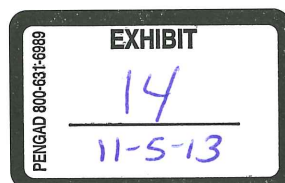


JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION
Sworn Statement to be included in Transcript of Public Hearings

Family Court
(Incumbent)

Full Name: Michael Shea Holt
Business Address: Rm. 402, Darlington County Courthouse
#1 Public Sq.
Darlington, SC 29532
Business Telephone: 843-398-4334

1. Why do you want to serve another term as a Family Court Judge?
Performing the duties of this position give me great pleasure and enjoyment. I also believe that this juncture in my life as a husband and father gives me great insight as to the issues raised in Family Court.
2. Do you plan to serve your full term if re-elected?
Yes
3. Do you have any plans to return to private practice one day?
I am not sure at this point in my life.
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?
I make every attempt to avoid ex parte communications. My policy is to ask attorneys to communicate with my administrative assistant so that I am not personally pulled into any conversations of an ex parte nature.
In emergency situations I do consider ex parte requests, but limit my considerations to the pleadings and do not engage in any conversation with counsel beyond that.
6. What is your philosophy on recusal, especially in situations in which lawyer-legislators, former associates, or law partners are to appear before you?
I do not recuse myself before lawyer-legislators. Not one time has a lawyer-legislator made me feel uncomfortable.
7. 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 likely recuse myself if a party was uncomfortable with my presiding.

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

This has not come up, but if there is an "appearance" of impropriety, I would recuse myself.

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

I accept the complimentary registrations and lodging offered to all judges at the South Carolina Bar Convention and the South Carolina Association for Justice Convention.

On a personal basis, I only accept gifts or social hospitality from long-standing relationships which precede my time on the Bench and which do not give any appearances of impropriety.

10. How do you handle a situation in which you became aware of misconduct of a lawyer or of a fellow judge?

I have not encountered this scenario, but I would likely report the misconduct.

11. Are you affiliated with any political parties, boards or commissions which, if you were re-elected, would need to be re-evaluated?

No.

12. Do you have any business activities that you have remained involved with since your election to the bench?

No

13. Since family court judges do not have law clerks, how do you handle the drafting of orders?

Generally, I direct one of the attorneys to draft the order, although I do many orders on my own.

14. What methods do you use to ensure that you and your staff meet deadlines?

We keep updated records so we can track outstanding orders and matters under advisement.

15. What specific actions or steps do you take to ensure that the guidelines of the Guardian Ad Litem statutes are followed during the pendency of a case?

Before a case is set for trial, usually at the pre-trial conference, I require the GAL to appear and report their activities to the Court.

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

I do not believe my role is to set public policy.

17. Canon 4 allows a judge to engage in activities to improve the law, legal system, and administration of justice. What activities do you plan to undertake to further this improvement of the legal system?

I participate in JCLE's and am an active member of the Family

Court Judges' Association.

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

I do believe it can strain relationships. All I can do is to recognize that my position requires me to be conscious of appearances and to respect that.

19. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality?

No

20. Would you hear a case where you or a member of your family held a de minimis financial interest in a party involved?

No

21. Do you belong to any organizations that discriminate based on race, religion, or gender?

No

22. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses?

Yes

23. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge?

I think a judge should be polite, respectful, compassionate and kind. A judge should be, above all, patient.

24. Do the rules that you expressed in your previous answer apply only while you are on the bench or in chambers, or do these rules apply seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day?

Twenty-four hours a day.

25. 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 or a pro se litigant?

It is not appropriate. Oftentimes when we become angry, we lose control of our emotions.

26. How much money have you spent on your campaign? If it is over \$100, has that amount been reported to the House and Senate Ethics Committees?

None

27. While campaigning for this office, have you used judicial letterhead or the services of your staff for your campaign?

My administrative assistant volunteered to type my application and make several telephone calls to obtain information for the application. She has been compensated accordingly.

I have not used my judicial letterhead.

28. Have you sought or received the pledge of any legislator prior to this date?

No

29. Have you sought or been offered a conditional pledge of support by any legislator pending the outcome of your screening?
No
30. Have you asked any third parties to contact members of the General Assembly on your behalf before the final and formal screening report has been released? Are you aware of any friends or colleagues contacting members of the General Assembly on your behalf?
No
31. Have you contacted any members of the Judicial Merit Selection Commission?
No
32. Are you familiar with the 48-hour rule, which prohibits a candidate from seeking pledges for 48 hours after the draft report has been submitted?
Yes

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

s/Michael S. Holt

Sworn to before me this 6th day of August, 2013.

Donna M. Pope

Notary Public for South Carolina

My commission expires: August 12, 2014