



JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION  
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE  
2021

Court, Position, and Seat # for which you are applying: Circuit Court, Sixteenth Judicial Circuit, Seat 1

1. Name: The Honorable William Angus McKinnon

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

Are you currently serving in some capacity as a judge? If part-time, please note.  
(Includes Municipal, Magistrate, Etc.) Yes, Circuit Court, Sixteenth Judicial Circuit, Seat 1

Home Address: [REDACTED]

Business Address: 1675-1H York Highway, York, SC 29745

E-Mail Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone Number: (home): [REDACTED]  
(office): 803-628-3047  
(cell): [REDACTED]

2. Date of Birth: [REDACTED] 1973  
Place of Birth: Raleigh, NC  
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? 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. n/a

6. Family Status:  
(a) State whether you are single, married, widowed, divorced, or separated.  
(b) If married, state the date of your marriage and your spouse's full name and occupation.

- (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.

Married on December 17, 2016 to Ellen Angelina Whitley McKinnon.

Never divorced, one stepchild.

Stepdaughter: [REDACTED]

- 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) Princeton University, A.B. in Classics, 1991-1995
  - (b) Univ. of North Carolina-Greensboro, Summer 1993, Summer student only
  - (c) Rutgers University, 1995-1996, took classes while working out of interest (no degree)
  - (d) University of South Carolina School of Law, J.D. magna cum laude, 1998-2001
- 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 Law Review (1999-2001)
  - (b) Christian Legal Society (1998-2000)
  - (c) Math Teacher, Cardinal Newman Middle School (1998-1999, during first year of law school)
  - (d) Tutor for first-year law students (2000)
  - (e) Order of Wig and Robe (Chief Justice, 2000-2001)
  - (f) Phi Delta Phi (unsure of dates, I think 1999-2001)
  - (g) Private SAT and Math Tutor (1998-2001)
  - (h) Compleat Lawyer Award (2001)
  - (i) Dean's Medallion (first in class) (2001)
- 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, admitted 2001 – took the exam once
  - (b) Washington, DC, admitted 2004 – did not take exam

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) Law Clerk to the Hon. Joseph F. Anderson, Jr., Chief Judge of the United States District Court for the District of South Carolina (2001-2002).

(b) Law Clerk to the Hon. Andrew J. Kleinfeld, Circuit Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (2002-2003).

(c) Covington & Burling, Washington, DC, (2003-2004). 100% litigation with a nation-wide practice, split approximately 50/50 between complex corporate litigation (representing defendants) and white collar criminal defense, including defense of securities violations.

(d) Lewis, Babcock & Hawkins, Columbia, SC (2004-2006). 100% civil litigation, including complex civil cases in the federal and state courts of South Carolina, and appeals in both the federal and South Carolina appellate courts. My practice included all aspects of civil litigation, and was approximately 2/3 plaintiff-side and 1/3 defense-side.

(e) Solo Private Practice, Columbia, SC (2006-2007). 100% civil litigation, almost entirely a single plaintiff-side trust litigation matter involving a prominent family and a significant amount of money.

(f) McGowan, Hood & Felder, LLC, Rock Hill, SC (2007-2016). 85% civil litigation, which was entirely plaintiff-side (excepting defense of other lawyers on ethics charges), and 15% criminal defense. My civil practice consisted of about 50% medical malpractice work and the remainder was complex civil litigation in the federal and state courts, including appeals. My criminal defense work was in the state court system only. I also assisted other lawyers with ethics issues, sometimes pro bono and sometimes for a fee. The criminal defense work dropped off significantly in the final eighteen months or so because there were less appointed cases referred to the private bar.

(g) Assistant Solicitor, Sixteenth Circuit Solicitor's Office (2015-2018). I started part-time in 2015 prosecuting DUIs, and closed my private practice and went full time in 2016. After joining the office full-time, my practice was 100% prosecution of criminal offenses in the general sessions court.

(h) Circuit Judge, Sixteenth Judicial Circuit (2018-present)

I have not been involved in administrative or financial management of any of the firms I have practiced with, other than my solo private practice, where I billed hourly and did not have any client funds (I only billed for work performed).

**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.
  - (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:
  - (b) state:
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:

- (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:
  - (b) non-jury:

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

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)
  - (b)
  - (c)
  - (d)
  - (e)

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)
  - (b)
  - (c)
  - (d)
  - (e)

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.

Yes. Elected as a Resident Circuit Judge, Sixteenth Judicial Circuit of South Carolina in 2018, and continue to serve in that office. This is a court of general jurisdiction over criminal and civil matters.

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) Home Builders Association of South Carolina v. State. Bench trial judgment for Defendants, rejecting challenge to an impact fee imposed on certain new homes in York County. Affirmed by unpublished opinion, Home Builders Ass'n of S.C. v. State, No. 2020-000612, 2021 WL 914200 (S.C. 2021).
  - (b) In re May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Meeting of the York County Grand Jury. Order addressing reported grand juror misconduct.
  - (c) Garris v Lexington School District One. Bench trial involving allegations of FOIA violations by a school board. Currently on appeal.
  - (d) Burgoon v Davis et al. Order denying motion to dismiss in a complicated interstate trust matter which also included personal jurisdiction, ripeness and venue as issues.
  - (e) Saul v Sinyard. Order finding the circuit court lacked jurisdiction to partition property which was already under a family court order to be sold as part of divorce proceedings.
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, 2001;
  - (b) Washington, DC, 2004;
  - (c) US District Court for the District of SC, 2002
  - (d) US Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, 2002;
  - (e) US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, 2003;
  - (f) US Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, 2004.
  - (e) United States Supreme Court, 2014
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 have lectured at the 2008 SCAJ Annual Convention about Email Subpoenas to Third-Party Internet Service Providers
22. Provide, as a separate attachment, your continuing legal or judicial education report from the past five years. The reports are attached.
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.)

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.

None I know of – have never responded or cooperated with these organizations.

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) York County Bar

(b)

(c)

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. None

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

Yes, I was a candidate for the circuit court on two prior occasions; both public hearings were in 2014. I was screened out of the JMSC for a Sixteenth Circuit resident judge seat but another candidate was selected (I withdrew prior to the actual vote), and I was not screened out of the JMSC for an at-large seat

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.

(a) American Boychoir School, Substitute Teacher/Tour Tutor (1995-1996)

(b) Aiken Preparatory School, Middle School Math and Latin teacher, (1996-1998)

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. SC instituted a tax lien against me in 2008, based on 2006 state taxes. I had an unexpectedly high state tax bill that year, and had to ask for a payment plan. Despite my compliance with the payment plan, SC filed a lien (apparently this is routine). The lien was paid off the same year. I have never filed bankruptcy or been in default on student loans. I have provided a screenshot showing no active tax liens in my name from the Department of Revenue website with this form.
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. None
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.

I own (subject to a mortgage) my primary residence at [REDACTED]. If public sidewalks count for "B," then yes. Otherwise, no.

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.

I own (subject to a mortgage) my primary residence at [REDACTED]. Current market value is \$470,300 according to Zillow.com. The improvements would be public sidewalks, if those count.

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. None

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. No
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? 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.

I have never been sued by a client. I was a defendant in a civil action resulting from a car accident in New Jersey in 1995. It was Lences v. McKinnon, in Mercer County Superior Court in New Jersey. The case was settled with a payment by my insurer, USAA. I do not remember the amount. The case was filed in 1997 and settled, as best as I can remember, in late 2001.

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.

n/a – not in private practice. I have never been covered by a tail policy

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) Rev. Dr. Michael Honeycutt, Senior Pastor, Westminster Presbyterian Church. [REDACTED]
  - (b) Peter Protopapas, Esq., Attorney, Rikard and Protopapas, [REDACTED]
  - (c) William Cranford, DMD., Dentist, Cranford Dental, [REDACTED]
  - (d) Scott Dillon, Headmaster, Westminster Catawba Christian School, [REDACTED]

(e) Paul Basha, PE, President and CEO, York Electric Co-op, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

56. Are you active on or a member of a social media or Internet site such as, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, etc.? No

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

How would your use of social media or other similar types of Internet sites be affected if you were serving in a judicial capacity? No change

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) National Rifle Association – Firearm Safety and Pistol Instructor

(b) Westminster Presbyterian Church – Formerly a Deacon and now a Ruling Elder

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 previously served as a Deacon and as a Ruling Elder at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Rock Hill, and expect to rotate back on to the Session (elder board) this year. My job as a deacon was “emergency care” of congregational members. I spent a lot of time assisting, counseling, and praying with people struggling with some very difficult circumstances. I do think this experience changed me. I think that as a result of this work, I am more able to put myself in the shoes of litigants, victims, and defendants. Additionally, I have significant experience with students, having been a teacher and volunteer with the youth group at my church, experience which has given me significant insight into how youth are impacted by difficult family situations.

Finally, I think my wide range of prior experience helps me be more effective as a judge. I have worked at a firm with over 300 lawyers in one office, and also been a solo practitioner. I’ve appeared in Magistrate’s Court a few times, and filed cert petitions with the US Supreme Court. I’ve been a law clerk in a trial court and an appellate court. I’ve argued about every type of motion that exists. I both defended criminal clients and served as an assistant solicitor. I think this breadth of experience helps me better relate to, and work with, all of the various lawyers we have in the Sixteenth Circuit and our state, as well as the members of the public who come before me as litigants or defendants.

CREDIT REPORTS ARE CURRENTLY FROZEN

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 \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Notary Signature)

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