

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

1. Judicial placement for which you are applying:
Court: Circuit Court
Circuit or Position: Twelfth Judicial Circuit
Seat: Seat 3
2. Are you currently serving in some capacity as a judge (to include municipal, magistrate, etc.)?
If so, state the position. If part-time, please indicate.
Yes, Circuit Court Judge, Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Seat 3

Personal

3. Name: The Honorable Harry Steven DeBerry, IV

Name that you are known by, if different from above. (Example: A Nickname):
H. Steven DeBerry, IV

Home Address: [Redacted]

County of Residence: Florence

Business Address: 181 N. Irby Street, Suite 3600, Florence, SC 29501

E-Mail Address: [Redacted]

Telephone Number: (home): [Redacted]
(office): 843-665-3020
(cell): [Redacted]

- 4 Date of Birth: [Redacted] 1980
Place of Birth: Florence

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.
No

8. Family Status:
Married on April 24, 2010 to Jessica Lynn White DeBerry.
Never divorced, two 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) The Citadel, Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (1999-2003)
(b) Florence Darlington Tech to receive credits towards my degree from The Citadel (2001)
(c) Francis Marion University to receive credits towards my degree from The Citadel (2002)
(d) Appalachian School of Law, Juris Doctor (2003-2006)

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.
(a) Completed all community service and academic requirements in a timely fashion and earned a degree of Juris Doctor.

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.
None

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) Florence County Bar Association, have held no offices or titles
(b) American Bar Association, have held no offices or titles

13. Are you active on or a member of a social media or Internet site such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, etc.?
I have an Instagram Account in the name [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?
I do not post on this account, it is only to follow and observe, and my use of this account does not affect my judicial capacity.

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.

None

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.

As a sitting judge of the Circuit Court I strive to be fair and unbiased in everything that I do. I make a concerted effort in every matter to fully hear and understand the issues from every party involved so that I can make a fair decision based on the issues and the law.

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) Janney Montgomery Scott, LLC, Senior Vice President, John R. Chase, Jr.
[Redacted]

(b) Thomas A. Finklea, CPA
[Redacted]

(c) Director, Dilmar Oil Company, Robert Earle Atkinson, IV
[Redacted]

(d) Florence County Clerk of Court, Doris Poulos O'Hara
[Redacted]

(e) Manager of Retail Banking, First Citizens Bank, Jammie J. McDonald, SVP
[Redacted]

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) I was admitted to practice law in the State of South Carolina in 2006. I took the bar exam in 2006 one time in South Carolina. I have not taken the bar exam in any other state.

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) Law Clerk for the Honorable R. Ferrell Cothran, Jr. 2006-2007
- (b) Attorney at The Whisenhunt Law Firm, Florence, SC 2007-2008
- (c) Assistant Solicitor for the Twelfth Judicial Circuit 2008-2011
- (d) DeBerry Law Firm, LLC 2011-2021
- (e) South Carolina Circuit Court Judge, 2021-present

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.
Omitted
- (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.
Omitted

(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.
Omitted

(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.
Omitted

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:
Omitted

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:
Omitted

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?
Omitted

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)
Omitted

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)

Omitted

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)

Omitted

26. 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 to Judge of the South Carolina Circuit Court, At-Large, Seat 12, now Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Seat 3

2021-present

The South Carolina Circuit Court is the state's general jurisdiction trial court handling both civil and criminal matters. This court also has appellate jurisdiction over Probate, Magistrate, and Municipal court matters.

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) City of Hardeeville v. Jasper County, 443 S.C. 635, 905 S.E.2d 431, (Ct. App. 2024)
Affirmed

In this matter the City of Hardeeville took the position that it could levy taxes and retain revenues after annexation of property that was already within the jurisdiction of a Multi County Business Park or MCBP. I ruled that the MCBP agreement was in place prior to the annexation and therefore was valid. My decision was affirmed.

(b) Rebecca C. Hagood as Personal Representative of the Estate of Frank D. Chavis, Sr., v. Palmetto Faith Operating, LLC d/b/a Faith Healthcare Center and Brooks Arnette, No. 2023-001712, 2024 WL 4903507 (S.C. Ct. App. Nov. 27, 2024).
Affirmed

In this matter I denied the Motion to Compel Arbitration because the Admission Agreement and the Arbitration Agreement did not merge. My decision was affirmed.

(c) A.M.L., and J.J.L., by and through their Next of Friend, John Doe, R.D.M., by and through his Next of Friend, Jane Snow, J.J.G., and S.T.S., v. Wright Directions Family Services, LLC, No. 2023-000791, 2025 WL 1326908 (S.C. Ct. App. May 7, 2025).

Affirmed

At issue in this matter were costs for labor for compiling, reviewing, and redacting 4,576 pages of medical records at the request of the moving party. I found that the costs associated with the work was reasonable and that sanctions were not warranted. My decision was affirmed as the Court of Appeals found no abuse of discretion.

(d) South Carolina Human Affairs Commission v. Yacht Cove Owners Association Inc., and Maria Dehart, No. 2022-000133, 2024 WL 370178 (S.C. Ct. App. Jan. 31, 2024).

Affirmed

At issue in this matter was the granting of a Rule 12(b)(6) SCRCF, dismissing an individual defendant from the action who was a board member of the Yacht Cove Owners Association Inc. The Court of Appeal affirmed the decision as the complaint failed to state a claim that would support personal liability.

(e) The State v. Driscoll Riggins, Jr., No. 2023-000868, 2025 WL 1825429 (S.C. Ct. App. July 2, 2025).

Affirmed

In this matter immunity pursuant to the Protection of Persons and Property Act was denied as there was evidence that the defendant in this matter was at fault in bringing on the confrontation among other findings that failed to prove by a preponderance of the evidence that Mr. Riggins was entitled to immunity under the Act. The Court of Appeals affirmed the decision as there was no abuse of discretion found.

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.

I was admitted to the South Carolina Bar on November 13, 2006

I was admitted to practice law in the United States District Court, District of South Carolina on November 30, 2011

29. 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.

I taught Business Law for a number of years at Florence Darlington Technical College. This course taught basic principles of law and how the law may interact with business.

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

Please see attached.

31. List all published books and articles you have written and give citations and the dates of publication for each.
None

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.)
Inapplicable

33. 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) I was elected to Florence County Council in November of 2013. My first term began on January 1, 2014 and expired December 31, 2018. I was re-elected to a second term in November 2018 and began my second term in January 2019. I timely filed my reports with the State Ethics Commission during the time I held office.

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? If yes, explain.
No

36. 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.
No.

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.
Upon being elected to the Circuit Court and winding down my law practice in 2020-2021 I purchased a tail policy that will cover any claims that may be made in the future as it related to my law practice. No claims have been filed.

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? 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? 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.

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.

Please see the attached Financial Net Worth Statement

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? If no, please provide details.
Yes

(b) Have you or any business with which you are associated been delinquent in any local, state, or federal taxes? If yes, please provide details.
No

(c) Has a tax lien or other collection procedure ever been instituted against you by federal, state, or local authorities? If yes, please provide details.

No

42. Have you ever defaulted on a student loan? If so, please provide details.

No

43. Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? If so, please provide details, along with proof of satisfaction of any liens or defaults.

No

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.

None

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

I ran in 2019 for Judge of South Carolina Circuit Court At-Large Seat 13 and was not elected.

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? 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.

No

47. 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.

I have invested in two business enterprises involving land and agriculture management. My only duty in each business is to oversee finances. I am not involved in day to day operations. My service is ongoing.

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

\$18.35 for a head shot picture to attach to my Personal Information Sheet for this application on 7/25/2025

\$0.78 Postage to mail my Personal Information Sheet and Acknowledgment of Application Form to JMSC

\$1.56 Postage to mail my letter of authorization to the Commission on Judicial Conduct and Commission on Lawyer Conduct to the Commission Counsel and a copy to the South Carolina Supreme Court.

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.

None

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.

None

54. 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.

None

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.

None

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.

None

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.

Please see attachment for list of Stock and Securities Holdings.

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? If so, please give the details, including the name of the attorney or litigant and the thing of value you received.

No

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? 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

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? 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, all I have done to date has been working to complete the application for re-election.

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? If so, give details.

No

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: _____