



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

**Family Court
(Incumbent)**

Full Name: WILLIAM GREGORY SEIGLER

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1. Why do you want to serve another term as a Family Court judge?

I have now served eight (8) years as a family court judge. Prior to that I served as a chief municipal judge while practicing privately and serving as public defender for three counties. Although I feel that we all have room to grow, I do believe I have significant experience that would benefit me while continuing to serve this great state. I feel that over the last 8 years I have applied and utilized my experiences while serving as a family court judge. I am absolutely certain that my service as a family court judge has been the most rewarding experience of my life. It is an honor and a privilege to have the opportunity to assist families in resolving the most important issues of their lives. I have worked tirelessly to ensure that I learn from my experiences and apply that knowledge while at all times striving to be a better judge. With all humility, I sincerely believe that I am a better judge today than I was 8 years ago. If I am given the opportunity to serve another term I can assure you I will continue to serve this great state to the best of my ability.

2. Do you plan to serve your full term if re-elected? Yes
3. Do you have any plans to return to private practice one day? No
4. Have you met the statutory requirements for this position regarding age, residence, and years of practice? Yes
5. What is your philosophy regarding *ex parte* communications? Are there circumstances under which you could envision *ex parte* communications being tolerated? There should be no *ex parte* communications except when allowed by Rule 3B(7), CJC, Rule 501, SCACR, or when properly presented in compliance with Rule 21, SCRFC, in emergency situations.

6. 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 consider the motion while giving it much thought as to how the party might consider the appearance of bias. I personally feel that it is of the utmost importance that litigants have faith and confidence in the judicial system. Each case is subjective, but there would be a likelihood that the motion would be granted, while always being mindful to avoid setting any precedent that may lead to frivolous motions for recusal.
7. How do you handle the appearance of impropriety because of the financial or social involvement of your spouse or a close relative? I have never encountered this issue; however, I would recuse myself from any case involving those factors.
8. What standards have you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality? I personally do not accept gifts or social hospitality, but if I did it would be in compliance with Rule 4D(5), CJC, Rule 501.
9. How would you handle a situation in which you became aware of misconduct or appearance of infirmity of a lawyer or of a fellow judge? I would evaluate the conduct and determine what actions were necessary consistent with Rule 3D, CJC, Rule 501, SCACR.
10. Have you engaged in any fund-raising activities with any social, community, or religious organizations? Please describe. No.
11. Do you have any business activities that you have remained involved with since your election to the bench? No.
12. Since Family Court judges do not have law clerks, how do you handle the drafting of orders? The attorneys typically draft the orders; however, when self-represented litigants are involved I normally draft the order. If the matter is taken under advisement I normally prepare an Order Instruction Memorandum.

13. What methods do you use to ensure that you and your staff meet deadlines? My administrative assistant and I keep a manual and computer generated system of reminders in order to meet all deadlines and to ensure that all orders are disposed of promptly and efficiently. In addition, my office prepares a Matters under Advisement report for Court Administration each month.
14. What specific actions or steps do you take to ensure that the guidelines of the guardian ad litem statutes are followed during the pendency of a case? I ensure that the parties and guardian are aware of SC Code 63-3-810 and 820, and that the guardian meets the requirements set forth in that statute. The order appointing the guardian must set forth the statutory requirements and duties, and requires the guardian to comply with providing an affidavit per the statute. Also, a retainer fee and a fee cap is set at the commencement of the case.
15. What is your philosophy on "judicial activism," and what effect should judges have in setting or promoting public policy? In my humble opinion, I do not feel it is appropriate for judges to participate in "judicial activism," thus they should avoid trying to set or change current public policy or law.
16. Canon 4 allows a judge to engage in activities to improve the law, legal system, and administration of justice. What activities do you plan to undertake to further this improvement of the legal system? I have spoken and presented at the Public Defender's Conference. Every year I participate in the JOE program that allows law students to sit with me for a two (2) week observation period. I will continue to be available to speak at schools or any church/civic organization.
17. Do you feel that the pressure of serving as a judge strains personal relationships (i.e. spouse, children, friends, or relatives)? How do you address this? Any job, including but not limited to public service, can be an additional strain, but with the support of family, a strong work ethic, time management, and patience, it should not significantly affect personal relationships.
18. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality? No.

19. Would you hear a case where you or a member of your family held a *de minimis* financial interest in a party involved? No.

20. 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.

21. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses for the past reporting period? Yes.

22. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge and when do these rules apply? Patient, courteous, and respectful at all times.

23. Do you feel that it is ever appropriate to be angry with a member of the public, especially with a criminal defendant? No. Is anger ever appropriate in dealing with attorneys or a pro se litigant? No.

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

Sworn to before me this _____ day of _____, 2021.

(Signature)

(Print name)

Notary Public for South Carolina

My commission expires: _____