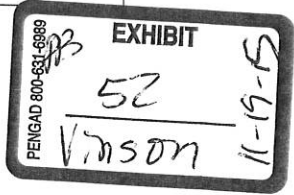


JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION
Sworn Statement to be included in Transcript of Public Hearings

Family Court
(Incumbent)



Full Name: The Honorable Jerry Deese Vinson, Jr.
Business Address: Box V, County Complex, Florence, SC 29501
Business Telephone: 843-665-3079

1. Why do you want to serve another term as a Family Court Judge?
I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as a Family Court Judge and I believe I have a calling to this service. I have developed skills and gained experience that allow me to become more effective in this position. I enjoy problem solving, as well as, helping children and families in need and distress.
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?
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 not permitted. Ex Parte petitions seeking emergency temporary relief are permitted by Court Rules and Law.
6. What is your philosophy on recusal, especially in situations in which lawyer-legislators, former associates, or law partners are to appear before you?
If an appearance of impropriety or substantial concern related to perceived bias is clearly stated on the court record, I will consider recusal.
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 give substantial deference to that party and discuss the concerns on the Court record. If the party was not reassured, I would consider granting the Motion.
8. How do you handle the appearance of impropriety because of the financial or social involvement of your spouse or a close relative?
I would recuse myself.
9. What standards have you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality?
I generally accept no gifts, except from close friends, nor does my wife. We generally socialize with close friends only. I do socialize with a few attorneys and if our relationship is close, I will not hear contested matters if that attorney represents a litigant.

10. How do you handle a situation in which you became aware of misconduct of a lawyer or of a fellow judge?
If the conduct is such that it must be reported, then I report it. If reporting was not mandatory, I would discuss it with the attorney or judge and advise them of the possible consequences and reporting requirements.
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?
I usually require an attorney to draft the Order and allow the opposing attorney or party to review it before I review, revise if necessary, and execute it. I prepare a majority of the pro se litigation orders, with the exception of Divorce Decrees in uncontested (no property, no debt, no children) cases when the Court approved forms are provided.
14. What methods do you use to ensure that you and your staff meet deadlines?
Deadlines are calendared and I regularly follow up with my staff.
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?
I allow only persons who have met the statutory requirements to serve as Guardians and require that the necessary Guardian's affidavit is filed. I issue a specific and detailed order outlining the Guardian's responsibilities pursuant to the statute. I invite the parties to make any motions necessary, including motions directed toward the Guardian, during the pendency of the action.
16. What is your philosophy on "judicial activism," and what effect should judges have in setting or promoting public policy?
It is my responsibility to apply the law, not make it. I believe that is consistent with the judicial canons and separation of powers.
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 am a regular speaker at legal seminars and training sessions. I am a member of the Bench Bar committee which examines practice and procedure issues. I am a member of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges which seeks to improve court systems for families and juveniles. I am also a member of the South Carolina Bar Law Related Education Committee.
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?
While there is some isolation that must occur, I feel no particular stress or pressure.
19. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality?
No. Other than retirement plans and an annuity, I have no active investments.

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?
A judge should be patient and respectful toward the litigants and attorneys; firm when necessary; and well-tempered at all times.
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?
While judges do not "wear the robe" at all times, they must comport themselves as if they do.
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?
Anger is not appropriate.
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?
No.
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/Jerry Deese Vinson, Jr.

Sworn to before me this 23rd day of July, 2015.

Sherrie E. Byrd

Notary Public for South Carolina

My commission expires: 11-5-2022