth Justice program.

(h) I gave a presentation on domestic violence to Spartanburg County magistrates.

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

Please see the separate attachment.

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.)

Two writing samples are attached.

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.

I am not aware of any existing or prior membership status or rating by any rating organization.

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
- (b) National Association of Drug Court Professionals
- (c) South Carolina Summary Court Judges Association

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.

I have not held public office other than judicial office. However, I did serve as an assistant solicitor for the Seventh Judicial Circuit.

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.

Adjunct Professor, Spartanburg Methodist College, August 2019-present.

I teach one class each fall. Stacy Parker is the chair of the Criminal Justice Department.

29. Have you ever been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial, or other public office?
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.

In my youth, I held several jobs that included driving a bus for Spartanburg County School District Two as a high school student, working at a Domino's in

Spartanburg, working at a Pizza Inn in Spartanburg, and working at a Sears in Spartanburg for a few months between graduating from college in December 1989 and beginning law school the following fall. I do not recall the precise dates of my employment in these positions. I also worked as a page with the South Carolina House of Representatives during part of my time in college, but I do not recall the exact dates.

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.

I currently serve as a member of the board of a nonprofit in Spartanburg, SC called Christmas in Action. This organization is self-described as “a non-profit organization that rehabilitates the houses of elderly, disabled, and otherwise disadvantaged homeowners to provide for their continued safety and independence.” My role is as a volunteer board member that is involved in monthly meetings and as a volunteer that works on sites each year after Christmas. My term began on July 1, 2019 and expires on June 30, 2022.

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)? No. If so, give the dates of your employment or activity in such capacity and specify by whom you were directed or employed. Not applicable.

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? No. Have you ever defaulted on a student loan? No. Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? No. If so, give details. Also, proof of satisfaction of any liens or defaults must be submitted with your application package. Not applicable.

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? No. If so, please specify the item or items you received, the date of receipt, and the lobbyist or lobbyist's principal involved. Not applicable.
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?
- a. \$11.55, postage, July 2, 2020
 - b. \$4.75, postage, July 8, 2020
 - c. \$5.20, postage, July 15, 2020
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. None.
38. Have you or has anyone acting on your behalf solicited or collected funds to aid in the promotion of your candidacy? No. If so, please specify the amount, solicitor, donor, and date of the solicitation. Not applicable.
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.
- I teach one class each fall at Spartanburg Methodist College. If Spartanburg Methodist College or anyone that I know through Spartanburg Methodist College became a party to a case before me, I would notify all parties on the record of my association with the college and any association that I have with an individual involved. I would carefully consider any subsequent recusal motions. I would apply Rule 3 E and D to the specific facts before me and rule accordingly.
- I do own a very small number of shares in two publicly traded banks. Since a master-in-equity presides over foreclosures and these banks could be involved in foreclosures, I would sell the stock before becoming a master-in-equity. While my interest in these banks is likely de minimis and would not require a disqualification, I would sell the stock just to remove the potential issue.
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.
- None.
- 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.

Not applicable.

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.

I have attached account records listing each stock that I owned in 2019. This information is included in the Charles Schwab statement that is attached.

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? No. If so, please give the details, including the name of the attorney or litigant and the thing of value you received. Not applicable.

44. For sitting judges, have you used the services of your staff, for which you did not pay, while campaigning for this office? No.

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? No. If yes, explain. Not applicable.

47. Have you ever been sued by a client? No. Have you ever been a named party (personally or professionally) in or had a pecuniary interest in any civil or criminal proceedings? Not to my knowledge. It is possible that I have been named, but not served, in civil matters in my capacity as an assistant solicitor or a magistrate. If so, give details, including, but not limited to, dates, and resolutions. Not applicable.

48. If you are in private practice, are you covered by malpractice insurance and, if so, how long have you carried malpractice insurance? Not applicable. If applicable, have you ever been covered by a tail policy? Not applicable. 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. Not applicable.
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? No. 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? No. If so, give the details and the resolution. Not applicable. Has your name ever been enrolled on the Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect? No. If so, give the details. Not applicable.
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? No. 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. If so, give details. Not applicable.
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? No. 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. My communication has been limited to making persons aware of my candidacy and discussing my qualifications.
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? No. If so, give details. Not applicable.
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) Valerie B. Sullivan,

[REDACTED]

(b) Holly Jo Mann,

[REDACTED]

(c) Roberto M. Inclan,

[REDACTED]

(d) Kaushik Kotecha,

[REDACTED]

(e) Donnie Willingham,

[REDACTED]

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

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

Facebook, Tommy Wall

Instagram, twall1318

How would your use of social media or other similar types of Internet sites be affected if you were serving in a judicial capacity? Since I am currently serving in a judicial capacity, my use of social media would not be affected. I am very careful not to comment on or repost regarding political matters, legal matters, or any other potentially controversial subjects.

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) board member, Christmas In Action

(b) member, Cherokee County Civic Club

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.

My approach to my role as a judge is to take my duties seriously, but not to take myself seriously. I understand that I have been entrusted with an important position in our society and I work daily to be deserving of that trust. My approach to my role as a judge is very similar to the approach that I took as a volunteer referee for youth soccer. It is the absolute responsibility of

the judge or the referee to know the rules and to make the best possible call with the information before them. To do the job well, both must conduct themselves in a way that projects confidence and excellence, without arrogance, demonstrates neutrality regarding the outcome, and remains open to different interpretations of the rules or facts.

The most important influences in my life regarding work ethic were my mom and dad. I do not remember them talking a lot about work ethic as I was growing up, but I have vivid memories of them demonstrating a strong work ethic daily. They would have never considered showing up early and working hard until the job was done an attribute, because it would have never occurred to them to take another approach. In my professional life, many people have made positive comments about my work ethic, but I just think of it as fulfilling my responsibilities. While I appreciate the kind comments, I do not think that I deserve praise for doing my job and I cannot envision taking another approach.

As with work ethic, the most important influences in my life regarding honesty and integrity were my mom and dad. Again, they taught more by example than discussion. However, my dad did speak to me throughout my childhood about the value of a person's reputation for honesty and integrity. Because his usual approach was to lead by example, rather than words, these direct discussions had a profound and lasting impact on me. I place an emphasis on conducting myself in a way that demonstrates my integrity and honesty.

During my fifteen years of presiding over civil and criminal cases as a full-time magistrate I have presided over virtually every type of civil and criminal case that may be heard in magistrate court. Although I have conducted jury trials on a regular basis, my extensive experience conducting civil and criminal bench trials likely provides my best preparation for the nonjury responsibilities of a master-in-equity. As a judge, I have gained valuable insight and experience that I use to fairly apply the law to each litigant and conduct court in a way that respects all parties. To serve the public properly, judges must provide fair and efficient justice to each litigant while applying the controlling legal principles and law. While I realize parties are going to frequently be disappointed with the outcome of a case, I strive to conduct court in a way that instills confidence in the legal system and the specific process that led to the outcome. It is important, in my view, to explain the proceeding to litigants and to explain the basis for the ruling. If I am fortunate enough to be appointed as the master-in-equity, I will take this same philosophy and approach to that court.

My years of experience as associate chief magistrate and the chief magistrate for Spartanburg County has prepared me to fulfill the financial and administrative responsibilities of the master-in-equity. As the chief magistrate, I am directly responsible for all accounts and financial transactions involving the magistrate offices at the Spartanburg County Courthouse and the detention center. Additionally, I am responsible for reviewing the bank records and transactions of the seven district magistrate offices. Other duties include preparing budgets, approving office expenditures, and supervising all court staff. This experience operating a court system with six full-time judges and thirteen to fifteen part-time judges has prepared me for the administrative duties of the master-in-equity office.

Beyond my experience as a judge, my experience as a litigator has prepared me for this position. As a trial attorney for over ten years, I gained extensive experience litigating a wide variety of criminal cases in Circuit Court. These cases frequently involved complex motion hearings prior to trial and during trial. While arguing these cases, I was able to observe and learn from some of South Carolina's finest Circuit Court judges. My observations of how these judges

conducted court and conducted themselves served as a model for me when I became a magistrate judge.

Before I ever thought about becoming an attorney or a judge, I learned the importance of examining all of the evidence and weighing it fairly from a childhood event. When I was a young boy, my dad looked out our kitchen window and saw a young man from the neighborhood placing a nail under one his tires. My dad yelled to get the young man's attention. The young man ran toward his house, leaving a nail under my dad's tire as evidence of the act. My dad called the young man's dad to tell him what happened. My dad's honesty has never been questioned and he would have sworn under oath that he saw the young man place a nail under his tire. He saw the young man under his truck, with his hand on a nail, and the nail was placed to go into my dad's tire the next time he backed out of the driveway. Open and shut case, right?

Now, the rest of the story. Just as the young man's dad is about to discipline him, the truth is revealed. The dad did need to discipline someone, but it was his other son. As the other son confessed, he had placed a nail under each of my dad's tires without detection. When he returned home and bragged to his brother about his exploits, his brother raced to my dad's truck to remove the nails before the tires were damaged. The young man had already removed nails that were under three of the tires and had his hand on a fourth nail to remove it when my dad saw him through the window. This early lesson about not jumping to conclusions, examining all of the available evidence, and weighing it fairly has remained with me during my career as a judge and lawyer. As the master-in-equity, I would continue to carefully examine any evidence presented, weigh it fairly, and apply the applicable law.

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: _____