SELECTING PROCESS

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SELECTING (AND COMPLETING) PROCESS

John Rubin
UNC School of Government
August 2024

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Is there probable cause that the offense was committed by the person to be charged?

Three Steps

What process, if any, should be issued?

What is the correct charging language for the offenses to be charged?

I. What Is Probable Cause

"The probable-cause standard is incapable of precise definition or quantification into percentages because it deals with probabilities and depends on the totality of the circumstances. We have stated, however, that '[t]he substance of all the definitions of probable cause is a reasonable ground for belief of guilt."



Maryland v. Pringle, 540 U.S. 366 (2003)

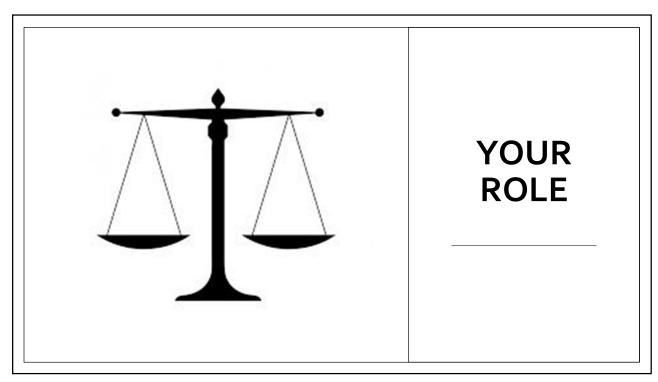
3

More on Probable Cause

"Probable cause to arrest means that at the moment of arrest, the facts and circumstances within the officer's knowledge and of which the officer had reasonably trustworthy information were sufficient to warrant a prudent person in believing that the defendant committed the offense."

Beck v. Ohio, 379 U.S. 89 (1964)

Δ





Credibility

Can you consider credibility?

If so, what factors should you consider?

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Credibility

- Nature of the witness
- Basis of knowledge
- Bias/interest
- Corroboration
- Information provided
- Demeanor?

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What may/should not be considered

Can you consider whether evidence may be excluded or suppressed?

Can you consider defenses? If so, which ones? What if a slam dunk?

Loose Ends about Probable Cause

- What if the complainant isn't asking for the most serious offense the facts support?
- What should you do if you find no PC?

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	Felonies
	School employees. G.S. 15A-301(b1), (b2)
Reasons Not to Charge	Patient abuse. G.S. 14-32.2(g)
to charge	Obscenity offenses. G.S. 14-19.20
	Offenses in other counties

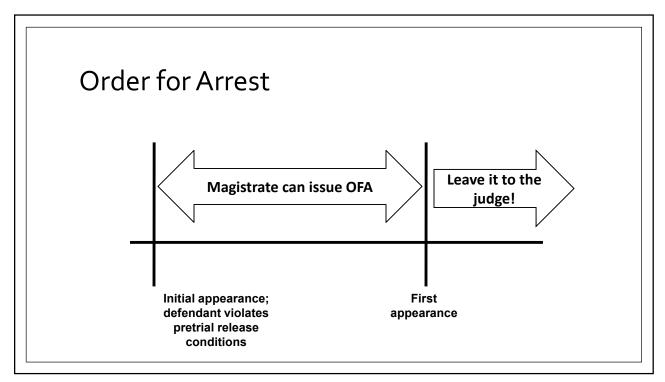
II. Purposes of Criminal Process

- Establishes the court's authority to act
- Compels the defendant to come to court
- Gives the defendant notice of the charge
- Provides a record of the case
 - including enabling the defendant to assert double jeopardy if later charged with the same offense

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Selecting Process: the Options

Process	Citation	Who Issues	What Charges
Citation	G.S. 15A-302	LEO	MDM or infraction
Summons	G.S. 15A-303	Judicial Official	Felony, MDM, or infraction
Arrest Warrant	G.S. 15A-304	Judicial Official	Felony or MDM
Magistrate's Order	G.S. 15A-511(c)	Judicial Official	Felony or MDM
Order for Arrest	G.S. 15A-305	Judicial Official	None



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Selecting Process: Generally

- Unless there is a specific reason to use a warrant, use a summons
- "In order to emphasize the desirability of utilizing the criminal summons when arrest and custody are not needed, [G.S. 15A-304(b)] states the circumstances for the use of a warrant for arrest." G.S. 15A-304, official commentary
- Using a summons means that "the entire machinery of arrest, processing, and bail can be avoided with resultant savings to the system of criminal justice." G.S. 15A-303, official commentary

Selecting Process: When to Use a Warrant

- Factors supporting use of a warrant: G.S. 15A-304(b)
- D "should be taken into custody"
 - "[F]ailure to appear when previously summoned"
 - "[F]acts making it apparent that a person summoned will fail to appear"
 - Risk of flight ("escape")
 - Risk of "injury to person or property"
 - Seriousness of the offense
 - Other factors?

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Selecting Process: Citizen-Initiated

- Stronger preference for a summons: G.S. 15A-304(b)(3)
- You "<u>shall not</u> issue a warrant for arrest and instead <u>shall</u> issue a criminal summons, unless . . ."
 - There is corroborating testimony from an officer or a disinterested witness
 - Having an officer investigate "would constitute a substantial burden for the complainant"
 - There is "substantial evidence" of one of the listed factors justifying issuance of a warrant

Selecting Process: Felonies

- A summons may be used for a felony
 - "The appropriate use of the criminal summons is in <u>any</u> case in which it appears that it is not necessary to arrest the defendant and take him into custody in order to ensure his appearance in court. This should be true in many misdemeanors <u>and a number of felonies</u>." G.S. 15A-303, official commentary.
- What's your local practice?

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III. Creating Process Correctly





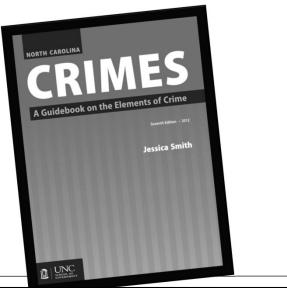
Charging Language

Arrest Warrant & Indictment Forms





Crimes



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Charging Language

General Statutes

§ 14-10. Secret political and military organizations forbidden.

If any person, for the purpose of compassing or furthering any political object, or aiding the success of any political party or organization, or resisting the laws, shall join or in any way connect or unite himself with any oath-bound secret political or military organization, society or association of whatsoever name or character; or shall form or organize or combine and agree with any other person or persons to form or organize any such organization; or as a member of any secret political or military party or organization shall use, or agree to use, any certain signs or grips



School of Government Hotline



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Requirements for Criminal Process (G.S. 15A-

924)

- A criminal pleading must contain:
 (1) The name or other identification of the defendant but the name of the defendant need not be repeated in each count unless required for clarity.
- A separate count addressed to each offense charged, but allegations in one count may be incorporated by reference in another count.
- A statement or cross reference in each count indicating that the offense charged therein was committed in a designated county.
- A statement or cross reference in each count indicating that the offense charged was committed on, or on or about, a designated date, or during a designated period of time. Error as to a date or its omission is not ground for dismissal of the charges or for reversal of a conviction if time was not of the essence with respect to the charge and the error or omission did not mislead the defendant to his prejudice.
- A plain and concise factual statement in each count which, without allegations of an evidentiary nature, asserts facts supporting every element of a criminal offense and the defendant's commission thereof with sufficient precision clearly to apprise the defendant or defendants of the conduct which is the subject of the accusation. When the pleading is a criminal summons, warrant for arrest, or magistrate's order, or statement of charges based thereon, both the statement of the crime and any information showing probable cause which was considered by the judicial official and which has been furnished to the defendant must be used in determining whether the pleading is sufficient to meet the foregoing requirement.
- For each count a citation of any applicable statute, rule, regulation, ordinance, or other provision of law alleged therein to have been violated. Error in the citation or its omission is not ground for dismissal of the charges or for reversal of a conviction.

More Requirements

- Name of victim (when there is one)
- Prior convictions if element of offense
- Feloniously if felony
- Any requirements for particular offense
- And, please do not abb.

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Charging Language: Common Problems

- In larceny cases, failing to allege victim's name and, if a business, that it is an entity capable of owning property
- In larceny cases, failing to describe the property stolen accurately
- In drug cases, failing to identify the controlled substance accurately
- In R/D/O cases, failing to include the specific duty the officer was performing

Loose Ends re Creating Process

- Should you charge greater and lesser included offenses?
- How many charges per process?
- Copies and distribution
- Recall of process

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Selecting Process In Class Exercise Answer Guide

Jeff Welty February 2024

Considering Evidence from Citizens

- 1. Lisa Lopez comes before you. She reports that her boyfriend, Dan Spillane, pushed her to the ground during an argument last night. She says that she did not call the police at the time, but she has decided that what Dan did was not OK. Her story is internally consistent and believable, though she has no visible injuries. You know that Lisa has taken out charges on Dan twice before and has asked that the charges be dropped each time. Is there probable cause to issue a charge? If so, what form of process would you issue?
- 2. Joe Jones comes before you. He says that he and his wife were having burgers and beer for dinner tonight when they saw their neighbor's 22-year-old son run into their yard and steal \$400 worth of their patio furniture. Joe called the police but they are short staffed and said they wouldn't be able to come out anytime soon. The young man has done similar things in the past, and Joe is fed up. Joe's story is clear and consistent and he has the young man's name and address. Is there probable cause to issue a charge? If so, what form of process would you issue?
- 3. Tom Tanker comes before you. He just turned 15 and got a fancy mountain bike for his birthday. He says that he saw Sam Singleton, a 19-year-old from his neighborhood, smash one of the bike's wheels with a baseball bat, causing \$300 worth of damage. Tom has a picture of the damage on his phone. He says that Sam has bullied him before and that Sam may be jealous of Tom because Tom's family is better off financially than Sam's. Is there probable cause to issue a charge? If so, what form of process would you issue?

Considering Defenses

General approach: (1) is there PC, (2) is there a potential defense, (3) what would you do?

- 1. Officer Smith comes before you. She has arrested Jim Anderson and Alex Zimmerman for assaulting one another during a bar fight and has Anderson with her for his initial appearance. She tells you that she responded to a call at the bar and found the two men punching each other. All the witnesses agreed that the fight began when Anderson offered to buy a drink for Zimmerman's girlfriend, and Zimmerman pushed Anderson to the ground and started kicking him. Anderson says "I was just defending myself!" What do you do?
- 2. Felicia Jackson comes before you. She wants you to charge her sister Angela with misdemeanor larceny for stealing Felicia's Olympic silver medal. Felicia tells you that she keeps the medal in a display case in her guest bedroom. Angela came for a three-day visit recently and when she left, the case had been opened and the medal was gone. Felicia says that Angela struggles with mental illness and substance abuse and during one part of the visit claimed to be "Athena reborn, goddess of the Olympics." At other times, she acknowledged that she was Angela. Felicia has no idea what Angela was thinking when she took the medal or whether she even understood that it was wrong to do so. What do you do?
- 3. Tim Tarheel comes before you. He wants you to charge his former friend, Dan Dukes, with assault with a deadly weapon. Tarheel describes an incident that took place four years ago during a cookout.

He says that he and Dukes got into an argument about whether UNC or Duke men's basketball was better. Dukes got frustrated, pulled out a box cutter and held it towards Tarheel, saying "I'll hurt you for talking dirty about my favorite team!" Tarheel was frightened but not injured. He left the cookout and has tried to avoid Dukes since.

However, Tarheel ran into Dukes yesterday at a local restaurant. He says "Dukes gave me the stink eye, and made me worried again." Tarheel is accompanied to see you by his friend Willie Wingman, who was also at the cookout. Wingman tells you a similar story about what happened and he says that what Dukes did back then scared him too.

You know that the statute of limitations generally for misdemeanors in North Carolina is two years. What would you do?

Warrant vs. summons

- 1. There is probable cause that Darlene stole a soccer ball from a neighbor's yard and gave it to her nephew for his birthday. Darlene lives in town, works as a cashier at the local Wal-Mart, and has no criminal record. Would you issue a summons or a warrant?
- 2. There is probable cause that Eric assaulted Zeke after the two got into an argument over a parking space at the grocery store. Eric punched and kicked at Zeke, who received several bruises before another person intervened. Eric lives in town, works as a plumber's apprentice when the plumber has work for him to do, and was charged with simple possession of marijuana 8 years ago but the charge was dismissed. Would you issue a summons or a warrant?
- 3. There is probable cause that Sterling, a 42 year-old businessman who owns multiple fast-food franchises in town, committed "statutory rape of a person 15 or younger by a defendant who is at least 12 years old and at least six years older than the victim" (GS 14-27.25). He had vaginal intercourse with a 14-year-old girl he met when she came to interview him for her school newspaper. Sterling has lived in town his entire life, owns significant property in town, and has no criminal record. Would you issue a summons or a warrant?
- 4. On a hot summer day, an officer saw a panel van stopped along the side of a two-lane highway in your county. He stopped to check on the welfare of any occupants. No one responded to his greeting, so he opened the unlocked front passenger door and looked inside. He immediately spotted a dozen small baggies of cocaine inside a larger Ziploc bag on the floor. No one was present, but the registration listed Krista as the owner. He was able to reach Krista by phone and she confirmed that the van was hers and that she was in the area visiting family. Based on this information, you are prepared to charge Krista with PWIMSD cocaine. She is from New Jersey and told the officer that she was "between jobs." She has two cocaine-related charges, and one conviction resulting in probation, in the New York/New Jersey area. Would you issue a summons or a warrant?

Arrest warrant form treasure hunt

G.S. 15A-924(a) lists six things that a criminal pleading must contain. (Don't worry about G.S. 15A-924(a)(7), as it is only rarely applicable.) Looking at the arrest warrant form, AOC-CR-100, find and mark the spot on the form where each of the items listed in G.S. 15A-924(a) is addressed.

- 1. Name of defendant
- 2. Separate count for each offense
- 3. County where offense committed
- **4.** Date or time period of offense
- 5. "Plain and concise factual statement"/essential elements of each offense
- 6. Statute or ordinance violated

Drafting charging language

In the 2018 legislative session, the General Assembly enacted a new statute, as follows:

General Statute 14-277.7. Communicating a threat of mass violence at a place of religious worship.

- (a) A person who, by any means of communication to any person or groups of persons, threatens to commit an act of mass violence at a place of religious worship is guilty of a Class H felony.
- (b) The following definitions apply to this section:
 - (1) Mass violence. As defined in G.S. 14-277.5(a)(2).
 - (2) Place of religious worship. Any church, chapel, meetinghouse, synagogue, temple, longhouse, or mosque, or other building that is regularly used, and clearly identifiable, as a place for religious worship."

Neither the NCAOC nor the School of Government has drafted charging language for this offense. You want to charge Kevin Denny with a violation of this statute. An officer has shared the following information with you.

Monday night, Denny told his ex-girlfriend Alexis Anderson, "I will blow up your stupid church with all
your stupid friends and family in it. I'm building my bomb now." Further, Anderson has stated that she
attends First Baptist Church of Hometown, NC. She has also stated that she is afraid of Denny and has
seen small explosives he has built in his garage. How should the charge read?

Selecting Process - Page 22

File No.				Law Enfor	cement Case No.		LID No.					
	WARRAN	IT FOR ARREST	Г									
THE		NORTH CAROL		STA	TE OF NOR	TH CAROL	INA .					
Name And Address Of Defendant		7			I		ral Court Of Ju Court Division					
						Co	unty	District	Court Division			
					nguage Court Interpreter s provided for all court pro		, Victim, Or Witne	ess? (If Yes, identii	fy person(s) and lang	uage(s).		
				☐ No	Yes: (explain)	occedings at no cost.)						
						OFFENSE(S	S) (see AOC-Ci	R-100 Continua	ation(s) for chargin	g text)		
				Count No.			Offense				e in Violation of G.S.	Offense Code
Race	Sex	Date Of Birth	Age	140.							71 0.0.	Code
				_								
Name Of Der	endant's Employer											
Date Of Offer	nse			-								
Misdeme Fingerpri	anor Offense Whi	ich Requires Fingerpri	inting Per									
		o. (as shown on fingerpr	rint card)									
Complainant	Name (and addres	ss, if Complainant is an o	officer)									
Witness Infor	mation											
TO ANY	OFFICER WIT	H AUTHORITY AN	ND JURISDICT	TION TO E	XECUTE A WARR	ANT FOR ARRES	ST FOR THE	OFFENSE(S)	CHARGED IN	THIS WAR	RANT:	
					that on or about th set forth above an							
This act(s) was in viola	ation of the law re	ferred to in th	is Warran	t For Arrest. This	Warrant For Arre	st is issued ι	upon informa	tion furnished	under oath	by the comp	
listed. Yo	ou are DIRECT	ED to arrest the o	defendant and	d bring the	defendant before	a judicial officia	l without unn	necessary del	lay to answer th	ne charge(s	s) above.	
Date Issued	Name Of	f Issuing Official		S	ignature			Magistrate	Deputy CSC	Assistant C	SC Clerk O	Superior Court
							[District Court		r Court Judge		
Location Of	Court					Court Date	,		Court Tim	e	ПАМ ПРМ	
				,	WAIVER OF PRO	DRABLE CALLS	E HEADING	<u> </u>			LIAW LIPM	
The unde	rsigned defend	dant, with the cons	ent of his/her		vaives the right to a							
Date Waived		e Of Defendant		, v	Name Of Attor		y.		Signature	Of Attorney		
						(0) -						

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STATE VERSUS	County			
Name Of Defendant Date Of Issuance Of Warrant For Arrest	NOTE: Use this page to set forth the charging text for each offense listed on the AOC-CR-100. G.S. 15A-924(a)		3.S. 15A-924(a)(5).	
		OFFENSES (continued)		
Count 1. Offense:				
Charging Text For This Count				
Count 2. Offense:				
Charging Text For This Count				

STATE VERSUS	County		
Name Of Defendant Date Of Issuance Of Warrant For Arrest	NOTE: Use this page to set forth the charging text for each offense listed on the AOC-CR-100. G.S. 15A-924(a)(5).		
	OFFENSES (continued)		
Count 3. Offense:			
Charging Text For This Count			
Count 4. Offense:			
Charging Text For This Count			

STATE VERSUS	County			
Name Of Defendant Date Of Issuance Of Warrant For Arrest	NOTE: Use this page to set forth the charging text for each offense listed on the AOC-CR-100. G.S. 15A-924(a)		(5).	
		OFFENSES (continued)		
Count 5. Offense:				
Charging Text For This Count				
Count 6. Offense:				
Charging Text For This Count				

STATE VERSUS	County File No.			
Name Of Defendant Date Of Issuance Of Warrant For Arrest	NOTE: Use this page to set forth the charging text for each offense listed on the AOC-CR-100. G.S. 15A-924(a)(5).			
	OFFENSES (continued)			
Count 7. Offense:				
Charging Text For This Count				
Count 8. Offense:				
Charging Text For This Count				

STATE VERSUS	County					
Name Of Defendant Date Of Issuance Of Warrant For Arrest	NOTE: Use this page to set forth the charging text for each offense listed on the AOC-CR-100. G.S. 15A-924(a)(5).					
	OFFENSES (continued)					
Count 9. Offense:						
Charging Text For This Count						
Count 10. Offense:						
Charging Text For This Count						

5	STATE VERSUS		County					
Name Of Defendant			If the Warrant For Arre	st is not served within one I	hundred and eic	htv (180) da	vs. it must be retur	ned to the Clerk of
Date Of Issuance Of W	/arrant For Arrest			which it was issued with the				
			RETU	RN OF SERVICE				
I certify that the	Warrant For Arrest issue	ed in this case on th	e date noted above for t	the defendant named abov	e, was received	d and served	l as follows:	
Date Received		Date Served		Time Served		AM PM	Date Returned	
☐ By arresting	the defendant and bring	ing the defendant b	efore:					
Name Of Judicial Office	ial							
The Warrant	WAS NOT served for th	ne following reason:						
Signature Of Officer M	aking Return			Name Of Officer (type or p	orint)			
Department Or Agency	/ Of Officer			,				
				'ERY/REISSUANCE				
Date	Name Of Clerk (type or print)		Signature Of C	Clerk		Deputy CS	SC Assistant CSC	Clerk Of Superior Court
			RETURN FOLLOWIN	IG REDELIVERY/REISS	UANCE			
<u> </u>	Warrant For Arrest issue		e date noted above for t	the defendant named abov	e, was received			
Date Received		Date Served		Time Served		☐ AM ☐ PM	Date Returned	
☐ By arresting	the defendant and bring	ing the defendant b	efore:					
Name Of Judicial Offic.	ial							
☐ The Warrant	WAS NOT served for th	ne following reason:						
Signature Of Officer M	aking Return			Name Of Officer (type or p	print)			
Department Or Agency	Of Officer			1				

						File No.			
STATE VERSUS		County							
Name Of Defendant Date Of Issuance Of Warrant For Arrest			NOTE: Use this page to enter judgment on a Warrant For Arrest. Use this Judgment page only if imposing a single, consolidated judgment for all offenses of conviction charged under this file number. Do not use this Judgment page to impose sentence: (i) if imposing separate judgments for separate offenses of conviction charged under this file number; (ii) to impose supervised probation; or (iii) for DWI sentences under G.S. 20-179. For DWI, use AOC-CR-342 (active) or AOC-CR-310 (probation). For structured sentencing offenses, use AOC-CR-602						
			(active) or AOC-CR-6		. ,	. ,			
District Attorn	PEV	Distant days	Defendance	JUDGMENT Attorney For Defendant		Appointed		PRIOR CONVICTIONS	
Diotriot / titorii	o y	Def. Denied Appo	They Del. I durid Not indigent	rational residence and		Retained	No./Level:	0 I (0) II (1-4)	
OFFENSES: The following offenses, which are set forth by Count No. in the Warrant For Arrest issued in this case on the date noted above for the defendant named above, are the subject of this Judgment:									
Count 1	PLEA: guilty not guilty	no contest		VERDICT: guilty	not guilty		M.CL.	.: A1 1 2	3
Count 2	PLEA: guilty not guilty	no contest		VERDICT: guilty	not guilty		M.CL.	.:	3
Count 3	PLEA: guilty not guilty	no contest		VERDICT: guilty	not guilty		M.CL	.: A1 1 2	3
Count 4	PLEA: guilty not guilty	no contest		VERDICT: guilty	not guilty		M.CL.	.:	3
Count 5	PLEA: guilty not guilty	no contest		VERDICT: guilty	not guilty		M.CL	.:	3
Count 6	PLEA: guilty not guilty	no contest		VERDICT: guilty	not guilty		M.CL	.:	3
Count 7	PLEA: guilty not guilty	no contest		VERDICT: guilty	not guilty		M.CL.	.:	3
Count 8	PLEA: guilty not guilty	no contest		VERDICT: guilty	not guilty		M.CL.	.:	3
Count 9	PLEA: guilty not guilty	no contest		VERDICT: guilty	not guilty		M.CL.	.:	3
Count 10	PLEA: guilty not guilty	no contest		VERDICT: guilty	not guilty		M.CL.	.:	3

STATE VERSUS	County						
Name Of Defendant	Judgment page to supervised proba	WOTE: Use this Judgment page only if imposing a single, consolidated judgment for all offenses of conviction charged under this file number. Do not use this Judgment page to impose sentence: (i) if imposing separate judgments for separate offenses of conviction charged under this file number; (ii) to impose supervised probation; or (iii) for DWI sentences under G.S. 20-179. For DWI, use AOC-CR-342 (active) or AOC-CR-310 (probation). For structured sentencing offenses, use AOC-CR-602 (active) or AOC-CR-604 (probation).					
	JU	JDGMENT (cor	ntinued)				
JUDGMENT: The defendant appeared in open court and freely, viconviction, if more than one, be consolidated for judgment with Co	oluntarily and understand		ea(s) on Side One.		Side One, it is ORDERE	D that all offense	es of
pay the following fine/penalty and costs: Amount Of Fine/Penalty \$	Costs \$						
be imprisoned for a term of days in custody of the		Other:*			. Pretrial credit	days served.	
Work release is recommended. is not recommended.							
The Court finds that a longer shorter period of p		•	, ,	•			
Execution of the sentence is suspended and the defendant is a 1. commit no criminal offense in any jurisdiction. 2. pos.	placed on unsupervised p	orobation* for	months, subject	to the following conditio	ns:		
3. remain gainfully and suitably employed, or faithfully pur	rsue a course of study or	of vocational trainin	g that will equip the	defendant for suitable	employment and abide	by all rules of the	institution.
4. satisfy child support and family obligations, as required	by the Court. 5. Subm	it to the taking of dig	gitized photographs	, including photographs	of the defendant's face	e, scars, marks, a	nd tattoos,
to be included in the defendant's records. 6. pay to the					1		\neg
	estitution**	Attorney's Fee	Community S	Service Fee Other \$	Total A	lmount Due	
**Name(s), address(es), and amount(s) for aggrieved party(ies Certification Of Identity (Witness Attendance).")		\$	φ		7		
7. complete hours of community service during the 8. not be found in or on the premises of the complainant of 9. not assault, communicate with or be in the presence of 10. provide a DNA sample pursuant to G.S. 15A-266.4. (Add) 11. Other: The Court finds just cause to waive costs as ordered on attach it is ORDERED that this: Judgment is continued upon payment case be consolidated for judgment we will be considered to run at the expiration of COMMITMENT: It is ORDERED that the Clerk deliver two conserve the sentence imposed or until the deliver two conserves the sentence imposed or until the deliver t	or	AOC-CR-618. dgment and Comm	Other: itment to the sheri tions of release pe _, and t	ff and that the sheriff canding appeal.	ause the defendant to	be retained in co	ustody to
		APPEAL ENT	RIES				
The defendant, in open court, gives notice of appeal to the The current pretrial release order is modified as follows:	District Superior	Court.					
Date Name Of District Court Judge Or Magistrate (ty	ype or print)	Signa	ture Of District Court	ludge Or Magistrate			
		CERTIFICAT	ION				
I certify that this Judgment is a true and complete copy of the origin on file in this case.	ginal which is Date		Delivered To Sheriff	Signature		Dep. CSC	Asst. CSC
AOC-CR-100 Judgment, Side Two, Rev. 7/24, © 2024 Adminis	trative Office o	ng Process -	Page 32				