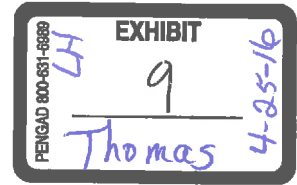


JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE



Court, Position, and Seat # for which you are applying: Court of Appeals #5

1. Name: The Honorable Paula H. Thomas

Name that you are known by if different from above

Are you currently serving in some capacity as a judge? Yes, Court of Appeals Seat 4
(Includes Municipal, Magistrate, Etc.)

Home Address: [REDACTED]

Business Address: 401 Cleland St. Georgetown, SC 29440

E-Mail Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone Number: [REDACTED]
(office): (843) 545-3551

2. Date of Birth: [REDACTED] 1957
Place of Birth: Sumter, SC
Social Security Number: [REDACTED]

3. 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

4. SCDL# or SCHD#: [REDACTED]
Voter Registration Number: [REDACTED]

5. Family Status: Married on May 25, 1985 to Don Stanley Thomas.
Never divorced, three children.

[REDACTED]

6. Have you served in the military? If so, give the dates, branch of service, highest rank attained, serial number, present status, and the character of your discharge or release.
No

7. 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) University of South Carolina, 1976–1979, BIS;

- (b) University of South Carolina, 1979–1981, M Ed;
- (c) University of South Carolina School of Law, 1983–1986, JD.

8. 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. If you took the bar exam more than once in any of the states listed, please indicate the number of times you took the exam in each state.
Admitted to the SC Bar in 1986

9. List the significant activities in which you took part during your attendance at college, graduate, and law school. Give the dates you were involved in these activities and list any leadership positions you held.
USC Law School, Legislative Council

10. Describe your continuing legal or judicial education during the past five years.

<u>Conference/CLE Name</u>	<u>Dates</u>
a) SC Circuit Court Judges Conf.	05/04/11
b) '11 Orientation New Judges	07/06/11
c) Applied Science & Law 21 st Century Technology	07/15/11
d) '11 Annual Judicial Conference	08/17/11
e) Southern Region High Court Conference	09/15/11
f) 2012 Annual Judicial Conference	08/22/12
g) SCDTAA Annual Meeting	11/08/12
h) SC Bar Pt 1& 2 Criminal Law Section	01/25/13
i) SCCA 2013 Judicial Conference	08/21/13
j) 22 nd Annual Forum for State Appellate Judges	07/26/14
k) 2014 Annual Judicial Conference	08/20/14
l) SC Bar Trial & Appellate Advocacy-Civil Law Update	01/23/15
m) SC Bar Pt 2 Criminal Law Section	01/23/15
n) 23 rd Annual Forum for State Judges	07/11/15
o) 2015 Judicial Conference	08/20/15
p) SC Bar Criminal Law Section	01/22/16

11. 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.

- (a) Speaker for “Restructured State Government and the state of Administrative law, August, 1993;
- (b) Speaker for “So You Want To Be A Judge” Women in Law, Columbia, SC, April, 1996;
- (c) Speaker-Circuit Court Judges Orientation- Preservation Issues–July 8, 2011;
- (d) Speaker-Sumter Ladies Woman Club–“Being a judge and how to get there” March 21, 2012.

12. List all published books and articles you have written and give citations and the dates of publication for each.
N/A
13. 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) Admitted to practice before the State Courts of SC in 1986;
 - (b) Also admitted to practice before the Federal District Court in 1998.
14. Describe chronologically your legal experience since graduation from law school and include a list of all law firms with which you have been associated. Describe the general character of your practice and divide it into periods with dates if its character has changed over the years.
 - (a) January 1987–September 1987: Law Offices of Kenneth W. Thornton, Georgetown, SC- Associate- Family Court and Circuit Court matters;
 - (b) September 1987–August 1988: Rubillo & Thomas, Georgetown, SC- Partner- Family Court and Circuit Court matters;
 - (c) August 1988–January 1993: Law Office of Paula H. Thomas, Pawleys Island, SC- Sole practitioner- Family Court and Circuit Court matters;
 - (d) January 1993–January 1994: Thomas & Gundling, Pawleys Island, SC- Partner- Family court and Circuit Court matters;
 - (e) January 1994–May 1994: Lawimore, Thomas, Gundling & Kelaher, PA- Pawleys Island, SC-Partner- Family Court and Circuit Court matters;
 - (f) May 1994–January 1995: Thomas, Gundling & Kelaher, Pawleys Island, SC- Partner, Family Court and Circuit Court matters;
 - (g) January 1995–July 1996: Law Office of Paula H. Thomas, Pawleys Island, SC- Sole practitioner, Family Court and Circuit Court matters.
15. Please answer the following (if you are a judge and are not seeking a different type of judgeship, this question is inapplicable): N/A
 - (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 has prepared you to preside over such matters as a Family Court Judge.
 - (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, whether you represent

plaintiffs or 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 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.

- (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.
 - (d) If you are a candidate for Administrative Law Judge, 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 Judge Court.
16. What is your rating, if any, by any legal rating organization, such as, Best Lawyers, Chambers, Legal 500, Martindale-Hubbell, Who's Who Legal, Super Lawyers, etc.? If you are currently a member of the judiciary, list your last available rating, if any.
Never Rated

* Retired justices/judges and justices/judges applying for reelection to their current position may omit Questions 17–22. If a candidate is seeking a judgeship different than his or her current position, Questions 17-22 should be answered based on experience prior to serving on the bench.

17. What was the frequency of your court appearances during the past five years *prior to election to the bench in 1996*?
- (a) federal: appeared twice;
 - (b) state: Appeared in family court and average of once per week
Appeared in circuit court an average of once per month.
18. What percentage of your practice involved civil, criminal, domestic, and other matters during the past five years *prior to election to the bench in 1996*?
- (a) civil: 45%;
 - (b) criminal: 15%;
 - (c) domestic: 40%;
 - (d) other: 0.
19. What percentage of your practice in trial court during the past five years *prior to election to the bench in 1996* involved matters that went to a jury, including those that settled prior to trial?
- (a) jury: 2%;
 - (b) non-jury: 98%.
- Did you most often serve as sole counsel, chief counsel, or associate counsel in these matters? Sole Counsel.

20. List five of the most significant litigated matters you have personally handled in either trial or appellate court or before a state or federal agency. Give citations if the cases were reported and describe why these matters were significant.
- (a) Harry F. Cameron v. Georgetown Steel—Workers' Compensation claim regarding novel question dealing with the "coming and going rule". Case No. WCC 9357660;
 - (b) Paula Wilson, et al. v. Patricia Brown, a/k/a Patricia Brown Nance—Issue of whether a deceased individual was competent at the time of marriage and the children's standing to sue. Case No. 95-DR-22-156;
 - (c) State of South Carolina v. Marshall Beam—First case in the 15th Circuit in which an individual was charged under the Criminal Negligence statute in South Carolina. Case No. 93-GS-26-2153;
 - (d) State v. Robert Prince—Addressed numerous search and seizure issues;
 - (e) Swails v. Revco—Establishing damages for administering wrong medication. Case No. 95-CP-22-260.
21. 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.
Myra Jean Merritt v. Carl A. Merritt, Jr., Docket 3 95-610.
22. List up to five criminal appeals that you have personally handled. Give the case name, the court, the date of decision and the citation if the case was reported.
N/A
23. 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
- (a) Elected May 1996, SC Circuit Court, At-Large Seat 1;
 - (b) Elected May 1998, SC Circuit Court, 15th Judicial Circuit, Seat 1;
 - (c) Elected February 2007 SC Court of Appeals, Seat 4. Re-elected Jan 2012.
24. If the answer to question 23 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) Stringer v. State Farm Mutual Auto Ins. Co., 386 S.C. 188, 687 S.E. 2d 58 (Ct. App. 2009) (en banc) (cert. denied);
 - (b) State v. Mitchell, 378 S.C. 305, 662 S.E. 2d 493 (Ct. App. 2008), cert. dismissed as improvidently granted by 386 S.C. 597, 689 S.E. 638 (2010) (Confrontation Clause);
 - (c) State v. Adams, 397 S.C. 481, 725 S.E. 2d 523 (Ct. App. 2012) (first case in SC to address whether the placement and monitoring of a GPS device on a person's car without a warrant is an unreasonable search under *United States v. Jones*, 132 S. Ct. 945 (2012) and the Fourth Amendment;
 - (d) Campbell v. Robinson, 398 S. C. 12, 726 S. E. 2d 221 (Ct. App. 2012)

(first case to address whether an engagement ring is the donor's or donee's property after the engagement is cancelled);

- (e) Williams v. Smalls, 390 S.C. 375, 701 S.E. 2d 772 (Ct. Ap. 2010) (cert. denied) (First case to address whether "liability for owners of trespassing stock" statute imposed strict liability on an owner of livestock for personal injuries suffered when automobile driver collided with escaped livestock).
25. 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.
Elected SC House Seat 108, November 1992, served until June 1996.
All reports were filed, no penalties.
26. 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
27. Have you ever been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial, or other public office? If so, give details, including dates.
Ran unsuccessfully for Court of Appeals, Seat 2 in 2004.
28. 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.
(a) Intervention Specialist—Sumter Alcohol & Drug Abuse—Sumter, SC December 1981—November 1982;
(b) Counselor— SC Vocational Rehabilitation, Sumter, SC December 1982—May 1983.
29. 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.
No
30. Provide, as a separate attachment, a complete, current financial net worth statement that itemizes in detail:
(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.
(See Attached)

(A net worth statement is provided with this questionnaire and you must use this format for submission of your financial statement.)

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

31. 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. Explain how you would resolve any potential conflict of interest.
None
32. 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 federal law or regulation, state law or regulation, or 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 for which a fine of \$125 or less was imposed.
■
33. Have you, to your knowledge, ever been under federal, state, or local investigation for possible violation of a criminal statute? If yes, explain.
No
34. Has a tax lien or other collection procedure ever been instituted against you by federal, state, or local authorities? Have you ever defaulted on a student loan? Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? If so, give details.
No
35. Have you ever been sued, either personally or professionally, that is, have you ever been named as defendant or respondent in any court of law? If so, give details, including, but not limited to, dates and resolution.
No
36. Have you ever, in South Carolina or any other jurisdiction, as a lawyer, judge, or other professional, been sanctioned or disciplined for lawyer, judicial, or other professional misconduct or has any jurisdiction found that you committed any misconduct? If so, give the details and describe any final disposition. ■
37. 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
38. 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. Also, if applicable, indicate your coverage and deductible for your current malpractice policy.

N/A

39. Are you active on or a member of a social media or Internet site or have you, to your knowledge, been featured or depicted on a social media or Internet site, such as, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.? If so, 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 am a member of Facebook. My post are all personal in nature and not in any way related to work or politics.
40. Are you now or have you ever been employed as a “lobbyist,” as defined by S.C. Code § 2-17-10(13), or have you acted in the capacity of a “lobbyist’s principal,” as defined by S.C. Code § 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
41. 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 § 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
42. S.C. Code § 8-13-700 provides, in part, that “[n]o public official, public member, or public employee may knowingly use his official office, membership, or employment to obtain an economic interest for himself, a member of his immediate family, an individual with whom he is associated, or a business with which he is associated.” Please detail any knowledge you have of any formal charges or informal allegations against you or any other candidate for violations of these provisions. Include the disposition, if any, of such charges or allegations.
N/A
43. S.C. Code § 8-13-765 provides, in part, that “[n]o person may use government personnel, equipment, materials, or an office building in an election campaign.” Please detail any knowledge you have of any formal charges or informal allegations against you or any other candidate for violations of these provisions. Include the disposition, if any, of such charges or allegations. N/A
44. 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.
None to date
45. List the amount and recipient of all contributions made by you or on your behalf to members of the General Assembly since the announcement of your intent to seek election to a judgeship.
None

46. 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? 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.
 Note: Attached are (1) Section 2-19-70(c); (2) JMSC Rule 24, and (3) informal opinions and letters concerning pledging prohibitions, with which third parties acting on your behalf, as well as you, must comply.
 No
47. Have you requested a friend or colleague to contact members of the General Assembly on your behalf? If so, give details. Are you aware of any friends or colleagues contacting members of the General Assembly on your behalf? If so, give details.
 No
48. Have you or has 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
49. Have you or has anyone acting on your behalf contacted members of the Judicial Merit Selection Commission about your candidacy or intention to become a candidate?
 No
50. 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) SC Bar Association;
 (b) SC Appellate Judges Association.
51. 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, any professional honors, awards, or other forms of recognition received and not listed elsewhere.
 None
52. 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.
 10 years on the Circuit Court Bench and 9 years on the SC Court of Appeals

53. List the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of five (5) persons, including your banker, 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 five (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.

- a) Dr. Gerald Harmon, P.O. Box 289, Pawleys Island, SC 29585 (843)237-4296
- (b) Laura Crowther, 951 Shine Ave. Myrtle Beach, SC 29577 (843) 626-3638
- (c) Doc Lachicotte, 10054 Occan Highway, Pawleys Island, SC 29585 (843) 237-2094
- (d) Annette Goings, 14 Ludlow Ct, Pawleys Island, SC 29585 (843) 283-3982
- (e) Sharon Maxwell, 11022 Ocean Hwy, Pawleys Island, SC 29585 (843) 237-8471

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 that adjoins property in which there have been public improvements of \$200; 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:

- (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

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: 

Date: March 2 2016