

Article 30.

Probable-Cause Hearing.

§ 15A-611. Probable-cause hearing procedure.

(a) At the probable-cause hearing:

- (1) A prosecutor must represent the State.
- (2) The defendant may be represented by counsel.
- (3) The defendant may testify as a witness in his own behalf and call and examine other witnesses, and produce other evidence in his behalf.
- (4) Each witness must testify under oath or affirmation and is subject to cross-examination.

(b) The State must by nonhearsay evidence, or by evidence that satisfies an exception to the hearsay rule, show that there is probable cause to believe that the offense charged has been committed and that there is probable cause to believe that the defendant committed it, except:

- (1) A report or copy of a report made by a physicist, chemist, firearms identification expert, fingerprint technician, or an expert or technician in some other scientific, professional, or medical field, concerning the results of an examination, comparison, or test performed by him in connection with the case in issue, when stated by such person in a report made by him, is admissible in evidence.
- (2) If there is no serious contest, reliable hearsay is admissible to prove value, ownership of property, possession of property in another than the defendant, lack of consent of the owner, possessor, or custodian of property to its taking or to the breaking or entering of premises, chain of custody, authenticity of signatures, and the existence and text of a particular ordinance or regulation of a governmental unit or agency.

The district court judge is not required to exclude evidence on the ground that it was acquired by unlawful means.

(c) If a defendant appears at a probable-cause hearing without counsel, the judge must determine whether counsel has been waived. If he determines that counsel has been waived, he may proceed without counsel. If he determines that counsel has not been waived, except in a situation covered by G.S. 15A-606(e) he must take appropriate action to secure the defendant's right to counsel.

(d) A probable-cause hearing may not be held if an information in superior court is filed upon waiver of indictment before the date set for the hearing. (1973, c. 1286, s. 1; 1975, c. 166, s. 27.)

§ 15A-612. Disposition of charge on probable-cause hearing.

(a) At the conclusion of a probable-cause hearing the judge must take one of the following actions:

- (1) If he finds that the defendant probably committed the offense charged, or a lesser included offense of such offense within the original jurisdiction of the superior court, he must bind the defendant over to a superior court for further proceedings in accordance with this Chapter. The judge must note his findings in the case records.
- (2) If he finds no probable cause as to the offense charged but probable cause with respect to a lesser included offense within the original jurisdiction of the

district court, he may set the case for trial in the district court in accordance with the terms of G.S. 15A-613. In the absence of a new pleading, the judge may not set a case for trial in the district court on any offense which is not lesser included.

(3) If he finds no probable cause pursuant to subdivisions (1) or (2) as to any charge, he must dismiss the proceedings in question.

(b) No finding made by a judge under this section precludes the State from instituting a subsequent prosecution for the same offense. (1973, c. 1286, s. 1; 1975, c. 166, s. 14.)

§ 15A-613. Setting offense for trial in district court.

If an offense set for trial in the district court under the terms of G.S. 15A-604(b)(4) or any provision of G.S. 15A-612 is a lesser included offense of the charge before the court on a pleading, the judge may:

- (1) Accept a plea of guilty or no contest, with the consent of the prosecutor; or
- (2) Proceed to try the offense immediately, with the consent of both the defendant and the prosecutor.

Otherwise, the judge must enter an appropriate order for subsequent calendaring of the case for trial in the district court. The trial so ordered may not be earlier than five working days nor later than 15 working days from the date of the order. The judge must note in the case records the new offense with which the defendant is charged, has been tried, or to which he entered a plea of guilty or no contest. (1973, c. 1286, s. 1; 1975, c. 166, s. 27.)

§ 15A-614. Review of eligibility for pretrial release.

Upon binding a defendant in custody over to the superior court for trial or upon entering an order for subsequent calendaring of the case of such a defendant for trial in the district court, the judge must again review the eligibility of the defendant for release under Article 26 of this Chapter, Bail. (1973, c. 1286, s. 1.)

§ 15A-615. Testing of certain persons for sexually transmitted infections.

(a) After a finding of probable cause pursuant to the provisions of Article 30 of Chapter 15A of the General Statutes or indictment for an offense that involves nonconsensual vaginal, anal, or oral intercourse; an offense that involves vaginal, anal, or oral intercourse with a child 12 years old or less; or an offense under G.S. 14-202.1 that involves vaginal, anal, or oral intercourse with a child less than 16 years old; the victim or the parent, guardian, or guardian ad litem of a minor victim may request that a defendant be tested for the following sexually transmitted infections:

- (1) Chlamydia;
- (2) Gonorrhea;
- (3) Hepatitis B;
- (3a) Herpes;
- (4) HIV; and
- (5) Syphilis.

In the case of herpes, the defendant, pursuant to the provisions of this section, shall be examined for oral and genital herpetic lesions and, if a suggestive but nondiagnostic lesion is present, a culture for herpes shall be performed.

(b) Upon a request under subsection (a) of this section, the district attorney shall petition

the court on behalf of the victim for an order requiring the defendant to be tested. Upon finding that there is probable cause to believe that the alleged sexual contact involved in the offense would pose a significant risk of transmission of a sexually transmitted infection listed in subsection (a) of this section, the court shall order the defendant to submit to testing for these infections. A defendant ordered to be tested under this section shall be tested not later than 48 hours after the date of the court order. A test for HIV ordered pursuant to this section shall use the HIV-RNA Detection Test for determining HIV infection.

(c) If the defendant is in the custody of the Division of Prisons of the Department of Adult Correction, the defendant shall be tested by the Division of Prisons of the Department of Adult Correction. If the defendant is not in the custody of the Division of Prisons of the Department of Adult Correction, the defendant shall be tested by the local health department. The Division of Prisons of the Department of Adult Correction shall inform the local health director of all test results. The local health director shall ensure that the victim is informed of the results of the tests and counseled appropriately. The agency conducting the tests shall inform the defendant of the results of the tests and ensure that the defendant is counseled appropriately. The results of the tests shall not be admissible as evidence in any criminal proceeding. (1993, c. 489, s. 1; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 8, s. 1; 2006-226, s. 10; 2006-264, s. 33(a); 2007-403, s. 1; 2011-145, s. 19.1(h); 2017-186, s. 2(aaa); 2021-180, s. 19C.9(p).)

§§ 15A-616 through 15A-620. Reserved for future codification purposes.