

**§ 163-9. Filling vacancies in State and district judicial offices.**

(a) Vacancies occurring in the offices of Justice of the Supreme Court, judge of the Court of Appeals, and judge of the superior court for causes other than expiration of term shall be filled by appointment of the Governor. An appointee to the office of Justice of the Supreme Court or judge of the Court of Appeals shall hold office until January 1 next following the election for members of the General Assembly that is held more than 60 days after the vacancy occurs, at which time an election shall be held for an eight-year term and until a successor is elected and qualified.

(b) Except for judges specified in the next paragraph of this subsection, an appointee to the office of judge of superior court shall hold his place until the next election for members of the General Assembly that is held more than 60 days after the vacancy occurs, at which time an election shall be held to fill the unexpired term of the office.

Appointees for judges of the superior court from any district:

(1) With only one resident judge; or  
(2) In which no county is subject to section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, shall hold the office until the next election of members of the General Assembly that is held more than 60 days after the vacancy occurs, at which time an election shall be held to fill an eight-year term.

(c) When the unexpired term of the office in which the vacancy has occurred expires on the first day of January succeeding the next election for members of the General Assembly, the Governor shall appoint to fill that vacancy for the unexpired term of the office.

(d) Vacancies in the office of district judge which occur before the expiration of a term shall not be filled by election. Vacancies in the office of district judge shall be filled in accordance with G.S. 7A-142. (1901, c. 89, ss. 4, 73; Rev. s. 4299; C.S., s. 5920; 1967, c. 775, s. 1; 1969, c. 44, s. 81; 1979, c. 494; 1981, c. 763, s. 3; 1985 (Reg. Sess., 1986), c. 920, s. 6; 1995, c. 98, s. 1; 1996, 2nd Ex. Sess., c. 9, s. 21; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)