

**Florida Bar**  
**Judicial Candidate Voluntary Self-Disclosure Statement**  
**Overview**

Through the Judicial Candidate Voluntary Self-Disclosure Statement, The Florida Bar provides judicial candidates, both sitting judges and others, with the opportunity to provide information about themselves and their backgrounds to the public in preparation and anticipation of an election. **The Florida Bar does not attest to the accuracy of the content of the voluntary self-disclosure statements, although each candidate must execute the statement under oath, nor should the disclosures be viewed as endorsements by The Florida Bar.** The self-disclosure statement is intended to give all candidates the opportunity to share information about their history, credentials, and other relevant information, with the voting public.

The self-disclosure statement was developed to provide a means by which the public could gather information about their judicial candidates. It came to the attention of the Bar that voters felt they did not have sufficient information to make educated decisions on judicial candidates.

In the self-disclosure statement, judicial candidates can provide biographical information including education, work history, special honors or awards, community involvement, public service, and other historical data. The candidate is also allowed to provide a brief statement about why a voter should support that individual and why he or she would make a good judge.

Candidates' statements are governed by Canon 7 of the Code of Judicial Conduct. The code bars judicial candidates from making statements that appear to commit them on legal issues likely to come before them in court. The Canons also specify that a candidate may not knowingly make misleading or untruthful statements and require that each candidate execute a statement that the candidate has read and understands the obligations of the Florida Code of Judicial Conduct. Candidates who violate Canon 7 are subject to discipline.

The information collected from candidates in the voluntary self-disclosure statement will be made available to the press. The information about local candidates may also be made available to the public, provided to local bar organizations, and may be made available at courthouses, post offices, and voting stations throughout the state. The information will also be available online at The Florida Bar's Web site and can be obtained upon request to the Bar.

FLORIDA BAR  
JUDICIAL CANDIDATE  
VOLUNTARY SELF-DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

***PLEASE BEAR IN MIND YOUR OBLIGATIONS UNDER JUDICIAL CANON NO. 7  
IN PROVIDING ANSWERS TO THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.***

***THE FLORIDA BAR DOES NOT ASSUME ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR ANSWERS NOR WILL THE  
BAR MAKE EDITS TO YOUR ANSWERS TO COMPORT WITH THE CANONS. THE BAR DOES RESERVE  
THE RIGHT TO REDACT OBSCENE LANGUAGE BEFORE DISSEMINATION.***

Name: John M. Selden

Date Disclosure Statement Completed: 6/10/10

Judicial Position Sought: 7th Judicial Circuit, Group 5

Jurisdiction: Circuit Court, 7th Judicial Circuit

Jurisdiction(s) in which admitted to practice law:

Jurisdiction	Date Admitted
New York	1892 (voluntarily inactive)
New Jersey	1983 (voluntarily inactive)
Florida	1991

Florida Bar No. 0886841

Years admitted to practice law: 28

Years in the legal profession: 30

*Prior Candidacy in Judicial Election(s):*

If you have run in an election for judicial office before, please list the position, court, and relevant date(s):

Court	Relevant Dates	Position
7th Judicial Circuit	2006	Candidate for Judge

FLORIDA BAR JUDICIAL CANDIDATE  
VOLUNTARY SELF-DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

*Prior and/or Current Judicial Experience:*

If you have held judicial office, please state the Courts involved, the dates of service, and the Court:

Court	Relevant Dates	Office

Number of evidentiary hearings, trials and/or oral arguments over which you have presided:

0-5  6-15  16-30  31-50  51-100  101-200  201+

Additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Please identify the number of jury trials \_\_\_\_\_ and the number of bench trials \_\_\_\_\_ over which you have presided.

Additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**Current judges may respond to the following questions regarding legal practice only with reference to pre-judicial legal experience.**

*Area(s) of Practice:*

Civil  Criminal  Government  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please list the primary areas in which you have specialized or have legal expertise and allocate a percentage of your practice to each area.

Criminal defense and appellate - 80%; involuntary civil commitment - 15%; general civil and extraordinary writs - 5% (estimates over duration of career)

Number of evidentiary hearings, trials and/or oral arguments in which you have participated as legal counsel:

0-5  6-15  16-30  31-50  51-100  101-200  201+

Additional comments: Numerous DCA oral arguments and oral arguments at both the FL and NJ Supreme Courts

Please identify the number of jury trials minimum 60 (est.) and the number of bench trials minimum 100 (est.) in which you have participated.

Additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_

FLORIDA BAR JUDICIAL CANDIDATE  
VOLUNTARY SELF-DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Number of arbitration hearings in which you have participated as legal counsel or hearing officer:

0-5  6-15  16-30  31-50  51-100  101-200  201+

Additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of administrative hearings in which you have participated as legal counsel or hearing officer:

0-5  6-15  16-30  31-50  51-100  101-200  201+

Additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_

To the extent applicable, please quantify any additional alternative dispute resolution/negotiation experience:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Have you ever been Board Certified in any area(s) of practice, if yes please identify:

The Area(s) of Practice: \_\_\_\_\_

When you were certified in each Area of Practice: \_\_\_\_\_

Whether you are currently certified in those areas: \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide the percentage of your practice that has involved representing plaintiffs \_\_\_\_\_% and the percentage that has involved representing defendants \_\_\_\_\_%.

*Undergraduate Education:*

Name of Institution: Princeton University, 1978

Degree received/Major: B.A., English

Academic awards, recognitions, honors, leadership roles and participation in academic organizations:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Law School Education:*

Name of Institution: New York Law School, 1981

Degree received: Juris Doctor

Internships/in-school clerkships, academic awards, recognitions, honors, leadership roles and participation in academic organizations (e.g., law review, moot court, legal clinics):

Three semesters Joint JD/MBA Program, landlord-tenant clinic

Number of hours devoted to public work while in undergraduate \_\_\_\_\_ or law school \_\_\_\_\_.

FLORIDA BAR JUDICIAL CANDIDATE  
VOLUNTARY SELF-DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

*Additional Educational History (if applicable):*

Name of Institution	Degree Received	Special awards, recognitions, honors, or leadership roles (if any)

*Employment:*

Present employer: State of FL, Office of the Public Defender, 7th Judicial Circuit

Number of years with present employer: 11

Present position: Division Chief, West Volusia (County Seat); Chief, Civil Commitment Division

Explain relevant experience or skills gained that you will bring to the bench:

1. Having handled trials and appeals before hundreds of judges in numerous counties of three different states, I have had the opportunity to observe wide-ranging examples of judicial style and temperament. This enables me to bring the best qualities of those examples to the bench. 2. My extensive appellate background has taught me both the need for accuracy, to avoid waste of judicial resources, and the skills to sit as an appellate judge over County Court appeals. 3. After years of playing Rugby Football, my decade of experience as a Certified Referee has given me the skills of making swift decisions, and communicating in an authoritative manner while remaining calm and composed, even in the face of the hottest contests.

*List All Prior Employers and Occupations, Legal or Non-legal, for the Last Ten Years:*

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years employed with this employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Position/specialty: \_\_\_\_\_

Explain relevant experience or skills gained that you will bring to the bench:

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years employed with this employer: \_\_\_\_\_

FLORIDA BAR JUDICIAL CANDIDATE  
VOLUNTARY SELF-DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Position/specialty: \_\_\_\_\_

Explain relevant experience or skills gained that you will bring to the bench:

\_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years employed with this employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Position/specialty: \_\_\_\_\_

Explain relevant experience or skills gained that you will bring to the bench:

\_\_\_\_\_

*Law Organizations:*

Please list legal organizations in which you have been an active member for more than two (2) years and all legal organizations in which you hold a leadership position or which required nomination to join:

Organization Name	Dates of Participation	Office Held (If applicable)
The Florida Bar	1991-current	
JRDEFENSE	2001-current	
SOCDA	2002-current	

*Honors and Publications:*

Please list any published articles or books that you have authored, any speeches or lectures you have given, and any honors, prizes or awards you have received:

Title	Date	Additional Information
Please see website for information		<a href="http://www.seldenforjudge.com">www.seldenforjudge.com</a>

*Public Service – Pro Bono, Volunteer Work or Military Service:*

Please provide the dates, activities and any special accomplishments, honors or leadership roles you have played in volunteer, public or military service organizations or in providing pro bono, volunteer, public or military service:

1. While practicing in New Jersey (1984-1987), I second-chaired the first capital murder trial in our County after re-institution of the death penalty. The client was convicted, but spared death, and sentenced to life in prison. I brought successful appeals, pro bono, to both the Appellate Division and the State Supreme Court, which reversed the conviction and changed a point of evidentiary law. 2. Served as Mock Trial Team Coach, Atlantic H.S. (South Daytona, FL), 2000-2001.

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*Health:*

Do you currently suffer from or have you suffered from any of the following ailments in the last three years:

- Dependence on narcotics, drugs or intoxicating beverages
- Pathological or compulsive behavior
- Memory loss or impaired judgment

Yes     No

If yes, please identify the ailment and provide full details, including the relevant dates, including dates of diagnosis, if applicable, the treatment received and any additional relevant information:

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*Discipline:*

If you have ever been found, either involuntarily or by consent, to have committed a violation of The Florida Bar Disciplinary Rules, the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration or the Florida Code of Judicial Conduct for which the discipline imposed was one of the following: (a) public reprimand; (b) suspension; or (c) disbarment, please provide the following information:

Date of charge: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Disposition: \_\_\_\_\_

Rule(s) found to have violated: \_\_\_\_\_

Discipline imposed for rule violation(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date reinstated to the Bar or bench: \_\_\_\_\_

Any conditions imposed for reinstatement (e.g., disgorgement, probation or public service):

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If you have been found to have committed a violation of the ethical or discipline rules, please explain the circumstances surrounding your discipline:

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*For current or former judges:*

Has the Florida Supreme Court, or a similar body in another state, ever rules against you on a Notice of Formal Charges by the Judicial Qualifications Commission? If so, please explain the circumstances surrounding the charges and include a description of any discipline imposed:

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*Military Discharge:*

If you served in the military and your discharge was anything other than honorable or you received a court martial, please provide that information here:

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*Criminal Convictions:*

Have you ever been convicted or pled no contest to a crime involving dishonesty or moral turpitude? If so, provide the following information:

Date of Conviction or Plea of No Contest: \_\_\_\_\_

Crime for which you were convicted or Pled No Contest: \_\_\_\_\_

Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

Any additional conditions imposed: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have been convicted or pled no contest to a crime involving dishonesty or moral turpitude and would like to explain the circumstances surrounding your criminal conviction, you may do so here:

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*Personal Statement:*

In 100 words or less, without discussing any particular issue which may come before you if you become a judge, explain why you believe you would be a good judge:

My educational background and academic legal skills have been recognized by courts including District Courts of Appeal before whom I have appeared (see e.g. 950 So.2d 1287). For the last two years, I have been supervising, training and mentoring 11 attorneys in five, busy court divisions (2 felony; 2 misdemeanor; 1 juvenile), working directly in the courts on a daily basis, and allowing me to see the demands placed on our judicial system in these economic times. This teaches a valuable lesson regarding the demands of the position and the need for efficiency. Lastly, I am the ONLY candidate in my group who has recently had the honor of having been nominated to the Governor by the 7th Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission (another candidate was selected for appointment: Judge Perkins).

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