

**JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE**



Court, Position, and Seat # for which you are applying: Master-in-Equity for Sumter County

1. Name: The Honorable Richard Lauren Booth
Name that you are known by if different from above (Example: A Nickname): Dick
Are you currently serving in some capacity as a judge? Yes, as Sumter County Master-in-Equity.
Business Address: 17 East Calhoun Street,
Sumter, SC 29150
Box 2756,
Sumter, SC, 29151
Telephone Number: (office): 803-775-6232 (law)
803-774-3884 (Master)
2. Date of Birth: 1952
Place of Birth: Sumter County, SC
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 September 12, 1981 to Gayle Michele Robb Booth. Never divorced, two children.
6. Have you served in the military? No, I have not.
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) Clemson University, 1970-1974, BS Financial Management with Honor;
 - (b) University of SC School of Law, 1974-1977, 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, 1977.
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.
I was an officer in my fraternity at Clemson and also participated in ROTC.
10. Describe your continuing legal or judicial education during the past five years.

<u>Conference/CLE Name</u>	<u>Date(s)</u>
(a) Annual Judicial Conference 2009	8/19/09;
(b) Master Bench/Bar	10/09/09;
(c) Annual Judicial Conference 2010	6/18/10;
(d) Master Bench/Bar	10/8/10;
(e) Make up CLE for Masters in Equity	10/8/10;
(f) Introduction to Court-Annexed ADR	10/29/10;
(g) Annual Judicial Conference 2011	8/17/11;

- (h) Master Bench/Bar 10/14/11;
 - (i) Annual Judicial Conference 2012 8/22/12;
 - (j) Master Bench/Bar 10/12/12;
 - (k) Lawyers Mentoring Program 3/1/13;
 - (l) Annual Judicial Conference 2013 8/21/13;
 - (m) Master Bench/Bar 10/11/13;
 - (n) Annual Judicial Conference 2014 8/20/14;
 - (o) Master Bench/Bar 10/10/14.
11. Have you taught law-related courses or lectured at bar association conferences, educational institutions, or continuing legal or judicial education programs?
I have produced and moderated the Master-in-Equity Bench/Bar and also participated on several lecture panels in same.
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) SC Supreme Court-1977
 - (b) US District Court for the District of SC-1979
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) Associate, Lee and Moise, insurance defense and criminal defense, general practice, 1977-1979;
 - (b) Associate, Nash and Chappell, insurance defense, estate planning, real estate, contract law, business law, criminal defense, general practice, 1980-1982;
 - (c) Partner, Nash, Chappell, Wilson and Booth, same as above 1982-1984;
 - (d) Partner, Lee, Wilson, Erter and Booth, same as above, but no criminal defense, 1984-1986;
 - (e) Richard L. Booth, sole practitioner; real estate, wills, trusts, estate planning, business and contract law, real estate litigation, general practice, 1986-1998;
 - (f) Partner, Richard L. Booth LLP, same as above, 1999;
 - (g) Richard L. Booth LLC, sole practitioner, same as above, 2000-present.
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 as far as I know.
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.
Yes, I have been the Sumter County Master-in-Equity since February 13, 2008 to present, and prior to that served as Supreme Court Appointed Special Referee and Interim Master-in-Equity from June 12, 2006 through the above appointment.
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) Arrow Bonding Company v. Jay Edward Warren, 2008-CP- 43-0013, 399 S.C. 603, 732 S.E.2d 622 (2012);
 - (b) White's Mill Colony, Inc., v. Richard Weeks, Lillian Davis, Jerry Rouse, Jimmie Johnson and Leon Kelly, 2002-CP-43-64, Unpublished Opinion No. 2013-UP-187 filed May 8, 2013 (Ct. App. 2013);
 - (c) First Citizens Bank and Trust Company v. Charles T. Brooks and the SC Department of Revenue, 2009-CP-43-2538, Unpublished Opinion No. 2014-UP-241 filed June 25, 2014 (Ct. App., 2014), rehearing denied filed August 25, 2014;
 - (d) Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., v. Delores Prescott, 2010-CP-43-00823, filed January 13, 2015;
 - (e) Finley v. Finley, 2013-CP-43-00574, filed September 9, 2014.
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 not.
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.
Part-time sole practitioner, Richard L. Booth LLC, during all years of service, no supervisor.
27. Have you ever been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial, or other public office?
No, I have not.
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?
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.
Sole member, Booth Farms LLC, inherited from father, tree farming and sale of lots.
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.
- (a) Richard L. Booth LLC, attorney at law; I automatically recuse myself from any matter which comes before me as to which I have previously been retained counsel for a party;
 - (b) Prior law partners in firms set forth in Question 14 above, even though all such relationships ended 20+ years ago; I routinely disclose to all litigants all such past associations and dates and seek any requests for recusal pursuant to applicable Rules of Judicial Conduct set forth in Rule 501, Canon 3 (F), SC Rules of Court, Volume I, (2015). If any party requests my recusal I will do so;
 - (c) Senator Thomas McElveen and Mayor Joseph McElveen are partners in the law firm from whom my law office and the Master-in-Equity office rent office space. I therefore will not act as judge in any matter involving them or their firm.
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?

- I ran a red light by mistake in 2008 or 09 for which I was fined \$250.00 to the best of my recollection.
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 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 initially named as a junior claimant defendant in foreclosure case 2007-CP-43-0036; I was determined to be unnecessary party and was dismissed as party defendant in 2009 prior to ultimate disposition.
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, I have not.
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. Yes, I have been covered since 1977. Yes, I was covered by tail when I withdrew from Lee, Wilson, Erter and Booth to start own firm in 1986, which I kept in place for three years. I am currently covered for \$1,000,000.00 for each claim and aggregate claims with \$5,000.00 deductible.
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?
No, I do not use social media.
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.
There have been none.

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.
There have been 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.
There have been 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.
There have been 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?
There have been none. I notified my delegation of my intention to offer for another term when I became aware that it was time for me to go through screening again, but I did not seek any pledge of support of anyone, nor have I done so directly or indirectly.
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?
No, I have not.
48. Have you or has anyone acting on your behalf solicited or collected funds to aid in the promotion of your candidacy?
No, none.
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, no one has done so.
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, 1977–present;
(b) Sumter County Bar Association, 1977-present.
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) Sumter County Museum Foundation Board-resigned;
(b) Sumter Gallery of Art Board- resigned;
(c) Sunset Country Club, no offices.
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.

I have always been honest, fair and concerned for the welfare of my clients in my law practice and of the litigants who appear before me. It is important to me that all parties to litigation in which I sit as judge receive proper due process of law and a right to be heard. As a young lawyer I found I appreciated very much judges that were patient and even-tempered in dealing with all who came before them, experienced and inexperienced, and who did not speak or act in a manner that would embarrass or humiliate anyone before their clients or a jury, though they did not hesitate to administer the law fairly and even-handedly. That experience has informed my practice and my judgeship ever since.

53. List the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of five persons, including your banker, from whom references could be obtained.

- (a) Alison Davis,
BB&T,
216 North Main Street,
Sumter, SC 29150
- (b) S. Lathan Roddey, III,
Box 850,
Sumter, SC 29151
- (c) Michael Self,
Box 2197,
Sumter, SC 29151
- (d) Anthony Hoefer,
207 North Washington Street,
Sumter, SC, 29150
- (e) Stephen M. Creech,
Box 850,
Sumter, SC 29151

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; None, 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;
One-quarter interest in family property consisting of 374 acres located on Stamey Livestock Road, Sumter, SC, currently under sales contract to Cypress Winds, LLC, in which there is a disagreement between the City of Sumter and High Hills Water District as to who will supply water and sewer to the purchaser. I am not entirely sure where controversy is heading, but I am sure I will not act in any judicial capacity concerning this property.
- (b) nature and value of any public improvements; None; and
- (c) South Carolina state or local public agency which purchased or is leasing or renting such property.

There is none, though a prior completed sale of land to the City of Sumter was consummated in 2009, but no interest was retained by me.

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.

There is 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/Richard Lauren Booth

Date: August 5, 2015