

Article 51.

Arraignment.

**§ 15A-941. Arraignment before judge only upon written request; entry of not guilty plea if not arraigned.**

(a) Arraignment consists of bringing a defendant before a judge having jurisdiction to try the offense, advising him of the charges pending against him, and directing him to plead. The prosecutor must read the charges or fairly summarize them to the defendant. If the defendant fails to plead, the court must record that fact, and the defendant must be tried as if he had pleaded not guilty.

(b), (c) Repealed by Session Laws 2021-47, s. 10(h), effective June 18, 2021, and applicable to proceedings occurring on or after that date.

(d) A defendant will be arraigned in accordance with this section only if the defendant files a written request with the clerk of superior court for an arraignment not later than 21 days after service of the bill of indictment. If a bill of indictment is not required to be served pursuant to G.S. 15A-630, then the written request for arraignment must be filed not later than 21 days from the date of the return of the indictment as a true bill. Upon the return of the indictment as a true bill, the court must immediately cause notice of the 21-day time limit within which the defendant may request an arraignment to be mailed or otherwise given to the defendant and to the defendant's counsel of record, if any. If the defendant does not file a written request for arraignment, then the court shall enter a not guilty plea on behalf of the defendant.

(e) Nothing in this section shall prevent the district attorney from calendaring cases for administrative purposes. (1973, c. 1286, s. 1; 1975, c. 166, s. 27; 1993, c. 30, s. 3; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 725, s. 7; 2021-47, s. 10(h).)