



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

Retired Judge

Full Name: Gafford Thomas Cooper, Jr.

Business Address: PO Box 1557, Camden, S.C. 29020

Business Telephone: 803-425-7182

1. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses for the past reporting period? Yes
2. Do you have any plans to return to private practice? No
3. Are you engaged in any legal activities other than your service as a retired judge, such as acting as an arbitrator or mediator? Yes, mediator.
4. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality? No
5. Are you a member of any organization or association that, by policy or practice, prohibits or limits its membership on the basis of race, sex, religion, or national origin? If so, please identify the entity and explain if this organization practices invidious discrimination on any basis. No
6. Have you engaged in any partisan political activity since your retirement? Please describe. No
7. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge? When do these rules apply? The Rules of Judicial Conduct apply at all times. My demeanor is best described in the Judge's Oath.
8. In your position as a retired judge, what methods do you employ to ensure that deadlines for the timely issuance of orders are met? My law clerk

employs an Excel spreadsheet to keep up with and calendar all cases we hear.

9. 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? Not appropriate. I cannot recall ever becoming angry with a lawyer or defendant. Sometimes irritated or frustrated, but never angered.
10. How would you handle a situation in which you became aware of misconduct or appearance of infirmity of a lawyer or fellow judge? Our responsibilities are spelled out in Canon 3 (D).
11. What is your philosophy on recusal, especially in situations in which lawyer-legislators, former associates, or law clerks are to appear before you? I always disclose the relationship in advance of hearing the matter.
12. What is your philosophy regarding *ex parte* communications? Are there circumstances under which you could envision *ex parte* communications being tolerated? Only in cases of scheduling and/or administrative functions should those communications take place.
13. 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 disclose to the parties the nature of the conflict or the source of the alleged bias. I would always grant a recusal motion unless I believed it was for the purpose of delay, fraud on the Court or pure "judge shopping."
14. What standards have you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality? I accept registration, food and lodging from the Association for Justice and the S.C. Defense Trial Lawyers at their annual conventions. I accept no gifts from lawyers (can't ever recall being offered one).
15. In order that we might advise court administration on steps that need to be taken, are there any limitations on your sight, hearing, or mobility that should be addressed by the court administrator? No.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ANSWERS TO THE ABOVE QUESTIONS ARE TRUE AND COMPLETE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

Sworn to before me this ____ day of _____, 2018.

(Signature)

(Print name)

Notary Public for South Carolina

My Commission Expires: _____