

# Changes to the Court System You Might Have Missed in the Budget

Shea Denning  
November 2023

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2023 Appropriations Act, S.L. 2023-134 (H 259)

- 1. Salaries
- 2. Renumbering
- 3. New Judgeships
- 4. New Retirement Age
- 5. Changes to the Judicial Standards Commission
- 6. Changes to Three-Judge Panels
- 7. Changes to Right of Appeal
- 8. Concealed Carry for Appellate Judges/Justices
- 9. New Public Defender Districts
- 10. And More

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1. Salaries

- **20 percent increase for Chief Justice**
  - \$203,073
- **13 percent increase for superior court judges**
  - \$169,125
- **24 percent increase for district court judges**
  - \$162,620

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- Bottom half of all states
- Supreme Court Associate Justices 44 out of 51



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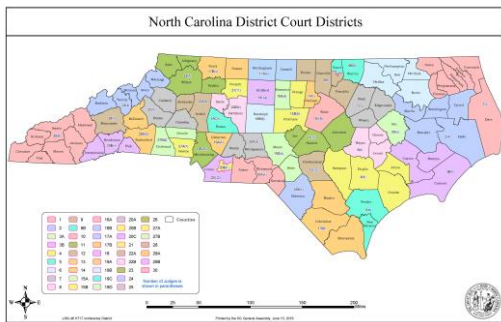
2. Renumbering

Back in 2019



District	Counties	District	Counties
1	Camden, Cherokee, Currituck, Dare, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Wayne	148-22	Robeson
2	Beaufort, Hyde, Martin, Tyrrell	148-23	Rockingham, Surry
3A	Wilmington, York	148-24	High Point, Guilford
4-6	Carteret, Caswell, Duplin, Jones, Onslow, Sampson, Wayne	148-25	Montgomery, Randolph, Wayne
7	Bertie, Bladen, Brunswick, Edgecombe, Nash	148-26	Moore
8	Greene, Lenoir	148-27	Stanly, Montgomery
9A	Franklin, Graham, Wayne	148-28	Union, Forsyth
10	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-29	Alexander, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
11	Ashe, Bladen, Brunswick, Edgecombe, Nash	148-30	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
12	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-31	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
13	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-32	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
14	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-33	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
15	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-34	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
16	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-35	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
17	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-36	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
18	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-37	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
19	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-38	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
20	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-39	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
21	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-40	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
22	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-41	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
23	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-42	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
24	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-43	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
25	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-44	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
26	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-45	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
27	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-46	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
28	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-47	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
29	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-48	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
30	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-49	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
31	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-50	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
32	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-51	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
33	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-52	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
34	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-53	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
35	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-54	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
36	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-55	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
37	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-56	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
38	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-57	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
39	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-58	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
40	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-59	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
41	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-60	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
42	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-61	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
43	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-62	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
44	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-63	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
45	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-64	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
46	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-65	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
47	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-66	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
48	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-67	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
49	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-68	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
50	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-69	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne
51	Alamance, Chatham, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne	148-70	Albemarle, Beaufort, Brunswick, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Wayne

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3. New Judgeships (Part I)

• **District Court Judge +**

- District 5: Sampson, Duplin, Jones, Onslow
- District 17: Alamance County
- District 34: Alleghany, Ashe, Wilkes, Yadkin
- District 43: Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, and Swain

• **Superior Court Judge +**

- District 2: Beaufort, Hyde, Martin, Tyrrell, Washington
- District 38: Gaston

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3. New Judgeships (Part II)

• **Special Superior Court Judges +10**

- January 1, 2024
- One from each division
- 5 from President Pro Tem
- 5 from Speaker of the House

• **All Special Superior Court Judges**

- 8-year terms

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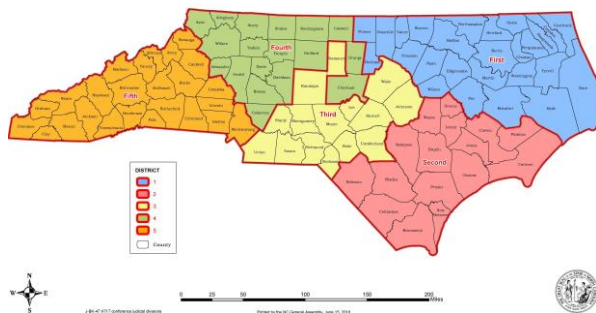
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3. New Judgeships (S.L. 2023-148 (S 761))

- Beth Freshwater Smith (First Judicial Division)
- Matthew T. Houston (Third Judicial Division)
- Clifton H. Smith (Fifth Judicial Division)
- Clayton Somers (First Judicial Division)
- Jessica Locklear (Second Judicial Division)
- Hoyt G. Tessener (Third Judicial Division)
- William Stetzer (Fifth Judicial Division)

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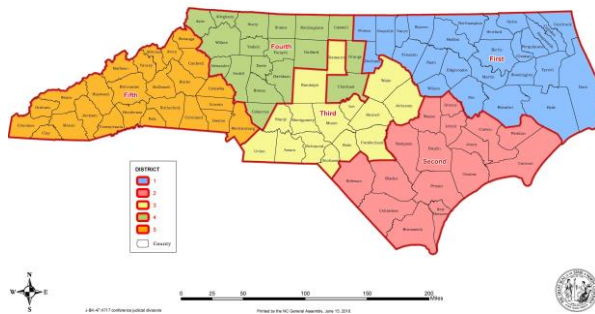
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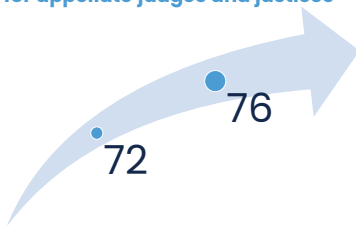
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4. Mandatory Retirement Age

- Increased for appellate judges and justices



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## 5. Judicial Standards Commission

### • New Membership

#### Judicial Members

Chris Dillon, Chair, Court of Appeals  
 Jeffery K. Carpenter, Vice Chair, Court of Appeals  
 Jeffery B. Foster, Superior Court  
 ✓ C. Ashley Gore, Superior Court  
 Dawn M. Layton, Superior Court  
 ✓ R. Andrew Womble, Superior Court  
 ✓ Justin K. Brackett, District Court  
 James H. Falson III, District Court  
 ✓ Rashad A. Hauter, District Court  
 Teresa Vincent, District Court

#### Citizen Members

John M. Check  
 Talece Y. Hunter  
 Donald L. Porter  
 Ronald L. Smith  
 Paul V. Coble (Alternate Member)  
 Fred R. Jarrett (Alternate Member)

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## 6. Three-Judge Panels

### • Redistricting • Facial challenges

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## 6. Three-Judge Panels (former law)

- **Redistricting**
  - Filed in Wake County Superior Court
  - 3 judge panel, presiding judge is senior resident superior court judge of Wake County
  - Chief Justice appoints other two panel members who must be resident judges from different regions of state
- **Facial challenges**
  - Must be transferred to Wake County
  - Assigned by Wake County Senior Resident to three-judge panel
  - Chief Justice appoints resident superior court judges from different regions to panel and named presiding judge

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## 6. Three-Judge Panels (new law)

- **One process for redistricting & facial challenges**
  - Chief Justice appoints three-judge panel and appoints presiding judge
  - May be resident or special superior court judges
  - No requirement that judges be selected from different judicial divisions
- **Effective for civil actions pending or filed on October 3, 2023**

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## 7. Appeal of Right

- **Appeal of right to NC Supreme Court based on dissenting opinion in Court of Appeals eliminated**

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## 8. Concealed Carry

- **Extended to appellate judges and justices**
- **May carry concealed handgun in a building housing a court of the General Court of Justice**
  - If in building to discharge official duties
  - And judge or justice has concealed handgun permit

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9. New Public Defender Districts (January 1, 2024)

- District 5
- District 7
- District 13 (effective July 1, 2024)
- District 15
- District 17
- District 30
- District 32
- District 43

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10. And More

- New assistant district attorneys
- New magistrates
- Local government authority to supplement salaries expanded
- Dollar amount of criminal cost waivers must be reported

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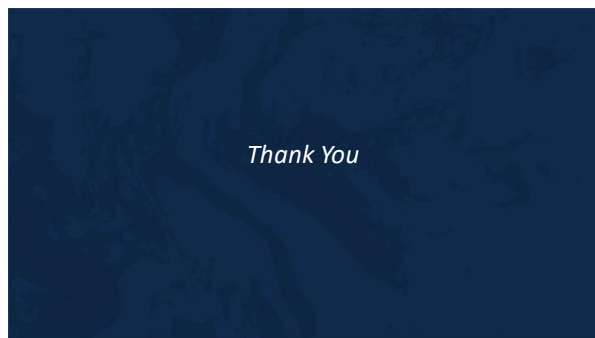
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