



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

Family Court
(New Candidate)

Full Name: Elnora Jones Dean

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1. Why do you want to serve as a Family Court Judge?

Most of my 28 years of legal experience has been in family court. I have represented clients in every aspect of family court. I believe that someone of my level of experience would be beneficial to the family court bench. As a Family Court judge, I would have the opportunity to preside over the type cases that I have litigated and render fair and just decisions that affect the lives of my community. I like helping people and I believe this would be another way to help people obtain fair and reasonable relief.

2. Do you plan to serve your full term if elected? Yes

3. Do you have any plans to return to private practice one day? No

4. Have you met the statutory requirements for this position regarding age, residence, and years of practice? Yes

5. What is your philosophy regarding *ex parte* communications? Are there circumstances under which you could envision *ex parte* communications being tolerated? My philosophy regarding *ex parte* communication is based upon The Code of Judicial Conduct, Canon 3(B)(7) which only allows *ex parte* communication in certain situations. where it is allowed under South Carolina laws. I believe that the use of *ex parte* communications should be rare. I do believe there are some emergency situations that may exist whereby the filing of *ex parte* pleadings would be necessary.

6. 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? I would strongly consider any request for recusal. Would you grant such a motion?

If there was even an appearance of bias, I would recuse myself if requested.

7. How would you handle the appearance of impropriety because of the financial or social involvement of your spouse or a close relative?

I would disclose any potential conflict of interest to the litigants. I would strongly consider any request for my recusal.

8. What standards would you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality?

The Code of Judicial Conduct provides guidance on what gifts a judge should accept. I do not plan to accept gifts from persons who do not normally give me gifts, such as close family members and friends. I would attend social gatherings with family members and friends as long as the gatherings were not for any unethical and/or inappropriate purpose. I would attend any gatherings sponsored by state or county bar associations. The attendance at other gatherings would be considered on a case by case basis with my goal being not to attend any gathering that would make it appear as if I am impartial to any particular person and/or group.

9. 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 report any misconduct or appearance of infirmity of a lawyer or a fellow judge to the appropriate authority pursuant to The Code of Judicial Conduct.

10. 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

11. Have you engaged in any fund-raising activities with any political, social, community, or religious organizations? Please describe.

In the past, I engaged in fund-raising activities with recreational sports that my children participated in and while I coached girls' basketball at Dutch Fork High School. Also, I was an active member of Jack & Jill of America, which is a social organization for women with minor children. We had several fund-raising activities during the 10 year period I was a member. Currently, I engage in fund-raising activities for Brookland Baptist Church.

12. Do you have any business activities that you would envision remaining involved with if elected to the bench? No

13. Since Family Court judges do not have law clerks, how would you handle the drafting of orders?

In family court, the attorney for the Plaintiff or Defendant usually drafts the court orders. When necessary, I will draft orders.

14. If elected, what method would you use to ensure that you and your staff meet deadlines?

I will meet with my staff daily to address scheduling. I will make sure that deadlines are placed on the calendar on a daily basis. I am accustomed to checking and double checking my calendar every day. I will also give litigants deadlines to submit orders.

15. If elected, what specific actions or steps would you take to ensure that the guidelines of the guardian ad litem statutes are followed during the pendency of a case?

As a judge, any concerns regarding the guardian ad litem's failure to comply with statutory guidelines would be addressed when brought before me. If the guidelines are not being followed, I would direct the guardian to the relevant statute, temporary orders and order appointing the guardian ad litem. The guardian would be order to

comply within a specified time period. If the guardian continues to have noncompliance, I would consider removing the guardian.

16. What is your philosophy on "judicial activism," and what effect should judges have in setting or promoting public policy?

I do not believe that judges should engage in judicial activism. Judges should always act in a manner that promotes public confidence in the judicial system.

17. 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?

I would be willing to speak in public forums such as schools and continuing legal education courses. I would work with other judges and/or lawyers on committees to improve laws and procedures that affect family court litigation.

18. Do you feel that the pressure of serving as a judge would strain personal relationships (i.e. spouse, children, friends, or relatives)? How would you plan to address this?

I do not believe that the pressure of serving as a judge would strain personal relationships primarily because I would not preside over cases involving persons with whom I have a close personal relationship.

19. Would you give any special considerations to a pro se litigant in family court?

No, pro se litigants are held to the same standards as lawyers. I aim to be fair to all litigants including pro se litigants.

20. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality?
No

21. Would you hear a case where you or a member of your family held a *de minimis* financial interest in a party involved? No

22. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses for the past reporting period? Yes
23. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge and when do these rules apply? I believe that judges should be calm, composed, respectful, fair and patient. I believe that judges should aim to treat all litigants the same. These rules apply at all times that I would be a judge.
24. Do you feel that it is ever appropriate to be angry with a member of the public who would appear before you, especially with a criminal defendant? No. Is anger ever appropriate in dealing with attorneys or a pro se litigant? No.

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 21 day of August, 2025.


(Signature)

Connie Breeden
(Print name)

Notary Public for South Carolina

My commission expires: 6/22/33