

§ 7A-498.4. Establishment of Commission on Indigent Defense Services.

(a) The Commission on Indigent Defense Services is created within the Office of Indigent Defense Services and shall consist of 13 members. To create an effective working group, assure continuity, and achieve staggered terms, the Commission shall be appointed as provided in this section.

(b) The members of the Commission shall be appointed as follows:

- (1) The Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court shall appoint one member, who shall be an active or former member of the North Carolina judiciary.
- (2) The Governor shall appoint one member, who shall be a nonattorney.
- (3) The General Assembly shall appoint one member, who shall be an attorney, upon the recommendation of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.
- (4) The General Assembly shall appoint one member, who shall be an attorney, upon the recommendation of the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
- (5) The North Carolina Public Defenders Association shall appoint member, who shall be an attorney.
- (6) The North Carolina State Bar shall appoint one member, who shall be an attorney.
- (7) The North Carolina Bar Association shall appoint one member, who shall be an attorney.
- (8) The North Carolina Academy of Trial Lawyers shall appoint one member, who shall be an attorney.
- (9) The North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers shall appoint one member, who shall be an attorney.
- (10) The North Carolina Association of Women Lawyers shall appoint one member, who shall be an attorney.
- (11) The Commission shall appoint three members, who shall reside in different judicial districts from one another. One appointee shall be a nonattorney, and one appointee may be an active member of the North Carolina judiciary. One appointee shall be Native American. The initial three members satisfying this subdivision shall be appointed as provided in subsection (k) of this section.

(c) The terms of members appointed pursuant to subsection (b) of this section shall be as follows:

- (1) The initial appointments by the Chief Justice, the Governor, and the General Assembly shall be for four years.
- (2) The initial appointments by the Public Defenders Association and State Bar, and one appointment by the Commission, shall be for three years.
- (3) The initial appointments by the Bar Association and Trial Academy, and one appointment by the Commission, shall be for two years.
- (4) The initial appointments by the Black Lawyers Association and Women Lawyers Association, and one appointment by the Commission, shall be for one year.

At the expiration of these initial terms, appointments shall be for four years and shall be made by the appointing authorities designated in subsection (b) of this section. No person shall serve more than two consecutive four-year terms plus any initial term of less than four years.

(d) Persons appointed to the Commission shall have significant experience in the defense of criminal or other cases subject to this Article or shall have demonstrated a strong commitment to quality representation in indigent defense matters. No active prosecutors or law

enforcement officials, or active employees of such persons, may be appointed to or serve on the Commission. No active judicial officials, or active employees of such persons, may be appointed to or serve on the Commission, except as provided in subsection (b) of this section. No active public defenders, active employees of public defenders, or other active employees of the Office of Indigent Defense Services may be appointed to or serve on the Commission, except that notwithstanding this subsection, G.S. 14-234, or any other provision of law, Commission members may include part-time public defenders employed by the Office of Indigent Defense Services and may include persons, or employees of persons or organizations, who provide legal services subject to this Article as contractors or appointed attorneys.

(e) All members of the Commission are entitled to vote on any matters coming before the Commission unless otherwise provided by rules adopted by the Commission concerning voting on matters in which a member has, or appears to have, a financial or other personal interest.

(f) Each member of the Commission shall serve until a successor in office has been appointed. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment by the appointing authority for the unexpired term. Removal of Commission members shall be in accordance with policies and procedures adopted by the Commission.

(g) A quorum for purposes of conducting Commission business shall be a majority of the members of the Commission.

(h) The Commission shall elect a Commission chair from the members of the Commission for a term of two years.

(i) The Director of Indigent Defense Services shall attend all Commission meetings except those relating to removal or reappointment of the Director or allegations of misconduct by the Director. The Director shall not vote on any matter decided by the Commission.

(j) Commission members shall not receive compensation but are entitled to be paid necessary subsistence and travel expenses in accordance with G.S. 138-5 and G.S. 138-6 as applicable.

(k) The Commission shall hold its first meeting no later than September 15, 2000. All appointments to the Commission specified in subdivisions (1) through (10) of subsection (b) of this section shall be made by the appointing authorities by September 1, 2000. The appointee of the Chief Justice shall convene the first meeting. No later than 30 days after its first meeting, the Commission shall make the appointments specified in subdivision (11) of subsection (b) of this section and shall elect its chair. (2000-144, s. 1; 2001-424, s. 22.11(b).)