

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

Administrative Law Court
(New Candidate)

Full Name: Erika Sophia Easler

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1. Do you plan to serve your full term if elected? Yes.
2. Do you have any plans to return to private practice one day? No.
3. Have you met the statutory requirements for this position regarding age, residence, and years of practice? Yes.
4. What is your philosophy regarding *ex parte* communications? Are there circumstances under which you could envision *ex parte* communications being tolerated? Ex parte communications are not permitted and should not be considered. Ex parte communications could be tolerated in very limited circumstances, for example scheduling or for other administrative matters that come up in an emergency. However, the other parties should be notified as soon as possible and afforded an opportunity to respond.
5. If you disclosed something that had the appearance of bias, but you believed it would not actually prejudice your impartiality, what deference would you give a party that requested your recusal? Would you grant such a motion? It would depend on whether the disclosure presented an actual conflict of interest or the appearance of impropriety. If so, then yes. However, if neither were present and I believed that my impartiality would not be compromised, if my refusal to recuse myself would undermine the party's confidence in a fair, unbiased outcome, then I would most likely grant the motion.
6. If elected, what standards would you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality? As a servicemember for the past sixteen (16) years, I have abided by the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch. It has been ingrained in me that as a representative of America, we are to conduct ourselves in a manner at all times to avoid any appearance of impropriety. As an attorney, I am subject to the South

Carolina Rules of Professional Conduct and Army Regulation 26-27 Rules of Professional Conduct for Lawyers. As a judge I would be subject to the Code of Judicial Conduct. Therefore, I would decline any and all gifts or social hospitality that conflict with the Rules or potentially creates any appearance of impropriety.


7. How would you handle a situation in which you became aware of misconduct or appearance of infirmity of a lawyer or of a fellow judge? I would check the Rules and then consult with the Ethics Advisory Committee or the applicable Commission before making an informed decision.
8. Are you affiliated with any political parties, boards or commissions that, if you are elected, would need to be re-evaluated? No.
9. Have you engaged in any fund-raising activities with any political, social, community, or religious organizations? Please describe. I attended a fundraiser for Oliver Gospel Mission in February 2025.
10. How would you handle the drafting of orders? In my current position as a judicial law clerk, I have gained extensive experience in drafting orders. I would work closely with my law clerk and staff attorney to ensure I am up to date on the most recent case law and thoroughly review any orders before I sign.
11. What method would you use to ensure that you and your staff meet deadlines? In my current position as a judicial law clerk, I use an Excel spreadsheet that I created to maintain and track all assigned cases. I would also work closely with my law clerk and staff attorney to ensure we had a similar system in place to track all assigned cases and meet all deadlines.
12. What is your philosophy on "judicial activism," and what effect should judges have in setting or promoting public policy? My philosophy is that to uphold the integrity and independence of the judiciary, judges must perform their duties impartially and diligently and free from bias. Therefore, judges should make rulings based on their honest interpretation of the law rather than their own personal views.
13. Canon 4 allows a judge to engage in activities to improve the law, legal system, and administration of justice. What activities would you plan to undertake to further this improvement of the legal system? Speaking at Continuing Legal Education courses, law schools, and engaging with the public at appropriate events. Furthermore, I would mentor my law clerks and staff attorneys to instill the habit of reading and staying up to date on current judicial decisions.
14. Do you feel that the pressure of serving as a judge will strain personal relationships (i.e. spouse, children, friends, or relatives)?

How would you plan to address this? No, I do not. I currently have both a full-time civilian job as a lawyer and also serve as the Brigade Judge Advocate to a unit at Fort Jackson in the US Army Reserve, operating as the sole legal advisor to a Brigade and all of its subordinate commands. I am efficient in managing my time and obligations. Therefore, my personal relationships have not been affected.

15. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality? No.
16. Would you hear a case where you or a member of your family held a *de minimis* financial interest in a party involved? No, I would not, to avoid any appearance of impropriety.
17. Are you a member of any organization or association that, by policy or practice, prohibits or limits its membership on the basis of race, sex, religion, or national origin? If so, please identify the entity and explain if this organization practices invidious discrimination on any basis. No.
18. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses for the past reporting period? Yes.
19. What percentage of your legal experience has dealt with cases that appear before the Administrative Law Court? Please describe to the Commission your experience in these areas. As a judicial law clerk at the Administrative Law Court, currently 100 % of my civilian legal experience has dealt with cases that appear before the Administrative Law Court.
20. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge and when do these rules apply? A judge should be calm, respectful, humble, and efficient. The rules apply twenty-four hours a day. When I served on active duty, I was constantly reminded that I am a servicemember at all times, whether in or out of uniform, and therefore, I must conduct myself as such at all times. I feel that this same principle applies both as a lawyer and as a judge.
21. Do you feel that it is ever appropriate to be angry with a member of the public who would appear before you? Is anger ever appropriate in dealing with attorneys or a pro se litigant? While anger is a natural emotion, it is never appropriate to deal with anyone in anger, especially as a judge. Judicial temperament requires one to have the ability to deal with

members of the public, attorneys, and pro se litigants with tact, calmly and courteously.

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



Sworn to before me this 12th day of August, 2025.

Jana E. Cox Shealy Jana E. Cox Shealy

Notary Public for S.C.

My Commission Expires: 4/18/35