

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

Family Court
(New Candidate)

Full Name: Tarita Andrea Dunbar
Business Address: PO Box 17799
Greenville, SC 29606-8799
Business Telephone: (864) 282-4664

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

In my current position as an attorney with the Department of Social Services Child Support Division, I represent neither the custodial parent nor the noncustodial parent in my cases. I must be fair, impartial, and attentive in listening to both parties in handling each case. I've had more people thank me, wish God's blessing on me or just appreciate that I listened to them. I believe serving as a Family Court Judge, I can have an even greater impact on the lives of people.

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?

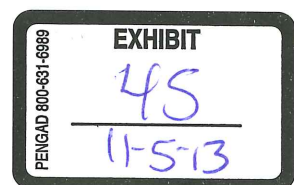
Ex parte communications are forbidden except as allowed by statute or rule. I envision only in emergency circumstances and limited in scope should ex parte communications be tolerated.

6. What is your philosophy on recusal, especially in situations in which lawyer-legislators, former associates, or law partners are to appear before you?

In any situation where there is an appearance of impropriety I would recuse myself. A lawyer-legislator should not be treated any differently from another lawyer. I don't have any law partners and former associates would mainly be governmental lawyers.

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 grant the motion.



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

I would avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety in all of my personal and professional activities. I would not allow family, social, political or other relationships to influence my judicial conduct or judgment. I would recuse myself on in matters involving family members. If there were limited social involvement, I would disclose the relationships and grant motion for recusal if requested.

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

I would not accept gifts from anyone other than family or close friends. I would not accept gifts or invitations, which would give the appearance of impropriety.

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

I would report any misconduct.

11. Are you affiliated with any political parties, boards or commissions that, if you were elected, would need to be evaluated? No

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?

I would request the lawyer to draft the order or I could draft orders myself, depending on the circumstances.

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

I would work with computer calendar, which would alert me to deadlines. Meeting deadlines would be a top priority and I would work diligently to make sure tasks are completed quickly and comply with all standards regarding deadlines.

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?

Require the appointed guardian ad litem to submit to the court and the parties an affidavit that he/she has the qualifications to serve in that capacity. Also, include in the order appointing of the guardian ad litem instructions of duties required under the statutes.

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

Judges should only interpret the law. Legislators make the laws.

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 make legal presentations in the community and participate in the SC Bar. I am interested in working with the SC Bar in

stimulating public awareness, of and dialogue about, law and its role in society.

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 have a very supportive spouse and my children are in college and one a senior in high school.

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

There would be no special considerations to a pro se litigant. I would remind a pro se litigant of their right to an attorney and make sure this is understood.

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? Never

22. Do you belong to any organizations that discriminate based on race, religion, or gender? No

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

24. What percentage of your legal experience (including experience as a special appointed judge or referee) concerns the following areas? If you do not have experience in one of these areas, can you suggest how you would compensate for that particular area of practice?

a. Divorce and equitable distribution: less than one percent. I have handled a divorce case and I handle cases establishing paternity and child support. I plan to observe many divorce cases before I am sworn in as a judge and study appellate cases and statutes regularly.

b. Child custody: less than one percent. I have handled a child custody case but I plan to observe child custody cases before I am sworn in as a judge, study appellate cases and statutes regularly.

c. Adoption: I have not handled adoption cases, but sat in on several that were connected with cases I handled in abuse and neglect. I plan to observe adoption cases and study appellate case law, and statutes to gain experience.

d. Abuse and neglect: 100%

e. Juvenile cases: 0% I have observed several juvenile cases and plan to observe more before sitting as a judge and I have studied applicable statutes.

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

A judge should be fair, not biased, attentive and respectful.

stimulating public awareness, of and dialogue about, law and its role in society.

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 have a very supportive spouse and my children are in college and one a senior in high school.

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

There would be no special considerations to a pro se litigant. I would remind a pro se litigant of their right to an attorney and make sure this is understood.

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? Never

22. Do you belong to any organizations that discriminate based on race, religion, or gender? No

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

24. What percentage of your legal experience (including experience as a special appointed judge or referee) concerns the following areas? If you do not have experience in one of these areas, can you suggest how you would compensate for that particular area of practice?

a. Divorce and equitable distribution: less than one percent. I have handled a divorce case and I handle cases establishing paternity and child support. I plan to observe many divorce cases before I am sworn in as a judge and study appellate cases and statutes regularly.

b. Child custody: less than one percent. I have handled a child custody case but I plan to observe child custody cases before I am sworn in as a judge, study appellate cases and statutes regularly.

c. Adoption: I have not handled adoption cases, but sat in on several that were connected with cases I handled in abuse and neglect. I plan to observe adoption cases and study appellate case law, and statutes to gain experience.

d. Abuse and neglect: 100%

e. Juvenile cases: 0% I have observed several juvenile cases and plan to observe more before sitting as a judge and I have studied applicable statutes.

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

A judge should be fair, not biased, attentive and respectful.

26. Would the rules that you expressed in your previous answer apply only while you are on the bench or in chambers, or would these rules apply seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day?
I believe I am a fair person, respectful to other people and not biased.
27. 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? Is anger ever appropriate in dealing with attorneys or a pro se litigant?
Anger is never appropriate. I treat everyone with respect.
28. How much money have you spent on your campaign? If the amount is over \$100, has that been reported to the House and Senate Ethics Committees? None
29. If you are a sitting judge, have you used judicial letterhead or the services of your staff while campaigning for this office? No
30. Have you sought or received the pledge of any legislator prior to this date?
No
31. Have you sought or been offered a conditional pledge of support by any legislator pending the outcome of your screening? No
32. 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
33. Have you contacted any members of the Judicial Merit Selection Commission? No
34. 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/Tarita A. Dunbar

Sworn to before me this 8th day of August 2013

LORIE LANG

Notary Public for South

My commission expires: April 11, 2022

AMENDED REPONSES TO SWORN STATEMENT

Amended response to question 24 (b).

I have also tried cases involving child custody as an attorney with Spartanburg County Department of Social Services.

Amended response to question 26.

The rules that I expressed in my answer to question 25, that I am a fair, unbiased, attentive and respectful, apply to me seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day.