



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

**Retired Judge**

Full Name: Thomas Leslie Hughston, Jr.

Business Address: 100 Broad Street, Suite 368, Charleston, SC 29401

Business Telephone: 843-958-5100

1. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses for the past reporting period? Yes.
2. Do you have any plans to return to private practice? No.
3. Are you engaged in any legal activities other than your service as a retired judge, such as acting as an arbitrator or mediator? No.
4. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality? No.
5. 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.
6. Have you engaged in any partisan political activity since your retirement? Please describe. No.
7. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge? When do these rules apply? Stay cool, but do not freeze. Engage with the people and the facts. Fair—listen to both sides. Make a decision that reflects this process. Applies in every case.

8. In your position as a retired judge, what methods do you employ to ensure that deadlines for the timely issuance of orders are met?  
I keep a file of pending matters with the latest communication with attorneys attached to each matter and "stay on top" of it almost daily.
9. Do you feel that it is ever appropriate to be angry with a member of the public, especially with a criminal defendant? Is anger ever appropriate in dealing with attorneys? I try not to get angry or mad on the Bench. I very seldom, if ever, say anything mean to a criminal defendant. I try to encourage them to reform/better themselves while serving their sentences. I am sure that I sometimes "spark" at an attorney, but I try to take a recess, leave the courtroom, walk up and down the hall, or sit in my office if I am about to get upset with someone.
10. How would you handle a situation in which you became aware of misconduct or appearance of infirmity of a lawyer or fellow judge? Report it to the appropriate authority.
11. What is your philosophy regarding *ex parte* communications? Are there circumstances under which you could envision *ex parte* communications being tolerated? I try to avoid *ex parte* communications. I try to keep everyone involved in a case fully informed.
12. If you disclosed something that had the appearance of bias, but you believed it would not actually prejudice your impartiality, what deference would you give a party that requested your recusal? Would you grant such a motion? I would show serious deference and would probably grant the motion.
13. What standards have you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality? No gifts. I go to parties, weddings, etc., if invited.

14. In order that we might advise court administration on steps that need to be taken, are there any limitations on your sight, hearing, or mobility that should be addressed by the court administrator? No.

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

T.L. Hightower Jr.

Sworn to before me this 7<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2025.

Angela Benton

(Signature)

Angela Benton

(Print name)

Notary Public for South Carolina

My Commission Expires: 11-12-2030