

**JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE
2025**

1. Judicial placement for which you are applying:

Court: Family

Circuit or Position: Thirteenth Judicial Circuit

Seat: 5

2. Are you currently serving in some capacity as a judge (to include municipal, magistrate, etc.)? Yes. If so, state the position. If part-time, please indicate. Family Court, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, Seat 5.

Personal

3. Name: Mr.
The Honorable Tarita A. Dunbar
Ms.

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

Home Address: [Redacted]

County of Residence: Greenville

Business Address: 350 Halton Rd., Greenville, SC 29607

E-Mail Address: [Redacted]

Telephone Number: (home):
(office): (864) 467-5854
(cell): [Redacted]

4 Date of Birth: [Redacted], 1961
Place of Birth: Manning, South Carolina

5. 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.

6. SCDL# or SCHD#: [Redacted]
Voter Registration Number: [Redacted]

7. 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

8. Family Status:

(a) Married on November 25, 1989 to Vernon Fred Dunbar, Circuit Court Judge
Never divorced, three children.
[Redacted]

9. 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) Georgetown University 1980-1986 BA.
(b) Southern University Law School 1986-87.
(c) Transferred to University of South Carolina 1987-89 receiving Juris Doctor.

10. 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.
None of significance.

11. 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. N/A

12. 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) Greenville Bar Association
(b) Commission on the Profession
(c) Served on Bench Bar Committee from 2014 until 2025.
(d) SC Family American Inn of Court

13. Are you active on or a member of a social media or Internet site such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, etc.? I am not active, nor do I engage on twitter. However, I started an account so I could read about tennis. I am a big tennis fan. In past you could read the comments on twitter without having an account. However, recently you had to start an account to read the comments.

If so, please list the account names for each account and the relevant platform. Not on a platform. Just started an account to follow tennis. My account name is [Redacted]

How would your use of social media or other similar types of Internet sites be affected if you were serving in a judicial capacity? Not affect my judicial role. I don't engage on social media.

14. 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) Golden Strip Church of Christ
- (b)
- (c)

15. 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. First, my experience of not having a relationship with my biological father has made me passionate about the importance of encouraging fathers to be in their children's lives. Second, my age and experience as a wife of thirty-five (35) years, stay at home mother and later a working mother of three (3) children. Third and most importantly, my experience as a Family Court Judge for over ten (10) years. In sum, these life experiences have taught me to exercise patience, understanding, mercy, and to exert discipline when needed.

16. List the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of 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 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 5 original letters of recommendation to the Commission with your application.*

- (a) Randall J. Lawless, [Redacted]
- (b) Harold P. "Pat" Welborn, Jr., [Redacted]
- (c) Ashley Foy, [Redacted]
- (d) Patsy Ahearn, [Redacted]
- (e) Stephen Karl Fowler, [Redacted]

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Experience

17. 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) Admitted to practice law in South Carolina in 1990. I took the bar exam three (3) times in South Carolina.

18. 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) Lawyer in general practice, mainly family law (1990-1991).

(b) Director of Research and Legal Counsel for the South Carolina Senate Corrections and Penology Committee. Conducted legal research, wrote legal memoranda, attended committee meetings, met with different agencies regarding their concerns and related concerns to committee members and staff, and spoke at a number of events on behalf of Senator (1993-1994).

(c) Contract Attorney with SC Labor Licensing and Regulation. Advised Board Members of the statutes and regulations during hearings. Drafted orders for the Board following a hearing. (2002-03).

(d) Attorney with Department of Social Services Child Abuse and Neglect. Litigated cases involving the removal of abused and neglected children, vulnerable adults, permanency planning hearings for the family, termination of parental rights and any other matters relating to the family. Appeared in court in Spartanburg and Cherokee counties four days a week. (2005-06).

(e) Attorney with Department of Social Services Child Support Division. Assisted individuals in establishing and collecting child support, assisted families in resolving their disputes regarding family visitation, and assisted the noncustodial parents seeking employment. Collaborated with The Fatherhood Coalition about available community resources, employment opportunities and assistance on how best to help the parents have a harmonious relationship with their children. Also, litigated cases involving paternity, modification of child support, and whether to suspend or terminate child support; determined who should rightfully receive child support; and all matters relating directly or indirectly to child support, paternity, and custody. (2006-14).

(f) Elected to the Family Court Bench Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, Seat 5 on February 5, 2014. Make decisions involving custody, alimony, domestic abuse, youth delinquency, name change, divorce, paternity, child support, disobedience of a court order, bench warrants, abused and neglected children, whether an individual is vulnerable, termination of parental rights, division of marital property, visitation, and adoptions. Draft all orders pertaining to self-represented litigants. Sixty-six thousand two hundred ninety-two (66,292) cases have been heard in Greenville County from January 2015 to June 30, 2025. I attend mostly educational conferences. I have accepted every speaking engagement on which I have been asked to participate. I also participate on committees which promote practices that assist vulnerable families through the legal system.

Justices/judges applying for re-election to their current position may omit Questions 19-25. If you are a full-time judge seeking a judgeship different than your current position, Questions 19-25 should be answered based on your experience prior to serving on the bench.

19. 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, 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.

20. 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:

21. 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:

22. During the past five years:

(a) What percentage of your practice was in trial court, including cases that settled prior to trial?

- (b) What number of cases went to trial and resulted in a verdict?
- (c) What number of cases went to trial and resolved after the plaintiff's or State's case? For the purposes of this question, resolved includes settlement, plea, judge's order during a motion hearing, etc.
- (d) What number of your cases settled after a jury was selected but prior to opening statements?
- (e) Did you most often serve as sole counsel, chief counsel, second chair, or co-counsel?
- (f) For sitting judges seeking a judgeship different than your current position, during the five years prior to your election to the bench, what percentage of your practice was in trial court, including matters that settled prior to trial?

23. List five of the most significant litigated matters you have personally handled in trial court, 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)

24. 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)

25. 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)

26. 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

- (a) Elected to Family Court Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, Seat 5 on February 5, 2014. Term of Office began July 1, 2014 until present. Describe the jurisdiction of each of the courts and note any limitations on the jurisdiction of each court. Thirteenth Judicial Circuit. Family Court has limited jurisdiction.

27. If the answer to question 26 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) An Order waiving a minor juvenile charged with Murder, Armed Robbery and Possession of a Weapon during the Commission of a Violent Crime from the jurisdiction of Family Court to the Court of General Sessions. The juvenile subsequently pled guilty in General Sessions and was sentenced to thirty (30) years incarceration.

(b) Sellers v. Nicholls, Op. No 5754, (S.C. Ct. App.) Filed December 9, 2020

(c) Hayduk v. Hayduk, Op. No. 5889, (S.C. Ct. App.) Filed May 4, 2022

(d) South Carolina Dept. of Social Services v. Janella Johnson, Up. Op. No. 2022-UP-386

(e) South Carolina Dept. of Social Services v. Johnson, Up. Op. No. 2022-UP-387

28. 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) All state courts in South Carolina

29. Have you taught law-related courses or lectured at bar association conferences, educational institutions, or continuing legal or judicial education programs? Yes. If so, briefly describe each course or lecture.

(a) Lectured on general family law issues at the Greenville Bar annual conference

(b) Addressed South Carolina Bar on the role of Guardian ad Litem.

(c) Spoke on various topics in Family Law at a paralegal conference.

(d) I am scheduled to speak for the Beaufort County Bar in February.

(e) Addressed fathers enrolled in the Fatherhood Program regarding the importance of fathers and family.

(f) Shared my insight in the foster care system to a panel of lawyers.

(g) Panel discussion with members of the Annie Casey Foundation on how to transform our system and practice to best serve families and young people.

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

31. List all published books and articles you have written and give citations and the dates of publication for each. N/A

32. 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 and 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.)

33. Have you ever held public office other than judicial office? N/A. 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.

Personal Conduct

34. 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 of the following: federal law or regulation; state law or regulation; 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.]

35. Have you, to your knowledge, ever been under federal, state, or local investigation for possible violation of a criminal statute? No. If yes, explain.

36. 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? No. If so, give details, including, but not limited to, dates, and resolutions. N/A

37. 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. N/A.

38. Have you ever, as a lawyer, judge, or other professional, been cautioned, sanctioned, or disciplined for lawyer, judicial, or other professional misconduct with or with a finding of misconduct? 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.]

39. Have you ever been investigated by the Department of Social Services? No. If so, give the details and the resolution. Has your name ever been enrolled on the Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect? No. If so, give the details. N/A

Financial

40. Provide, as a separate attachment, a complete, current financial net worth statement that itemizes the below in detail. Note that a net worth statement form is provided with this questionnaire and you must use this format for submission of your financial statement.

- (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.

NOTE: The Commission may require written confirmation that financial obligations have been satisfied or that the parties have agreed upon a payment schedule.

41. (a) Have you filed state and federal income tax returns for the last 5 years? Yes. If no, please provide details.
(b) Have you or any business with which you are associated been delinquent in any local, state, or federal taxes? No. If yes, please provide details.
(c) Has a tax lien or other collection procedure ever been instituted against you by federal, state, or local authorities? No. If yes, please provide details.

42. Have you ever defaulted on a student loan? No. If so, please provide details.

43. Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? No. If so, please provide details, along with proof of satisfaction of any liens or defaults.

Conflict of Interest

44. 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. N/A

45. Have you ever been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial, or other public office? No. If so, give details, including dates.

46. 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? No. 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.

47. Are you now an officer or director or involved in the management of any business enterprise? No. Explain the nature of the business, your duties, and the term of your service.

48. Are you now or have you ever been employed as a “lobbyist,” as defined by S.C. Code Section 2-17-10(13), or have you acted in the capacity of a “lobbyist’s principal,” as defined by S.C. Code Section 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.

49. 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 Section 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.

50. 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. N/A If you have spent over \$100, have you reported your expenditures to the House and Senate Ethics Committees? N/A

51. 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 4 years. If you participate in any employer-mandated contributions to a PAC or any other political entity, please describe and note your personal involvement in contributions. If you are a sitting judge, please include such contributions since your last screening. (a) Bruce Bannister \$1,000.00.
(b) Jason Elliott \$1,000.00.
(c) Chandra Dillard \$1,000.00.

52. Have you or 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.

53. 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. N/A.

54. Describe any interest you or a member of your immediate family has in real property: N/A
(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.

List the interest you hold and the value and location of the property. Identify as applicable the:
N/A

(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.

55. 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. N/A.
56. 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. (a) Exxon Mobile
57. 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.
58. For sitting judges, have you used the services of your staff, for which you did not pay, while campaigning for this office? No.
59. 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.
60. 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. I have not campaigned for this election. I have not asked anyone to campaign for me.
61. Are you familiar with the 12 days' rule as provided by Section 2-19-25, 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.
62. Since submitting your letter of intent to become a candidate, have you or 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.

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 _____, 2025.

(Notary Signature)

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