



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

Family Court
(Incumbent)

Full Name: William Gregory Seigler
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1. Why do you want to serve another term as a Family Court Judge?
I can genuinely say that being a family court judge has been the most fulfilling and humbling position I have ever held. Although, extremely difficult and stressful decisions are before me and my fellow family court judges every day, I do feel that I am able to truly help people as a family court judge, but more specifically I have the grand opportunity to help minor children. Simply, I do feel that as a family court judge I have and can continue to serve the people of this great state, and hopefully contribute to the betterment of our society and state.
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? I strictly adhere to the rules set out in Canon 3, Rule 501, SCARC. Unless clearly allowed by the rules, there is no *ex parte* communication allowed by me or my staff.
6. What is your philosophy on recusal, especially in situations in which lawyer-legislators, former associates, or law partners are to appear before you?
The rules are very specific as to when a judge must recuse himself. Canon 3(e) says you must do so if your impartiality might reasonably be questioned. As to former associates and law partners, you do not have to recuse yourself unless the former partner handled the case at the time the judge was his partner. As to lawyer-legislators, unless you have a personal relationship or prior association, with him/her, you do not have to recuse. The rules are clear, but personally if there is any reason where an issue of impartiality may be raised then that should be disclosed on the record to avoid any appearance of impropriety.
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 probably grant the motion if after considering all the factors and circumstances I determined that it was warranted. As a judge you must always be

- aware how gravely important it is that our system of justice maintain the utmost appearance of fairness and impartiality.
8. How do you handle the appearance of impropriety because of the financial or social involvement of your spouse or a close relative?
I have never been faced with making that decision, but the rules are very clear. If presented with the situation I would recuse myself.
 9. What standards have you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality?
Canon 4 allows the acceptance of gifts under certain circumstances, but my personal policy is that I do not accept gifts from any one outside of close relatives.
 10. How do you handle a situation in which you became aware of misconduct of a lawyer or of a fellow judge?
Fortunately I have not been faced with the situation. However, Canon 3 clearly states that as a judge, upon becoming aware of the misconduct the judge will report the said conduct to the appropriate authority.
 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?
At the conclusion of the trial or hearing I determine which attorney will be drafting the order. Once that is determined I instruct the drafting attorney to receive approval of the order from opposing counsel before sending it to me for my signature. If there is only one attorney and a pro se litigant I instruct the attorney to draft the order and send a copy of the pro se litigant before sending it to me pursuant to the rules. On rare occasions I will draft an order when an attorney is involved. If an order is needed where both parties are pro se I will often draft the order if the litigants are unable to so themselves.
 14. What methods do you use to ensure that you and your staff meet deadlines?
My staff and I have a methodical system whereby the status of all orders are constantly tracked as to when the order is due. The attorneys are advised as to when an order is due based on the case.
 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 strictly follow what the statute and case law requires. I verify when documents were filed and if they were filed within the times set out in the statute. I also verify that all the necessary parties have been properly provided or served with the reports and documents within a timely manner.
 16. What is your philosophy on “judicial activism,” and what effect should judges have in setting or promoting public policy?
I feel as a judge I should follow the law under any and all circumstances. Outside factors should not be considered for any reason and a judge should apply the law appropriately at all times.

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 encourage, engage, and participate in continuing legal education with my colleagues and other members of the bar.
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?
No. Being a judge is very stressful and we have to make very important decisions, but it has not caused a strain on my personal relationships.
19. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality?
No.
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?
I feel that as a judge you should always be courteous and respectful to all parties and attorneys involved in the case. I try to be professional, calm, fair, polite, and honest at all times, under any and all circumstances.
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?
I make every effort to apply these same rules day in and day out, and I try to instill those same rules in my children as well.
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?
I do not feel that it is ever appropriate under any circumstance to become angry with any one in the courtroom.
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/William Gregory Seigler

Sworn to before me this 3rd day of August, 2015.

Brenda Dewalt

Notary Public for South Carolina

My commission expires: 11/13/2023