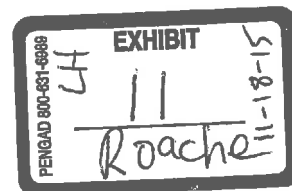


**JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE**



Court, Position, and Seat # for which you are applying: Family Court, Ninth Judicial Circuit, Seat 3

1. Name: Ms. Rita J. Roache
Name that you are known by if different from above: None
Are you currently serving in some capacity as a judge? No
Business Address: 2803 Carner Avenue,
North Charleston, SC 29405
Telephone Number: (office):843-266-2172 or 843-720-7044
2. Date of Birth: 1960
Place of Birth: Washington, D.C.
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.
5. Family Status: Married on August 9, 1997 to John Perry Buncum Jr. Never divorced, two children.
6. Have you served in the military? Not applicable.
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) Hampton Institute, now Hampton University, 1978-1982, BA;
 - (b) George Washington University, 1982-1984 Studies toward a Masters in International Affairs. I completed the coursework, but did not receive a degree because I decided to enroll in law school. I received a full scholarship to law school and was required to be a full-time law student;
 - (c) George Washington University, 1984-1987, 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.
SC, 1988.
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.
 - (a) During college from 1978 until 1982, I was involved in many campus and community activities. I am a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated and served as the President. I was also selected as a Leadership Fellow by the national organization. I was a Student Leader for three years, 1979-1982 and was a co-facilitator of the program in 1980-1982. I was also a member of the Hampton Swim Team from 1979-1981 and served as co-captain. I was a Peace Corps intern in 1981 and spent the summer at the Peace Corps in Washington, D.C. I was also selected to membership in Alpha Kappa Mu National Honor Society and was elected as the National Vice President;

- (b) During graduate school from 1982-1984, I was involved with my sorority and participated in many community service projects;
- (c) In my law school tenure, from 1984-1987, I was a member of the American Bar Association and served as the 11th Circuit Representative. I was a member of the Women Law Students Association and the Black Law Students Association. I participated in the Moot Court Program. I also interned with the Honorable Shelly Bowers, a District of Columbia Superior Court Judge.

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

<u>Conference/CLE Name</u>	<u>Date(s)</u>
(a) Appleseed Family Law Training	4/10/15;
(b) SCLS Statewide Meeting	11/12-14/14;
(c) SCLS Statewide Meeting	12/4-6/13;
(d) Charleston Grantee Gathering	8/25/13;
(e) Schoolin the Newbies	9/26/13;
(f) SCBLA Annual Retreat	9/26/13;
(g) Appleseed Family Law Training	6/1/12;
(h) Charleston Grantee Gathering	8/28/12;
(i) CLE for DSS Support Attorneys	11/2/12;
(j) SCLS Statewide Meeting	11/14-16/12;
(k) Family Law CLE	4/1/11;
(l) Handling your First....	6/3/11;
(m) Training for New Attorneys	8/26/11;
(n) Ethical Implications of Social Media	9/15/11;
(o) SCLS Statewide Meeting	11/9-11/11;
(p) Appleseed Family Law Training	3/26/10;
(q) Training for Attorneys Appointed in DSS Matters	4/30/10;
(r) SCLS Statewide Meeting	11/17-19/10;
(s) I have also served as a mentor for a new lawyer and will receive CLE credit for his in 2015.	

11. Have you taught law-related courses or lectured at bar association conferences, educational institutions, or continuing legal or judicial education programs?

- (a) I presented on two CLEs sponsored by Neighborhood Legal Assistance program on the topic of physical cruelty divorces in 2001;
- (b) I presented on a CLE sponsored by the SC Bar in 1997 on law office management;
- (c) I have conducted presentations on numerous CLEs sponsored by SC Appleseed Legal Justice Center on several family law topics. Most recently, I did an hour presentation on Custody Issues on April 10, 2015;
- (d) At "Handling Your First..." shown above, I did a presentation on "Handling your first Order of Protection";
- (e) I have presented on family law at several of the SC Legal Services Statewide Meetings.
- (f) I have done presentations at CLEs sponsored by the Children's Law Office in the "Training for Attorneys Appointed in DSS Matters" and "Training for New Attorneys".

12. List all published books and articles you have written and give citations and the dates of publication for each.
None.
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 1988;
 - (b) Admitted to practice before the US Supreme Court in 1994.
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) 1988-1990—Worked with the SC Department of Social Services, Office of Child Support Enforcement. I was responsible for handling child support matters in five counties, exclusively in the Family Court;
 - (b) 1991-2000—I worked with Edward M. Brown, first in The Law Offices of Edward M. Brown and then Brown & Roache, a partnership was formed. My practice was concentrated in family law and other civil matters.
 - (c) 2001-Present—I accepted a position with the Neighborhood Legal Assistance Program as the Department of Justice attorney handling matters for survivors of domestic violence. NLAP eventually became SC Legal Services. My practice has focused on family law.
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.
BV.
17. What was the frequency of your court appearances during the past five years?
- (a) federal:
 - (b) state: Several times per month.
18. What percentage of your practice involved civil, criminal, domestic, and other matters during the past five years?
- (a) civil: 0%;
 - (b) criminal: 0%;
 - (c) domestic: 85%;
 - (d) other: civil legal matters: education, probate, contract, housing: 15%.
19. What percentage of your practice in trial court during the past five years involved matters that went to a jury, including those that settled prior to trial?
- (a) jury: 0%;
 - (b) non-jury: 100%.

Did you most often serve as sole counsel, chief counsel, or associate counsel in these matters?

I most often served as 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) Zayat and Johnson v. Footman and Berkeley County DSS were two actions that were consolidated for trial in adoption and termination of parental rights cases that were tried for six days. I represented the Defendant/Mother whose rights were terminated and her twin children were adopted by two different former foster families. Information about the appeal is listed in the next question, Number 21. This matter was significant because of the extensive record created in the trial that supported the overturning of the trial court's decision on appeal;
 - (b) Zayat and Johnson v. Footman After losing the appeal the adoptions were overturned, the former foster parents filed to be recognized as *de facto* custodians and to obtain visitation with the minor children. The Plaintiffs were not successful. Defendant/Mother maintained custody and control of her children and this was of significance;
 - (c) David v. David-A custody, divorce and equitable division matter in which I served as guardian ad litem for the minor child. There was protracted litigation. This matter is significant as it is the only action in my career that has been decided by binding arbitration;
 - (d) Gabrish v. Gabrish-This case was a contested custody, visitation and equitable division matter that involved a business and more than a million dollars in assets. Extensive discovery was conducted. The matter was settled with the client obtaining custody and substantial assets, with limited responsibility for the debts of the marriage. This matter was significant due to the amount of assets and the successful negotiations;
 - (e) The Matter of Hattie Edwards was a Social Security matter where we sought to establish a common law marriage and entitlement to benefits for this wife and mother of five adult children, who was married to the father/decedent for almost 30 years. This matter was significant because I was able to translate the knowledge of family law and apply it in this matter before an Administrative Law Judge.
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.
Loe #1 and Loe#2 v. Mother, Father and Berkeley County Department of Social Services, 675 S.E.2d 807, 382 S.C. 457(S.C. Ct.App.) cert.denied. The Court of Appeals reversed and remanded the action on March 20, 2009 deciding that the Mother's parental rights should not have been terminated and that her children should not have been adopted, but returned to her custody. The Court further found that the Mother should not be responsible for the fees of the guardian ad litem or those of the attorney for the guardian ad litem. The SC Supreme Court denied certiorari in the matter.
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.
None.
23. Have you ever held judicial office? Describe the jurisdiction of each of the courts and note any limitations on the jurisdiction of each court.
No.
25. Have you ever held public office other than judicial office? Also, state whether or not you have timely filed your report with the State Ethics Commission during the period you held public office.
No, I have never held public office.

27. Have you ever been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial, or other public office?
Yes, I ran for Family Court judge in 2001 and 2010. Both times I was found qualified and was nominated in 2001.
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.
No, I have not.
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, I am not.
30. A complete, current financial net worth statement was provided to the Commission.
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.
There are 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?
No, I have not.
33. Have you, to your knowledge, ever been under federal, state, or local investigation for possible violation of a criminal statute?
No, I have not.
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?
No to all of the above questions.
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?
I was appointed by the Charleston County Probate Court as the Personal Representative of the Estate of James Watson. A foreclosure action was filed by the mortgage company as the family was not able to pay the mortgage. Along with the heirs and the estate, I was named as a defendant in the suit. The matter was resolved and the estate closed in 2009.
37. Have you ever been investigated by the Department of Social Services? Has your name ever been enrolled on the Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect?
No, to both questions.
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.
I am not in private practice.
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 not a member of any social media site. I understand that my picture has appeared while attending various events.
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)?
No, I have not.
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?
No, I have not.
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.
I have no knowledge.
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.
None.
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.
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?
No, I have not.
47. Have you requested a friend or colleague to contact members of the General Assembly on your behalf? Are you aware of any friends or colleagues contacting members of the General Assembly on your behalf?
I have not and I am not aware of anyone contacting members of the General Assembly on my behalf.
48. Have you or has anyone acting on your behalf solicited or collected funds to aid in the promotion of your candidacy?
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–Children’s Committee;
 - (b) Dorchester County Bar 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.
- (a) Junior League of Charleston–Board Member at Large;
 - (b) Junior League of Charleston Volunteer of the Year Award;
 - (c) Charleston Chapter of the Links, Inc.–corresponding secretary and committee chair;
 - (d) Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.;
 - (e) Outstanding Twenty Year Alumnus Award from Hampton University;
 - (f) National Hampton Alumni Association, Inc.–Board of Directors;
 - (g) Service Award from National Hampton Alumni Association, Inc.
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.
53. List the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of five persons, including your banker, from whom references could be obtained.
- (a) Kimberly Shelton, Esquire,
931 Hunt Club Run,
Charleston, SC 29414;
843-720-7044
 - (b) Edward M. Brown, Esquire,
P. O. Box 20261,
Charleston, SC 29413;
843-559-9224
 - (c) Bernard R. Fielding, Esquire,
P. O. Box 994,
Charleston, SC 29402;
843-722-3348
 - (d) Juanita F. Middleton, Esquire,
P. O. Box 31319,
Charleston, SC 29417;
843-870-2147
 - (e) Noel Rinehart,
Southcoast Community Bank,
3305 South Morgan’s Point Road,
Mount Pleasant, SC 29466;
843-884-3832
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.

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.

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: s/Rita J. Roache

Date: August 9, 2015