

Article 3.

The Supreme Court.

**§ 7A-10. Organization; compensation of justices.**

(a) The Supreme Court shall consist of a Chief Justice and six associate justices, elected by the qualified voters of the State for terms of eight years. Such election shall be under Article 25 of Chapter 163 of the General Statutes or Article 1A of this Chapter. Before entering upon the duties of the office, each justice shall take an oath of office. Four justices shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of the court. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, sessions of the court shall be held in the city of Raleigh, and scheduled by rule of court so as to discharge expeditiously the court's business. The court may by rule hold sessions not more than twice annually in the Old Chowan County Courthouse (1767) in the Town of Edenton, which is a State-owned court facility that is designated as a National Historic Landmark by the United States Department of the Interior. The court may by rule hold sessions not more than twice annually in the City of Morganton; unless a more suitable site is identified by the court, the court shall meet in the Old Burke County Courthouse, the location of summer sessions of the Supreme Court from 1847-1862.

(b) The Chief Justice and each of the associate justices shall receive the annual salary provided in Current Operations Appropriations Act. Each justice is entitled to reimbursement for travel and subsistence expenses at the rate allowed State employees generally.

(b1) In addition to the reimbursement for travel and subsistence expenses authorized by subsection (b) of this section, and notwithstanding G.S. 138-6, each justice whose permanent residence is at least 50 miles from the City of Raleigh shall also be reimbursed for the mileage the justice travels each trip to the City of Raleigh from the justice's home for business of the court. The reimbursement authorized by this subsection shall be calculated for each justice by multiplying the actual round-trip mileage from that justice's home to the City of Raleigh by a rate-per-mile established by the Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts, but not to exceed the business standard mileage rate set by the Internal Revenue Service. The duty station for any justice of the Supreme Court whose permanent residence is at least 30 miles from the City of Raleigh and outside of Wake County at the time the justice takes office as a justice of the Supreme Court shall be the county seat of the county in which the justice's permanent residence is located at the time of election or appointment to the office of justice of the Supreme Court for the purpose of determining eligibility for mileage reimbursement. If a justice who has previously qualified for mileage reimbursement under this subsection relocates the justice's permanent residence outside of the county of residence used in determining that justice's eligibility for reimbursement under this subsection, that justice shall not be eligible for reimbursement for mileage and the justice's duty station shall be Wake County.

(c) In lieu of merit and other increment raises paid to regular State employees, the Chief Justice and each of the Associate Justices shall receive as longevity pay an annual amount equal to four and eight-tenths percent (4.8%) of the annual salary set forth in the Current Operations Appropriations Act payable monthly after five years of service, nine and six-tenths percent (9.6%) after 10 years of service, fourteen and four-tenths percent (14.4%) after 15 years of service, nineteen and two-tenths percent (19.2%) after 20 years of service, and twenty-four percent (24%) after 25 years of service. "Service" means service as a justice or judge of the General Court of Justice, as a member of the Utilities Commission, or as an administrative law judge. Service shall also mean service as a district attorney or as a clerk of superior court. (1967, c. 108, s. 1; 1983, c. 761, s. 242; 1983 (Reg. Sess., 1984), c. 1034, s. 165; c. 1109, ss. 11, 13.1; 1985, c. 698, s. 10(a); 1997-56, s. 1; 2007-323, ss. 14.21(a), 28.18A(a); 2015-66, s. 2; 2015-89, s. 1; 2017-57, s. 35.4(d); 2021-180, s. 16.18(a).)