



**JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION  
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE  
2021**

Court, Position, and Seat # for which you are applying: Family Court, Ninth Judicial Circuit, Seat 3

1. Name: The Honorable Michèle Patrão Forsythe

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

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

Yes. Family Court, Ninth Judicial Circuit, Seat 3

Home Address: [REDACTED]

Business Address: Charleston County Judicial Center  
100 Broad Street  
Suite 256  
Charleston, South Carolina 29401

E-Mail Address: Personal address [REDACTED]  
Work address [REDACTED]

Telephone Number: (home): [REDACTED]  
(office): 843.958.4439  
(cell): [REDACTED]

2. Date of Birth: [REDACTED] 1973  
Place of Birth: Newark, New Jersey  
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.

- (a) No.
- (b) N/A

6. Family Status:

- (a) Married
- (b) Date of Marriage: September 5, 1998, to Charles Robert Forsythe, Lieutenant, Isle of Palms Police Department
- (c) Never Divorced
- (d) Child: [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) University of Maryland Baltimore County, 1991-1996
  - (1) Bachelor of Arts Political Science
  - (2) Minor International Affairs Concentration on Latin American Politics
- (b) Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1995
  - (1) Foreign Student Spanish Language Program-No Degree obtained. This was a foreign student exchange program where I obtained course credits to complete my minor in International Affairs at the University of Maryland Baltimore County.
- (c) University of South Carolina School of Law, 1999-2002
  - (1) 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) University of South Carolina School of Law
  - (1) Student Bar Association Member, 2000-2002
  - (2) Student Bar Association Special Events Co-Chair, 2001
  - (3) Southeastern Environmental Law Journal, 2000-2002
  - (4) Southeastern Environmental Law Journal Publication Editor, 2002
  - (5) Student Loan Forgiveness Committee, 2002
  - (6) Student Loan Forgiveness Committee Talent Show Fundraiser 2002

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
  - (b) Year of Admission 2003
  - (c) 3 times
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) In 2002, I was a law clerk pending bar results at Nexsen Pruet, LLC. I worked on various matters in legal malpractice defense, and personal injury defense.
  - (b) From late 2003 into 2004, I practiced as a contract attorney for Rosen Law Firm, LLC. I worked on various family law and business litigation matters.
  - (c) From 2004 to 2005, I practiced as an associate attorney with Hulsey Litigation Group, LLC. My responsibilities involved legal research and writing regarding personal injury claims, business disputes, class action claims, including but not limited to mass tort cases. The majority of those matters were in Federal District Court, including the Federal District Court in Puerto Rico.
  - (d) In 2005, I practiced as a contract attorney with Grimball & Cabaniss, LLC. I handled all DSS appointments for DSS abuse and neglect cases for the law firm's office in Kingstree, South Carolina. I also handled minor settlement hearings in probate and circuit court, and worked on personal injury defense matters.
  - (e) From 2005 to 2006, I also practiced as a contract attorney with Savage & Savage, P.A. I divided my time between Grimball & Cabaniss, LLC and Savage & Savage, P.A. While working for Savage & Savage, P.A., I worked on personal injury cases, securities litigation, and criminal defense in both state and federal court. My responsibilities included legal research and writing, as well as court appearances.
  - (f) In 2006, I became an associate attorney with the law firm of Query Sautter Gliserman & Price, LLC. My practice was extremely diverse. I represented clients in Family Court regarding child custody, divorce, equitable distribution, abuse and neglect defense. I also represented clients in criminal defense matters in Summary Courts, Magistrate Courts, General Sessions, and the United States Federal District Court. I also represented clients in business litigation disputes, serving as chief counsel in trial of those cases. I represented clients in personal injury and wrongful death cases, serving as first or second chair during several trials. I wrote and co-wrote several appellate briefs for the South Carolina Court of Appeals and the South Carolina Supreme Court. I appeared before the United States Court of Appeal for the Fourth Circuit, on brief and oral argument.
  - (g) In 2008, I was certified as a Family Court Mediator and began mediating cases regarding child abuse and neglect, divorce, equitable distribution, spousal support,

child custody, and child support. During the time, I was also appointed as a Guardian ad Litem by the Family Court in contested cases.

- (h) In 2011, I became a partner in the practice which became known as Query Sautter Price & Forsythe, LLC, and ultimately became known as Query Sautter Forsythe, LLC. As my practice continued to evolve, I became involved in more appellate matters and represented clients in more complex litigation. I also had responsibility for management of the law firm, including employees, accounts payable and receivable, technology, and negotiating contracts with vendors.
- (i) In 2014, I became the lead attorney for the Southern State Police Benevolent Association in the Charleston area. I routinely represented law enforcement officers in all matters associated with possible police misconduct, as was frequently tasked with responding to scenes with officer involved shootings.
- (j) In February 2016, I was elected to the Family Court of South Carolina. For over five years, I have handled a variety of matters in the Family Court. I have also remained active in extra judicial work. I have worked on programs regarding language access in South Carolina, juvenile alternatives to incarceration and violence disruption, and domestic child sex trafficking and labor trafficking in South Carolina. I am also a member of the Family Court Bench Bar.

**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.
- (a) Yes. I presently serve on the South Carolina Family Court. I was elected on February 2, 2016 and commenced my term on July 1, 2016. The jurisdiction of the Family Court is determined by statute. There are no jurisdictional limits. The Family Court is tasked by statute to handle matters including, but not limited to marriage, divorce, children, child abuse and neglect, juvenile delinquency, child emancipation, child support, child custody, child visitation, child adoption, adult adoption, vulnerable adult abuse and neglect, domestic abuse orders of protection, alimony or separate support and maintenance, equitable apportionment, name changes, corrections of birth certificates.
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) South Carolina Department of Social Services v. William David Cubbage, et al., 2019-UP-134 (S.C. Court of Appeals filed April 8, 2019).
  - (b) South Carolina Department of Social Services v. Ashley Joyner & Joshua Coker, 2018-DR-10-3134 (Order on Termination of Parental Rights and Permanency Planning Hearing Trial on January 28, 2019 to January 30, 2019)
  - (c) Kathryn C. Dennis v. Thomas J. Ravenel, Thomas J. Ravenel v. Haymaker Media, Incorporated, et al., 2018-DR-10-3671 (Order Vacating Order to Seal Record, June 7, 2019)
  - (d) Bostick v Bostick, 2017-DR-07-188 (Final Order and Decree of Divorce on a Trial on the Merits)
  - (e) South Carolina Department of Social Services v. Passio, 2016-DR-27-200 (Order on Permanency Planning Hearing Trial April 20, 2017)

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) State of South Carolina, 2003
  - (b) United States District Court, District of South Carolina, 2005
  - (c) United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, 2008
  - (d) The United States Supreme Court, 2008
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) August 14, 2015. Alternative Dispute Resolution Issues in Family Court at the Charleston County Bar Association Family Law Seminar.
  - (b) October 16, 2016. Access to Justice Summit presentation on language access challenges in the legal system.
  - (c) November 12, 2016. Charleston School of Law Color of Justice Seminar on Judges and Diversity in South Carolina.
  - (d) January 21, 2017. South Carolina Bar “Hollywood Squares” Family Court Presentation during the South Carolina Bar Convention.
  - (e) February 13, 2017. Horry County Family Court CLE, Perspectives from the Bench.
  - (f) May 5, 2017. American Bar Association Family Law Spring Seminar. Assisted Reproductive Technology in the South.
  - (g) March 2, 2018. South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force. Perspectives on Trafficking from a Family Court Judge.
  - (h) April 24, 2018. Horry County. Stay or Go. Human Trafficking Exercise with lawyers, law enforcement.
  - (i) May 2, 2018. South Carolina Department of Social Services. Discussion on Human Trafficking and Child Abuse and Neglect.
  - (j) July 20, 2018. South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice. Discussion on Human Trafficking and Juvenile Justice.
  - (k) August 17, 2018. Family Law Essentials. Contempt Hearings and Advice from the Bench.
  - (l) September 19, 2018. Constitution Day. Septima Clark Academy. Speaker at the high school on the importance of the Constitution.
  - (m) October 23, 2018. Speaker at the Tri County Human Trafficking Task Force.
  - (n) October 25, 2018. Speaker at the Hilton Head Island Bar Association on Human Trafficking in South Carolina.
  - (o) December 11, 2018. Tri County Task Force Survivors Lunch. Introduction to Human Trafficking.
  - (p) February 2, 2019. Charleston County Bar Association. Judges Panel on What Works for Me.
  - (q) February 5, 2019. Horry County Family Bar Association. Language Differences and Cultural Differences. Working within the Hispanic Community in Family Law.

- (r) April 10, 2019. South Carolina Family Court Judges Conference. An Introduction to Human Trafficking.
- (s) April 13, 2019. The Links Charleston. Speaker on a panel regarding the perils of Human Trafficking.
- (t) April 18, 2019. Charleston School of Law Latino Bar Association. Perspectives from a Hispanic Judge.
- (u) May 31, 2019. Charleston School of Law. Human Trafficking GAL Project.
- (v) June 25, 2019. Charleston School of Law Summer Honors Series. Perspectives from a Family Court Judge.
- (w) August 6, 2019. Isle of Palms Methodist Church. Human Trafficking in South Carolina.
- (x) December 6, 2019. Advanced Family Law Seminar South Carolina Bar. Speaker--“Show me the Money!” – Above–Guideline Child Support (and The Three Pony Rule).
- (y) January 24, 2020. South Carolina Bar Convention. South Carolina and Human Trafficking—A Guardian ad Litem for Trafficked Youth in Family Court.
- (z) January 31, 2020. Charleston County Guardian ad Litem Meeting. Perspectives from the Family Court Bench.
- (aa) February 18, 2020. University of South Carolina School of Law. Gender and Violence Seminar.
- (bb) February 21, 2020. University of South Carolina School of Law, South Carolina Law Review Symposium. Panel Discussion on Human Trafficking in South Carolina.
- (cc) April 4, 2020. Charleston School of Law Professionalism Series.
- (dd) June 6, 2020. Charleston School of Law Summer Honors Program. Human Trafficking in South Carolina.
- (ee) September 15, 2020. South Carolina Family Court Judges Conference. Juveniles in South Carolina as Dually Involved Youth.
- (ff) October 2, 2020. South Carolina Victim Advocates Training. Order of Protection—What You Need to Know.
- (gg) November 13, 2020. Charleston Pro Bono Legal Services CLE. Human Trafficking.
- (hh) February 05, 2021. Charleston County Bar Association. What Works for Me-From the Judge’s Perspective.
- (ii) February 5, 2021. Charleston School of Law, Law Review Symposium. Sexual Abuse and Sex Trafficking.
- (jj) April 30, 2021. Charleston Air Force Base JAG Meeting. South Carolina Family Law—What a JAG Lawyer Needs to Know About South Carolina.
- (kk) June 8, 2021. Charleston School of Law Professionalism Series. On Human Trafficking—What a Family Court Judges Knows.
- (ll) June 18, 2021. South Carolina Victim Advocates. Orders of Protection—A Refresher.
- (mm) June 28, 2021. Charleston School of Law Honors Program. Community Service as a Lawyer.
- (nn) August 20, 2021. South Carolina Bar Family Law Essentials. Motions to Compel—What You Need to Know.



- (oo) October 4, 2021. South Carolina State Court Judges Conference. What You Need to Know About Electronic Discovery.
22. Provide, as a separate attachment, your continuing legal or judicial education report from the past five years.
- (a) Please see attached.
23. List all published books and articles you have written and give citations and the dates of publication for each.
- (a) Michèle Patrão Forsythe, Lady Luck Smiles on Environmentalists in Mississippi, 9 S.C. Env't'l. L.J. 231 (Spring 2002)
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.)
- N/A
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.
- (a) Super Lawyers Rising Star, 2013
- (b) AVVO Rating 9.3/10 prior to my election in 2016.
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) The South Carolina Family Law American Inn of Court Charter Member 2021
- (b) The James L. Petigru American Inn of Court 2009 to present
- (c) The James L. Petigru American Inn of Court Executive Committee 2009-2015
- (d) The James L. Petigru American Inn of Court Secretary 2009-2015
- (e) Berkeley County Bar Association 2010-2013
- (f) Charleston County Bar Association 2004 to present
- (g) Charleston County Bar Association Executive Committee 2013-2016
- (h) Charleston County Bar Association CLE Co-Chair 2013-2014
- (i) Charleston County Bar Association CLE Chair 2014-2016
- (j) Charleston County Bar Wellness Committee 2019 to present
- (k) Charleston School of Law Moot Court Volunteer 2009, 2010, 2019, 2020
- (l) Lawyer's Committee on Children's Rights 2010-2016

- (m) South Carolina Association for Justice, Member 2003-2016
- (n) South Carolina Bar, Member 2003 to present
- (o) South Carolina Bar Resolution of Fee Disputes Board Ninth Circuit 2012-2016
- (p) South Carolina Bar House of Delegates 2010-2014, 2015-2016
- (q) South Carolina Bar Practice and Procedure Committee 2014-2018
- (r) South Carolina Bar Lawyer Wellness Committee 2014-2018
- (s) South Carolina Bar Lawyers Helping Lawyers Committee 2015
- (t) South Carolina Bar Future of the Profession Committee 2015
- (u) South Carolina Bar Ask-A-Lawyer Volunteer 2013-2014
- (v) South Carolina Bar Mock Trial Judge 2014-2021
- (w) South Carolina Bar Women's Lawyer Association 2020 to present
- (x) South Carolina Supreme Court Lawyer Mentoring Program 2014 to present
- (y) South Carolina Language Access Task Force, Chair 2016-2017
- (z) National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges 2016-2019
- (aa) South Carolina Family Court Bench Bar Committee 2018 to present
- (bb) South Carolina Family Court Bench Bar Committee Dually Involved Youth Working Group 2019-2020
- (cc) South Carolina Family Court Bench Bar Committee DSS Working Group 2018-2020
- (dd) Tri-County Human Trafficking Task Force 2018 to present
- (ee) South Carolina Law Enforcement Officers Human Trafficking Work Group 2019-2020
- (ff) Supporting Opportunities for Survivors Working Group 2020 to 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.

- (a) No.
- (b) N/A
- (c) I have always filed my State Ethics Commission Reports on a timely basis.
- (d) N/A

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.

I have no other employment other than my service as a Family Court Judge.

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

- (a) Yes.
- (b) November 2018.
- (c) Did not screen out for Circuit Court, Ninth Judicial Circuit, Seat 2

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.

Yes.

- (a) Intelligence Analyst  
1996-1998

A clandestine agency within the Department of Defense

I was recruited by the Department of Defense in the Winter of 1995 to work for a clandestine intelligence agency. I was recruited, interviewed, investigated, and tested for my position and began working in November 1996. I was granted a top-secret clearance beyond standard top-secret clearances used for the military or contractors. Over time, I was read into many special intelligence access clearances. Most of the work performed in the time I worked at the Agency remains classified. I can disclose I was awarded several commendations for my work with the Presidential Daily Brief. I have no authority to disclose other commendation details of my work history or assignments.

- (b) The United States Senate  
1996

United States Senator Paul Sarbanes

I worked for Senator Paul Sarbanes as an Intern in 1995 through the Spring of 1996. In the Spring of 1996, I was hired to serve as the Senator's second Executive Assistant. I commenced my duties upon graduation until I was offered my position listed above. My duties included maintaining the Senator's calendar; coordinating the Senator's engagements with his Press Secretary and Chief of Staff; corresponding with certain constituent groups on the Senator's behalf; providing additional constituent services; drafting the Senator's correspondence; compiling and coordinating the delivery of the Senator's briefing materials. I remained with Senator Sarbanes until I commenced working for the Department of Defense.

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.

- (a) I am a member of a limited liability corporation known as Cutters, LLC. This company holds title to Units 201, 202, and 203 at The Wappoo Centre, 147 Wappoo Creek Drive, Charleston, South Carolina. This company own the real estate mentioned above. Because of the nature of my work on the bench, I am not privy to any lease information. My partners have insured I have no dealings which could cause a conflict of interest. Because of my connection to my partners, O. Grady

Query and Michael W. Sautter, I am recused on all cases in which they are associated.

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) A complete, current financial statement was provided to the Commission.  
(b) A complete, current financial 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.

- (a) No.
- (b) No.
- (c) 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.

- (a) 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?

- (a) N/A
- (b) N/A

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) In 2017, my husband, Charles Robert Forsythe donated to the South Carolina Senate election campaign of Senator Sandra Senn in the amount of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00). Money used for this campaign donation did not come from a joint account.
- (b) In 2020, my husband donated to the campaign of Representative Spencer Wetmore in the amount of Three Hundred and Fifty Dollars (\$350.00). Money used for this campaign donation did not come from a joint account.

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.

- (a) No.
- (b) N/A

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.

- (a) The only conflict I am aware of at present is with my current partners in Cutters, LLC. As a result of this relationship which is now well over a decade old, I hear no cases that have any connection to O. Grady Query, or Michael W. Sautter. Because of long standing relationship with my former law partners, I hear no family court matters on which they are associated.

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.

- (a) N/A
- (b) N/A
- (c) N/A

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.

- (a) N/A
- (b) N/A
- (c) N/A

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.

- (a) N/A
- (b) N/A

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.

Please see attached financial statement.

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.

- (a) No.

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

- (a) 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.
- (a) 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.
- (a) Fee Dispute, Client, July 1, 2011—Family Court Case. The Assigned Member conducted an investigation and determined that the attorney fee was earned. The Complainant appealed the decision to the Chair. The Chair determined the attorney fee was earned and closed the case.
- (b) Fee Dispute, Client, April 29, 2013—The Assigned Member conducted an investigation and determined the fee was earned. The decision was not appealed. The case was closed.
- (c) Fee Dispute, Client, May 27, 2015—Family Court Case. The Assigned Member conducted an investigation and determined that an accounting error was made in the amount of Sixty-Two Dollars and Fifty Cents (\$62.50). The Assigned Member determined the remainder of the fee was earned. The amount of Sixty-Two Dollars and Fifty Cents (\$62.50) was returned to the Client. Client appealed the decision of the Assigned Member to the Fee Dispute Panel. The Panel dismissed the appeal, and the case was closed.
- (d) Lawsuit, Small Claims Court. Stephen Albenesius v. Robert and Michele Forsythe. 2016-CV-10-10601120, Filed on December 6, 2016 and Dismissed on August 30, 2017. Plaintiff was a tenant of 55 West Second Street, Folly Beach, South Carolina. This property is owned by my father, Joseph Lopes Patrão and was managed by Exit Realty. Based upon my Father's instructions, the tenant was evicted for failure to pay rent on a timely basis, and destruction of the premises. The tenant sued my husband and I, alleging we were the property owners. He was aware that we were not the property owners. Plaintiff filed a claim, and we filed a counterclaim for damages. The case was subsequently dismissed by agreement of the parties. No payments were made by Plaintiff or Defendants.
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.
- (a) N/A
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.
- (a) No.
  - (b) 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.
- (a) No.
  - (b) 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.
- (a) No.
  - (b) N/A
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?
- (a) 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.
- (a) 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) Brooke Mosteller Burris, Esquire  
Founder, Tri-County Human Trafficking Task Force

[REDACTED]

(b) Dr. Elizabeth B. Flynn, Pharm.D.

[REDACTED]

(c) Rachel Janowski, Esquire

[REDACTED]

(d) Alissa C. Lietzow, Esquire  
Executive Director  
Pro Bono Legal Services

[REDACTED]

(e) O. Grady Query, Esquire  
The Wappoo Centre

[REDACTED]

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

(a) Facebook      michelepatraoforsythe

- (b) Instagram patraoforsythe
- (c) LinkedIn MForsythe
- (d) Pinterest Michele Patrao Forsythe
- (e) SnapChat michelepatrao
- (f) TikTok mpatrao
- (g) Twitter micheleforsythe
- (h) YouTube patraoforsythe

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?

- (a) I use social media to communicate with family members and friends, and to monitor the social networking activities of my child. My social media posts revolve around my family and travel. I am mindful of social media interactions. The National Judicial College suggests that judges remain connected to social media, but in a limited capacity. I believe it is important for judges to be aware of all social media platforms and to remain engaged in a limited capacity.

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) James Louis Petigru Inn of Court 2009 to present
- (b) James Louis Petigru Inn of Court, Inn Secretary, 2009 to 2015
- (c) James Louis Petigru Inn of Court, Outstanding Service Award, 2015
- (d) The Benevolent Protective Order of Elks, 2014 to present
- (e) Liberty Fellowship, 2019 to present
- (f) YWCA Award Winner of Professional Services Award, 2019
- (g) Boy Scouts of America Coastal Carolina Council, Board Member, 2019 to present
- (h) The Formation Project, Board Member, 2020 to present

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.

- (a) I continue to be grateful for the opportunity to serve as a South Carolina Family Court Judge. It has been an opportunity not just to serve, but to also learn. I have seen the joys and sorrows of people in our community. I continue to dedicate my time and efforts not just to my work on the bench, but also to my work on anti-human trafficking efforts and juvenile justice. My time on the Family Court has been

one of the most rewarding experiences of my life, and continues to be an honor for which I am ever thankful.

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: \_\_\_\_\_