

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**  
**SESSION 2007**

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**SENATE DRS35258-LLf-201 (03/13)**

Short Title: Omnibus Courts Amendments.

(Public)

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Sponsors: Senator Snow.

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Referred to:

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A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO MAKE VARIOUS AMENDMENTS TO THE LAW AFFECTING THE  
STATE COURT SYSTEM.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** G.S. 7A-343 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 7A-343. Duties of Director.**

The Director is the Administrative Officer of the Courts, and his duties include the following:

- (1) Collect and compile statistical data and other information on the judicial and financial operation of the courts and on the operation of other offices directly related to and serving the courts;
- (2) Determine the state of the dockets and evaluate the practices and procedures of the courts, and make recommendations concerning the number of judges, district attorneys, and magistrates required for the efficient administration of justice;
- (3) Prescribe uniform administrative and business methods, systems, forms and records to be used in the offices of the clerks of superior court;
- (4) Prepare and submit budget estimates of State appropriations necessary for the maintenance and operation of the Judicial Department, and authorize expenditures from funds appropriated for these purposes;
- (5) Investigate, make recommendations concerning, and assist in the securing of adequate physical accommodations for the General Court of Justice;
- (6) Procure, distribute, exchange, transfer, and assign such equipment, books, forms and supplies as are to be acquired with State funds for the General Court of Justice;

- 1 (7) Make recommendations for the improvement of the operations of the  
2 Judicial Department;
- 3 (8) Prepare and submit an annual report on the work of the Judicial  
4 Department to the Chief Justice, and transmit a copy to each member  
5 of the General Assembly;
- 6 (9) Assist the Chief Justice in performing his duties relating to the transfer  
7 of district court judges for temporary or specialized duty;
- 8 (9a) Establish and operate systems and services that provide for electronic  
9 filing in the court system and further provide electronic transaction  
10 processing and access to court information systems pursuant to  
11 G.S. 7A-343.2; and
- 12 (9b) Enter into contracts with one or more private vendors to provide for  
13 the payment of fines, fees, and costs due to the court by credit, charge,  
14 or debit cards; such contracts may provide for the assessment of a  
15 convenience or transaction fee by the vendor to cover the costs of  
16 providing this service;
- 17 (9c) Prescribe policies and procedures for the appointment and payment of  
18 foreign language interpreters in those cases specified in  
19 G.S. 7A-314(f). These policies and procedures shall be applied  
20 uniformly throughout the General Court of Justice. These policies and  
21 procedures may include reasonable fees, to be set by the Director, for  
22 interpreter training and testing. These fees shall not exceed the costs  
23 incurred by the Judicial Department in providing the training and  
24 testing. After consultation with the Joint Legislative Commission on  
25 Governmental Operations, the Director may also convert contractual  
26 foreign language interpreter positions to permanent State positions  
27 when the Director determines that it is more cost-effective to do so;
- 28 (9d) Analyze the use of contractual positions in the Judicial Department  
29 and, after consultation with the Joint Legislative Commission on  
30 Governmental Operations, convert contractual positions to permanent  
31 State positions when the Director determines it is in the best interests  
32 of the Judicial Department to do so; and
- 33 (10) Perform such additional duties and exercise such additional powers as  
34 may be prescribed by statute or assigned by the Chief Justice."

35 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 7A-794 and G.S. 7A-798 are repealed.

36 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 7A-801 reads as rewritten:

37 **"§ 7A-801. ~~Plan for evaluation.~~ Monitoring and annual report.**

38 The Administrative Office of the Courts shall ~~develop a statewide model and~~  
39 ~~conduct ongoing evaluations of~~ monitor all State-recognized and funded local drug  
40 treatment court programs. A report of these evaluations shall be submitted courts,  
41 prepare an annual report on the implementation, operation, and effectiveness of the  
42 statewide drug treatment court program, and submit the report to the General Assembly  
43 by March 1 of each year. Each local drug treatment court program shall submit  
44 evaluation reports to the Administrative Office of the Courts as requested."

1           **SECTION 4.** G.S. 7A-314(f) reads as rewritten:

2           "(f) In any case in which the Judicial Department is bearing the costs of  
3 representation for a party and that party or a witness for that party does not speak or  
4 understand the English language, and the court appoints a foreign language interpreter  
5 to assist that party or witness, the reasonable fee for the interpreter's services is payable  
6 from funds appropriated to the Administrative Office of the Courts. The court may also  
7 appoint an interpreter, payable from funds appropriated to the Administrative Office of  
8 the Courts, in cases where an interpreter is necessary to assist the court in the efficient  
9 transaction of business. The appointment and payment shall be made in accordance with  
10 G.S. 7A-343(9c)."

11           **SECTION 5.** G.S. 7A-10(b) reads as rewritten:

12           "(b) The Chief Justice and each of the associate justices shall receive the annual  
13 salary provided in Current Operations Appropriations Act. The Chief Justice shall  
14 receive an annual salary that is at least two and seven-tenths percent (2.7%) greater than  
15 the salary of the associate justices. Each justice is entitled to reimbursement for travel  
16 and subsistence expenses at the rate allowed State employees generally."

17           **SECTION 6.** G.S. 7A-18(a) reads as rewritten:

18           "(a) The Chief Judge and each associate judge of the Court of Appeals shall  
19 receive the annual salary provided in the Current Operations Appropriations Act. The  
20 Chief Judge shall receive an annual salary that is at least two and seven-tenths percent  
21 (2.7%) greater than the salary of the associate judges. Each judge is entitled to  
22 reimbursement for travel and subsistence expenses at the rate allowed State employees  
23 generally."

24           **SECTION 7.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2007.