

Article 3.

The Supreme Court.

§ 7A-10. Organization; compensation of justices.

(a) The Supreme Court shall consist of a Chief Justice and six associate justices, elected by the qualified voters of the State for terms of eight years. Such election shall be under Article 25 of Chapter 163 of the General Statutes or Article 1A of this Chapter. Before entering upon the duties of the office, each justice shall take an oath of office. Four justices shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of the court. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, sessions of the court shall be held in the city of Raleigh, and scheduled by rule of court so as to discharge expeditiously the court's business. The court may by rule hold sessions not more than twice annually in the Old Chowan County Courthouse (1767) in the Town of Edenton, which is a State-owned court facility that is designated as a National Historic Landmark by the United States Department of the Interior. The court may by rule hold sessions not more than twice annually in the City of Morganton; unless a more suitable site is identified by the court, the court shall meet in the Old Burke County Courthouse, the location of summer sessions of the Supreme Court from 1847-1862.

(b) The Chief Justice and each of the associate justices shall receive the annual salary provided in Current Operations Appropriations Act. Each justice is entitled to reimbursement for travel and subsistence expenses at the rate allowed State employees generally.

(b1) In addition to the reimbursement for travel and subsistence expenses authorized by subsection (b) of this section, and notwithstanding G.S. 138-6, each justice whose permanent residence is at least 50 miles from the City of Raleigh shall also be reimbursed for the mileage the justice travels each trip to the City of Raleigh from the justice's home for business of the court. The reimbursement authorized by this subsection shall be calculated for each justice by multiplying the actual round-trip mileage from that justice's home to the City of Raleigh by a rate-per-mile established by the Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts, but not to exceed the business standard mileage rate set by the Internal Revenue Service.

(c) In lieu of merit and other increment raises paid to regular State employees, the Chief Justice and each of the Associate Justices shall receive as longevity pay an annual amount equal to four and eight-tenths percent (4.8%) of the annual salary set forth in the Current Operations Appropriations Act payable monthly after five years of service, nine and six-tenths percent (9.6%) after 10 years of service, fourteen and four-tenths percent (14.4%) after 15 years of service, nineteen and two-tenths percent (19.2%) after 20 years of service, and twenty-four percent (24%) after 25 years of service. "Service" means service as a justice or judge of the General Court of Justice, as a member of the Utilities Commission, or as an administrative law judge. Service shall also mean service as a district attorney or as a clerk of superior court. (1967, c. 108, s. 1; 1983, c. 761, s. 242; 1983 (Reg. Sess., 1984), c. 1034, s. 165; c. 1109, ss. 11, 13.1; 1985, c. 698, s. 10(a); 1997-56, s. 1; 2007-323, ss. 14.21(a), 28.18A(a); 2015-66, s. 2; 2015-89, s. 1; 2017-57, s. 35.4(d); 2021-180, s. 16.18(a); 2023-134, s. 16.30(a).)

§ 7A-10.1. Authority to prescribe standards of judicial conduct.

The Supreme Court is authorized, by rule, to prescribe standards of judicial conduct for the guidance of all justices and judges of the General Court of Justice. (1973, c. 89.)

§ 7A-11. Clerk of the Supreme Court; salary; fees; oath.

The clerk of the Supreme Court shall be appointed by the Supreme Court to serve at its pleasure. The annual salary of the clerk shall be fixed by the Administrative Officer of the Courts, subject to the approval of the Supreme Court. The clerk may appoint assistants in the number and at the salaries fixed by the Administrative Officer of the Courts. The clerk shall perform all duties the Supreme Court may assign. The clerk shall adopt a seal of office, to be approved by the Supreme Court. A fee bill for services rendered by the clerk shall be fixed by rules of the Supreme Court, and all those fees shall be remitted to the State treasury. Charges to litigants for document management and the reproduction of appellate records and briefs shall be fixed by rule of the Supreme Court and remitted to the Appellate Courts Printing and Computer Operations Fund established in G.S. 7A-343.3. The operations of the Clerk of the Supreme Court shall be subject to the oversight of the State Auditor pursuant to Article 5A of Chapter 147 of the General Statutes. Before entering upon the duties of the clerk's office, the clerk shall take the oath of office prescribed by law. (1967, c. 108, s. 1; 1969, c. 1190, s. 2; 1973, c. 750; 1983, c. 913, s. 3; 2002-126, s. 2.2(j); 2019-243, s. 19(a); 2022-74, s. 16.2(a); 2023-103, s. 5(c).)

§ 7A-12. Supreme Court marshal.

The Supreme Court may appoint a marshal to serve at its pleasure, and to perform such duties as it may assign. The marshal shall have the criminal and civil powers of a sheriff, and any additional powers necessary to execute the orders of the appellate division in any county of the State. His salary shall be fixed by the Administrative Officer, subject to the approval of the Supreme Court. The marshal may appoint such assistants, and at such salaries, as may be authorized by the Administrative Officer of the Courts. The Supreme Court, in its discretion, may appoint the Supreme Court librarian, or some other suitable employee of the court, to serve in the additional capacity of marshal. (1967, c. 108, s. 1.)

§ 7A-13. Supreme Court library; functions; librarian; library committee; seal of office.

(a) The Supreme Court shall appoint a librarian of the Supreme Court library, to serve at the pleasure of the court. The annual salary of the librarian shall be fixed by the Administrative Officer of the Courts, subject to the approval of the Supreme Court. The librarian may appoint assistants in numbers and at salaries to be fixed by the Administrative Officer of the Courts.

(b) The primary function of the Supreme Court library is to serve the appellate division of the General Court of Justice, but it may render service to the trial divisions of the General Court of Justice, to State agencies, and to the general public, under such regulations as the librarian, subject to the approval of the library committee, may promulgate.

(c) The library shall be maintained in the city of Raleigh, except that if the Court of Appeals sits regularly in locations other than the city of Raleigh, branch libraries may be established at such locations for the use of the Court of Appeals.

(d) The librarian shall promulgate rules and regulations for the use of the library, subject to the approval of a library committee, to be composed of two justices of the Supreme Court appointed by the Chief Justice, and one judge of the Court of Appeals appointed by the Chief Judge.

(e) The librarian may adopt a seal of office.

(f) The librarian may operate a copying service by means of which he may furnish certified or uncertified copies of all or portions of any document, paper, book, or other writing in the library that legally may be copied. When a certificate is made under his hand and attested by his official seal, it shall be received as prima facie evidence of the correctness of the matter therein contained,

and as such shall receive full faith and credit. The fees for copies shall be approved by the library committee, and the fees so collected shall be administered in the same manner as the charges to litigants for the reproduction of appellate records and briefs. (1967, c. 108, s. 1.)

§ 7A-14. Reprints of Supreme Court Reports.

The Supreme Court is authorized to have such of the Reports of the Supreme Court of the State of North Carolina as are not on hand for sale, republished and numbered consecutively, retaining the present numbers and names of the reporters and by means of star pages in the margin retaining the original numbering of the pages. The Supreme Court is authorized to have such Reports reprinted without any alteration from the original edition thereof, except as may be directed by the Supreme Court. The contract for such reprinting and republishing shall be made by the Administrative Office of the Courts in the manner prescribed in G.S. 7A-6. Such republication shall thus continue until the State shall have for sale all of such Reports; and hereafter when the editions of any number or volume of the Supreme Court Reports shall be exhausted, it shall be the duty of the Supreme Court to have the same reprinted under the provisions of this section and G.S. 7A-6. In reprinting the Reports that have already been annotated, the annotations and the additional indexes therein shall be retained. (Code, s. 3634; 1885, c. 309; 1889, c. 473, ss. 1-4, 6; Rev., s. 5361; 1907, c. 503; 1917, cc. 201, 292; C.S., s. 7671; 1923, c. 176; 1929, c. 39, s. 2; 1975, c. 328.)

§ 7A-15. Reserved for future codification purposes.