



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

**Master-in-Equity
(Incumbent)**

Full Name: Richard Lauren Booth
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1. Do you plan to serve your full term if re-appointed?
Yes.
2. Do you have any plans to return to private practice one day?
I am currently a part-time Master in Equity and maintain a private practice.
3. Have you met the Constitutional requirements for this position regarding age, residence, and years of practice?
Yes.
4. What is your philosophy regarding *ex parte* communications?
I follow the rules set forth in Rule 501, Canon 3 (B), South Carolina Rules of Court, Volume I (2015).
5. What is your philosophy on recusal, especially in situations in which lawyer-legislators, former associates, or law partners are to appear before you?
I routinely disclose to all litigants all such matters and dates and indicate my preference to recuse myself because of the associations. If any party thereafter requests my continued involvement as judge, or if any party indicates some unease with my involvement, I will then act pursuant to applicable Rules of Judicial Conduct set forth in Rule 501, Canon 3 (F), South Carolina Rules of Court, Volume I, (2015). If any party thereafter requests my recusal I will do so.
6. 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? If I do not believe it will prejudice my impartiality I generally say so to the parties. If no one objects to my continued involvement I will not generally automatically recuse myself. However, if anyone thereafter does request my disqualification after disclosure, or if they seem hesitant in any regard, then, after compliance with Canon 3(F) as referred to above, if a party or their lawyer desires that I recuse myself, I will normally accede to their wishes simply to avoid the appearance of impropriety.
7. What standards have you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality?
Accept none.
8. How would you handle a situation in which you became aware of misconduct of a lawyer or of a judge?

- First contact the party and attempt to counsel them to avoid future misconduct but if it is not corrected then I would report them to the ODC.
9. Are you affiliated with any political parties, boards or commissions that need to be re-evaluated?
No.
10. Have you engaged in any fund-raising activities with any political, social, community, or religious organizations?
No.
11. How do you handle the drafting of orders?
I usually draft them myself but in very simple or very complex matters I will from time to time ask a participating attorney to prepare a draft reflecting the findings of fact and conclusions of law of my ruling to be submitted for my input and amendment, circulate it to all parties for their input, and which I then modify and complete to reflect my specific ruling if it does not precisely do so.
12. What methods do you use to ensure that you and your staff meet deadlines?
My office maintains two independent calendars.
13. What is your philosophy on “judicial activism,” and what effect should judges have in setting or promoting public policy?
I am not a proponent of judicial activism and do not attempt to set or promote political or public policy matters in my rulings. I attempt to apply existing law even-handedly in all matters, and generally do not resort to the application of equity except where there is no adequate remedy at law and in the exceedingly rare situation that the existing law is clearly antiquated or would result in a ruling so manifestly unfair as to shock the conscience. Even then, neither political nor any current public policy situations are manifested in my rulings.
14. 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 continue to participate in Continuing Legal and Judicial Education efforts as faculty member.
15. 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?
No.
16. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality?
No, except in matters of the investments themselves in which I would never act as judge.
17. Would you hear a case where you or a member of your family held a *de minimis* financial interest in a party involved?
No, even to the extent it might be allowed under the applicable rules, just to avoid the appearance of impropriety.
18. Do you belong to any organizations that discriminate based on race, religion, or gender?
No.

19. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses?
Yes.
20. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge?
Calm, even-handed, respectful, pleasant, but stern if needed.
21. Would 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?
At all times.
22. Do you feel that it is ever appropriate to be angry with a member of the public who would appear before you? Is anger ever appropriate in dealing with attorneys or a pro se litigant?
No.
23. 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?
\$0.00.
24. While campaigning for this office, have you used judicial letterhead or the services of your staff for your campaign?
No.
25. Have you sought or received the pledge of any legislator prior to this date?
No.
26. Have you sought or been offered a conditional pledge of support by any legislator pending the outcome of your screening?
No.
27. 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 and no.
28. Have you contacted any members of the Judicial Merit Selection Commission?
No.
29. 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/Richard Lauren Booth

Sworn to before me this 5th day of August, 2015.

Amy B. Vohs

Notary Public for South Carolina

My commission expires:7/16/2023