

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

**Retired Judge**

Full Name: R. Markley Dennis, Jr.

Business Address: 1253 Smythe Street, Daniel Island, SC 29492

Business Telephone: 843-729-5670

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 not to my knowledge
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?  
To treat all persons associated with the court function with respect and to follow the Cannons of Ethics which clearly indicate

how a judge should perform the duties required. As Canon 3(B)(4) states "a judge shall be patient, dignified, and courteous". That together with compliance with the civility oath would be my goal. This is required all the time and as much as we may like to be a judge from 9 to 5 from Monday through Friday, the community expects that conduct all the time.

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 would use those methods that have served me for the last 26 years. I learned much from my first year by mistakes that I made and tried not to repeat them.

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 never appropriate. A judge may disagree with lawyers and criminal defendants but should always respect their opinions and again strictly follow the Judicial Canons of Ethics and the Civility Oath.

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

During my career I have had one occasion where that was the case. It truly is a delicate matter. In that situation the attorney for the opposing party was aware and we talked with persons close to the lawyer and were able to get him some help and also further representation for his client. We fully complied with the requirements of Canon 3(G).

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 never appropriate but there are many occasions when they occur typically from pro se litigants and family members of parties to an action. While not appropriate, I handle the typically with a letter to the offending person and provide opposing counsel of the communication and my response. If it is an pending case, I will file the letters with the clerk of court to become part of the case file.

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?

I would follow Canon 3(E) but there are many factors which must be considered; however if there would be no prejudice to either side by my recusal, then the safest approach is to let another judge hear the matter.

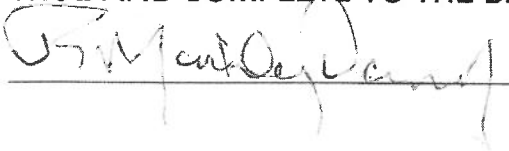
13. What standards have you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality?

During my 27 years on the bench, I believe I have followed Canon 4(D) which very specifically and clearly dictates how the judiciary I expected to act regarding gifts or social hospitality. I think the safest approach is to not accept any gifts or social hospitality unless it is crystal clear that it is permitted by 4(D).

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?

None

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

  
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Sworn to before me this 27<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2021.

  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Signature)

  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Print name)

Notary Public for South Carolina

My Commission Expires: 8/31/2026