

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2013

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SENATE BILL 182
Judiciary I Committee Substitute Adopted 5/14/13

Short Title: Limit Appeals to Superior Court.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 6, 2013

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO ELIMINATE APPEALS FOR INFRACTIONS, TO MODIFY APPEALS TO
3 THE SUPERIOR COURT IN PROBATION REVOCATIONS IN WHICH THE
4 DEFENDANT HAS WAIVED A HEARING, TO ALLOW FOR AN UNRESTRICTED
5 RESENTENCING HEARING UPON THE REVERSAL OF A SENTENCE ON
6 APPELLATE REVIEW, AND TO RECLASSIFY CERTAIN MISDEMEANORS AS
7 INFRACTIONS.

8 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

9 SECTION 1. G.S. 15A-1115 reads as rewritten:

10 "**§ 15A-1115. ~~Review of disposition by superior court.~~Review of infractions originally**
11 **disposed of in superior court.**

12 (a) ~~Appeal of District Court Decision.~~—A person who denies responsibility and is
13 found responsible for an infraction in the district court, within 10 days of the hearing, may
14 appeal the decision to the criminal division of the superior court for a hearing de novo. Upon
15 appeal, the defendant is entitled to a jury trial unless he consents to have the hearing conducted
16 by the judge. The State must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the person charged is
17 responsible for the infraction unless the person admits responsibility. Unless otherwise
18 provided by law, the procedures applicable to misdemeanors disposed of in the superior court
19 apply to those infraction hearings. In the superior court, a prosecutor must represent the State.
20 Appeal from the judgment in the superior court is as provided for other criminal actions in
21 superior court, and the Attorney General must represent the State in an appeal of such actions.

22 (b) Review of Infractions Originally Disposed of in Superior Court. – If the superior
23 court disposes of an infraction pursuant to its jurisdiction in G.S. 7A-271(d), appeal from that
24 judgment is as provided for criminal actions in the superior court."

25 SECTION 2. G.S. 15A-1347 reads as rewritten:

26 "**§ 15A-1347. Appeal from revocation of probation or imposition of special probation**
27 **upon violation.~~violation; consequences of waiver of hearing.~~**

28 (a) ~~When~~ Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, when a district court
29 judge, as a result of a finding of a violation of probation, activates a sentence or imposes
30 special probation, the defendant may appeal to the superior court for a de novo revocation
31 hearing. At the hearing the probationer has all rights and the court has all authority they have in
32 a revocation hearing held before the superior court in the first instance. Appeals from lower
33 courts to the superior courts from judgments revoking probation may be heard in term or out of
34 term, in the county or out of the county by the resident superior court judge of the district or the
35 superior court judge assigned to hold the courts of the district, or a judge of the superior court
36 commissioned to hold court in the district, or a special superior court judge residing in the



1 district. When the defendant appeals to the superior court because a district court has found he
 2 violated probation and has activated his sentence or imposed special probation, and the superior
 3 court, after a de novo revocation hearing, orders that the defendant continue on probation under
 4 the same or modified conditions, the superior court is considered the court that originally
 5 imposed probation with regard to future revocation proceedings and other purposes of this
 6 Article. When a superior court judge, as a result of a finding of a violation of probation,
 7 activates a sentence or imposes special probation, either in the first instance or upon a de novo
 8 hearing after appeal from a district court, the defendant may appeal under G.S. 7A-27.

9 (b) If a defendant waives a revocation hearing, the finding of a violation of probation,
 10 activation of sentence, or imposition of special probation may not be appealed to the superior
 11 court."

12 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 15A-1335 is repealed.

13 **SECTION 4.** G.S. 20-35 reads as rewritten:

14 "**§ 20-35. Penalties for violating Article; defense to driving without a license.**

15 (a) Penalty. – A—Except as otherwise provided in subsection (a1) of this section, a
 16 violation of this Article is a Class 2 misdemeanor unless a statute in the Article sets a different
 17 punishment for the violation. If a statute in this Article sets a different punishment for a
 18 violation of the Article, the different punishment applies.

19 (a1) A person who does any of the following is responsible for an infraction:

20 (1) Fails to carry a valid license while driving a motor vehicle, in violation of
 21 G.S. 20-7(a).

22 (2) Operates a motor vehicle with an expired license, in violation of
 23 G.S. 20-7(f).

24 (3) Fails to notify the Division of an address change for a drivers license within
 25 60 days after the change occurs, in violation of G.S. 20-7.1.

26 (b) Repealed by Session Laws 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 761, s. 4.

27 (c) Defenses. – A person may not be ~~convicted~~ found responsible for failing to carry
 28 a regular drivers license if, when tried for that offense, the person produces in court a regular
 29 drivers license issued to the person that was valid when the person was charged with the
 30 offense. A person may not be ~~convicted~~ found responsible for driving a motor vehicle
 31 ~~without a regular~~ with an expired drivers license if, when tried for that offense, the person
 32 shows all the following:

33 (1) That, at the time of the offense, the person had an expired license.

34 (2) The person renewed the expired license within 30 days after it expired and
 35 now has a drivers license.

36 (3) The person could not have been charged with driving without a license if the
 37 person had the renewed license when charged with the offense."

38 **SECTION 5.** G.S. 20-176 reads as rewritten:

39 "(a) Violation of a provision of Part 9, 10, 10A, or 11 of this Article is an infraction
 40 unless the violation is specifically declared by law to be a misdemeanor or felony. ~~Violation~~
 41 Except as otherwise provided in subsection (a1) of this section, violation of the remaining Parts
 42 of this Article is a misdemeanor unless the violation is specifically declared by law to be an
 43 infraction or a felony.

44 (a1) A person who does any of the following is responsible for an infraction:

45 (1) Fails to carry the registration card in the vehicle, in violation of
 46 G.S. 20-57(c).

47 (2) Fails to sign the vehicle registration card, in violation of G.S. 20-57(c).

48 (3) Fails to notify the Division of an address change for a vehicle registration
 49 card within 60 days after the change occurs, in violation of G.S. 20-67.

50"

51 **SECTION 6.** G.S. 113-135(a) reads as rewritten:

1 "(a) Any person who violates any provision of this Subchapter or any rule adopted by
2 the Marine Fisheries Commission or the Wildlife Resources Commission, as appropriate,
3 pursuant to the authority of this Subchapter, is guilty of a misdemeanor except that fishing
4 without a license in violation of G.S. 113-174.1(a) or G.S. 113-270.1B(a) is punishable as an
5 infraction and punishment for violation of the rules of the Wildlife Resources Commission is
6 limited as set forth in G.S. 113-135.1. Unless a different level of punishment is elsewhere set
7 out, anyone convicted of a misdemeanor under this section is punishable as follows:

8 (1) For a first conviction, as a Class 3 misdemeanor.

9 (2) For a second or subsequent conviction within three years, as a Class 2
10 misdemeanor."

11 **SECTION 7.** Section 3 of the act becomes effective December 1, 2013, and applies
12 to appeals initiated on or after that date. The remainder of this act becomes effective December
13 1, 2013, and applies to offenses committed on or after that date.