

Article 12.

Public Administrator.

§ 28A-12-1. Appointment and term.

There shall be a public administrator in every county, appointed by the clerk of superior court, with the written approval of the senior resident superior court judge of the district in which the appointment is made, for a term of four years. (1868-9, c. 113; Code, s. 1389; Rev., s. 18; C.S., s. 17; 1925, c. 253; 1973, c. 1329, s. 3.)

§ 28A-12-2. Oath of office.

The public administrator shall take and subscribe an oath or affirmation in the form provided in G.S. 11-11 for administrators and in the manner provided in G.S. 28A-7-1; and the oath or affirmation so taken and subscribed shall be filed in the office of the clerk of superior court. (1868-9, c. 113, ss. 2, 5; Code, s. 1393; Rev., s. 19; C.S., s. 18; 1973, c. 1329, s. 3.)

§ 28A-12-3. Qualification and bond.

(a) The public administrator shall qualify and give bond with regard to each estate administered by the public administrator as provided in Article 8 of this Chapter, at the expense of such estate.

(b) As an alternative to and in lieu of the bonding requirement provided in subsection (a), the administrator may, in the discretion of the clerk of superior court, enter into a single permanent bond, secured by any of the methods provided in G.S. 28A-8-2(4), payable to the State of North Carolina, conditioned upon the faithful performance of the duties of the administrator's office and obedience to all lawful orders of the clerk of superior court or other court touching the administration of any estate committed to the administrator. The amount of the permanent bond shall be determined by the clerk, based on the total value of all the estates administered by the public administrator, and may be increased or decreased from time to time as the clerk determines is necessary. The expense of the bond shall be borne by the estates administered by the administrator, as determined by the clerk. (1868-9, c. 113, ss. 2, 3, 4; Code, ss. 1390, 1391, 1392; Rev., s. 320; 1915, c. 216; C.S., s. 19; 1941, c. 243; 1973, c. 1329, s. 3; 1979, cc. 111, 726; 2011-344, s. 4.)

§ 28A-12-4. When public administrator shall apply for letters.

The public administrator shall apply for and may, with the approval of the clerk of superior court, obtain letters on the estates of decedents when:

- (1) It is brought to the public administrator's attention that a period of six months has elapsed from the death of any decedent who has died owning property, and no letters testamentary, or letters of administration or collection, have been applied for or issued to any person; or
- (2) Any person without known heirs shall die intestate owning property; or
- (3) Any person entitled to apply for letters of administration shall, in writing, request the clerk to issue letters to the public administrator as provided in G.S. 28A-5-2(c). (1868-9, c. 113, s. 6; Code, s. 1394; Rev., s. 20; C.S., s. 20; 1973, c. 1329, s. 3; 2011-344, s. 4.)

§ 28A-12-5. Powers and duties.

(a) The public administrator shall have, in respect to the several estates in the public administrator's hands, all the rights and powers and shall be subject to all the duties and liabilities of other personal representatives.

(b) After the expiration of the term of office of a public administrator or the public administrator's resignation as public administrator, the public administrator shall continue, subject to the provisions of Articles 9 and 10 of this Chapter, to administer the several estates previously committed to the public administrator until the public administrator has fully administered the same, and the public administrator's bonds shall continue in effect as to all such estates. (1868-9, c. 113, s. 7; 1876-7, c. 239; Code, s. 1395; Rev., s. 21; C.S., s. 21; 1973, c. 1329, s. 3; 2011-344, s. 4.)

§ 28A-12-6. Removal from office.

If letters of administration issued to the public administrator with respect to any estate are subsequently revoked on the grounds that they were obtained by false representation as provided in G.S. 28A-9-1(a)(2), or on the grounds as specified in G.S. 28A-9-1(a)(1), 28A-9-1(a)(3), 28A-9-2(a)(3), 28A-9-2(a)(5), or 28A-9-2(a)(6) or if the public administrator becomes a nonresident of the State, the clerk of superior court shall order the removal of the public administrator from office upon notice and hearing in accordance with Article 2 of this Chapter. (1973, c. 1329, s. 3; 2011-344, s. 4.)

§ 28A-12-7. Procedure after removal from office.

The clerk of superior court shall require of any public administrator who is removed from office pursuant to G.S. 28A-12-6 a complete accounting of all of the public administrator's activities as public administrator and for the property remaining under the public administrator's control by reason of the public administrator's appointment under this Article as administrator of any estate that has not been fully administered at the time of the public administrator's removal. If it appears to the clerk of superior court that grounds exist for revocation of letters of administration issued with respect to any such estate, the clerk shall proceed in accordance with the provisions of Article 9 of this Chapter. If letters of administration are revoked pursuant to such proceedings, the clerk of superior court shall issue letters of administration to the successor public administrator or to some other person not disqualified under G.S. 28A-4-2. (1973, c. 1329, s. 3; 2011-344, s. 4.)

§ 28A-12-8. Compensation.

A public administrator shall be compensated in accordance with Article 23 of this Chapter. (1977, c. 814, s. 5.)