

**§ 30-20. (Effective until March 1, 2024) Procedure for assignment.**

Upon the application of the surviving spouse, a child by the child's guardian or next friend, or the personal representative of the deceased, the clerk of superior court of the county in which the deceased resided may assign the inquiry to a magistrate of the county. The clerk of court, or magistrate upon assignment, shall ascertain the person or persons entitled to an allowance according to the provisions of this Article, and determine the money or other personal property of the estate, and pay over to or assign to the surviving spouse and to the children, if any, so much thereof as they shall be entitled to as provided in this Article. Any deficiencies shall be made up from any of the personal property of the deceased, and if the personal property of the estate shall be insufficient to satisfy the allowance, the clerk of the superior court shall enter judgment against the personal representative for the amount of the deficiency, to be paid when a sufficiency of such assets shall come into the personal representative's hands. (1870-1, c. 263; Code, s. 2122; 1891, c. 13; 1899, c. 531; Rev., s. 3098; C.S., s. 4115; 1961, c. 749, s. 6; 1971, c. 528, s. 23; 1989, c. 11, s. 2; 1997-310, s. 3; 2011-344, s. 7; 2012-71, s. 2(b).)

**§ 30-20. (Effective March 1, 2024) Procedure for assignment; order of clerk.**

(a) The clerk of court shall first ascertain if the surviving spouse is entitled to an allowance according to the provisions of this Article, and, if so, enter an order setting forth the personal property of the estate to be awarded to the surviving spouse. Once the spouse's allowance has been awarded, the clerk of court shall next ascertain if any children of the decedent are entitled to an allowance according to the provisions of this Article, and, if so, enter an order setting forth the personal property of the estate to be awarded for the child's allowance. If a personal representative has been appointed for the decedent's estate, the clerk of court shall provide a copy of any order awarding an allowance to the personal representative of the decedent's estate.

(b) If the personal property of the estate is insufficient to satisfy the allowances awarded, the clerk of the superior court shall enter judgment against the decedent's estate for the amount of the deficiency. If a personal representative has been appointed for the decedent's estate, the deficiency shall be satisfied by the personal representative when a sufficiency of such assets shall come into the possession of the personal representative.

(c) The clerk of court may, on the clerk's own motion, determine that a hearing is necessary to determine whether a year's allowance should be awarded pursuant to the provisions of this Article and, if so, what personal property should be awarded. If the clerk of court makes such a determination, the clerk shall direct the petitioner to commence a contested estate proceeding pursuant to G.S. 30-23 in order to determine the year's allowance. (1870-1, c. 263; Code, s. 2122; 1891, c. 13; 1899, c. 531; Rev., s. 3098; C.S., s. 4115; 1961, c. 749, s. 6; 1971, c. 528, s. 23; 1989, c. 11, s. 2; 1997-310, s. 3; 2011-344, s. 7; 2012-71, s. 2(b); 2023-120, s. 1.2.)