

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**  
**SESSION 2003**

**H**

**1**

**HOUSE BILL 1781\***

Short Title: Court Fee Changes.

(Public)

---

Sponsors: Representative Alexander.

---

Referred to: Finance.

---

May 31, 2004

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT TO INCREASE AND ADJUST FEES IN THE GENERAL COURT OF  
JUSTICE.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** G.S. 7A-304(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) In every criminal case in the superior or district court, wherein the defendant is convicted, or enters a plea of guilty or nolo contendere, or when costs are assessed against the prosecuting witness, the following costs shall be assessed and collected, except that when the judgment imposes an active prison sentence, costs shall be assessed and collected only when the judgment specifically so provides, and that no costs may be assessed when a case is dismissed.

(1) For each arrest or personal service of criminal process, including citations and subpoenas, the sum of five dollars (\$5.00), to be remitted to the county wherein the arrest was made or process was served, except that in those cases in which the arrest was made or process served by a law-enforcement officer employed by a municipality, the fee shall be paid to the municipality employing the officer.

(2) For the use of the courtroom and related judicial facilities, the sum of ~~twelve dollars (\$12.00)~~ seventeen dollars (\$17.00) in the district court, including cases before a magistrate, and the sum of ~~thirty dollars (\$30.00)~~ thirty-five dollars (\$35.00) in superior court, to be remitted to the county in which the judgment is rendered. In all cases where the judgment is rendered in facilities provided by a municipality, the facilities fee shall be paid to the municipality. Funds derived from the facilities fees shall be used exclusively by the county or municipality for providing, maintaining, and constructing adequate courtroom and related judicial facilities, including: adequate space and furniture for judges, district attorneys, public defenders and other personnel of the Office of Indigent Defense Services, magistrates, juries, and other

1 court related personnel; computer equipment, software, and supplies  
 2 for data sharing and automation; office space, furniture and vaults for  
 3 the clerk; jail and juvenile detention facilities; free parking for jurors;  
 4 and a law library (including books) if one has heretofore been  
 5 established or if the governing body hereafter decides to establish one.  
 6 In the event the funds derived from the facilities fees exceed what is  
 7 needed for these purposes, the county or municipality may, with the  
 8 approval of the Administrative Officer of the Courts as to the amount,  
 9 use any or all of the excess to retire outstanding indebtedness incurred  
 10 in the construction of the facilities, or to reimburse the county or  
 11 municipality for funds expended in constructing or renovating the  
 12 facilities (without incurring any indebtedness) within a period of two  
 13 years before or after the date a district court is established in such  
 14 county, or to supplement the operations of the General Court of Justice  
 15 in the county.

16 (3) For the retirement and insurance benefits of both State and local  
 17 government law-enforcement officers, the sum of six dollars and  
 18 twenty-five cents (\$6.25), to be remitted to the State Treasurer. Fifty  
 19 cents (50¢) of this sum shall be administered as is provided in Article  
 20 12C of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes. Five dollars and  
 21 seventy-five cents (\$5.75) of this sum shall be administered as is  
 22 provided in Article 12E of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes, with  
 23 one dollar and twenty-five cents (\$1.25) being administered in  
 24 accordance with the provisions of G.S. 143-166.50(e).

25 (3a) For the supplemental pension benefits of sheriffs, the sum of  
 26 seventy-five cents (75¢) to be remitted to the Department of Justice  
 27 and administered under the provisions of Article 12G of Chapter 143  
 28 of the General Statutes.

29 (4) For support of the General Court of Justice, the sum of seventy-six  
 30 dollars (\$76.00) in the district court, including cases before a  
 31 magistrate, and the sum of eighty-three dollars (\$83.00) in the superior  
 32 court, to be remitted to the State Treasurer. For a person convicted of a  
 33 felony in superior court who has made a first appearance in district  
 34 court, both the district court and superior court fees shall be assessed.  
 35 The State Treasurer shall remit ~~the sum of one dollar and five cents~~  
 36 ~~(\$1.05)~~ a portion of each fee collected under this ~~subdivision~~  
 37 subdivision, in an amount equal to that specified in the table below,  
 38 to the North Carolina State Bar for the provision of services described in  
 39 ~~G.S. 7A-474.4.~~G.S. 7A-474.4:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>
<u>January 2002</u>	
<u>Through 2003-2004</u>	<u>\$1.05</u>
<u>2004-2005</u>	<u>2.00</u>
<u>2005-2006</u>	<u>3.00</u>

1                    2006-2007                    4.00  
 2                    2007-2008 and after                    5.00.

3                    (5) For using pretrial release services, the district or superior court judge  
 4 shall, upon conviction, impose a fee of ~~fifteen dollars (\$15.00)~~ thirty  
 5 dollars (\$30.00) to be remitted to the county providing the pretrial  
 6 release services. This cost shall be assessed and collected only if the  
 7 defendant had been accepted and released to the supervision of the  
 8 agency providing the pretrial release services.

9                    (6) For support of the General Court of Justice, for the issuance by the  
 10 clerk of a report to the Division of Motor Vehicles pursuant to  
 11 G.S. 20-24.2, the sum of fifty dollars (\$50.00), to be remitted to the  
 12 State Treasurer. Upon a showing to the court that the defendant failed  
 13 to appear because of an error or omission of a judicial official, a  
 14 prosecutor, or a law-enforcement officer, the court shall waive this fee.

15                    (7) For the services of the State Bureau of Investigation laboratory  
 16 facilities, the district or superior court judge shall, upon conviction,  
 17 order payment of the sum of three hundred dollars (\$300.00) to be  
 18 remitted to the Department of Justice for support of the State Bureau  
 19 of Investigation. This cost shall be assessed only in cases in which, as  
 20 part of the investigation leading to the defendant's conviction, the  
 21 laboratories have performed DNA analysis of the crime, tests of bodily  
 22 fluids of the defendant for the presence of alcohol or controlled  
 23 substances, or analysis of any controlled substance possessed by the  
 24 defendant or the defendant's agent. The court may waive or reduce the  
 25 amount of the payment required by this subdivision upon a finding of  
 26 just cause to grant such a waiver or reduction."

27                    **SECTION 2.** G.S. 7A-305(a) reads as rewritten:

28                    "(a) In every civil action in the superior or district court, except for actions  
 29 brought under Chapter 50B of the General Statutes, the following costs shall be  
 30 assessed:

31                    (1) For the use of the courtroom and related judicial facilities, the sum of  
 32 ~~twelve dollars (\$12.00) in cases heard~~ seventeen dollars (\$17.00) in the  
 33 district court, including cases before a magistrate, and the sum of  
 34 ~~sixteen dollars (\$16.00) in district and~~ thirty-five dollars (\$35.00) in  
 35 the superior court, to be remitted to the county in which the judgment  
 36 is rendered, except that in all cases in which the judgment is rendered  
 37 in facilities provided by a municipality, the facilities fee shall be paid  
 38 to the municipality. Funds derived from the facilities fees shall be used  
 39 in the same manner, for the same purposes, and subject to the same  
 40 restrictions, as facilities fees assessed in criminal actions.

41                    (2) For support of the General Court of Justice, the sum of ~~sixty-nine~~  
 42 ~~dollars (\$69.00)~~ eighty-two dollars (\$82.00) in the superior court, and  
 43 the sum of ~~fifty-four dollars (\$54.00)~~ seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) in  
 44 the district court except that if the case is assigned to a magistrate the

sum shall be forty-three dollars (\$43.00). Sums collected under this subdivision shall be remitted to the State Treasurer. The State Treasurer shall remit ~~the sum of one dollar and five cents (\$1.05)~~ a portion of each fee collected under this ~~subdivision~~ subdivision, in an amount equal to that specified in the table below, to the North Carolina State Bar for the provision of services described in ~~G.S. 7A-474.4.~~ G.S. 7A-474.4:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>
<u>January 2002</u>	
<u>Through 2003-2004</u>	<u>\$1.05</u>
<u>2004-2005</u>	<u>2.00</u>
<u>2005-2006</u>	<u>3.00</u>
<u>2006-2007</u>	<u>4.00</u>
<u>2007-2008 and after</u>	<u>5.00."</u>

**SECTION 3.** G.S. 7A-306(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) In every special proceeding in the superior court, the following costs shall be assessed:

- (1) For the use of the courtroom and related judicial facilities, the sum of ~~ten dollars (\$10.00)~~ seventeen dollars (\$17.00) to be remitted to the county. Funds derived from the facilities fees shall be used in the same manner, for the same purposes, and subject to the same restrictions, as facilities fees assessed in criminal actions.
- (2) For support of the General Court of Justice the sum of ~~thirty dollars (\$30.00).~~ seventy-five dollars (\$75.00). In addition, in proceedings involving land, except boundary disputes, if the fair market value of the land involved is over one hundred dollars (\$100.00), there shall be an additional sum of thirty cents (30¢) per one hundred dollars (\$100.00) of value, or major fraction thereof, not to exceed a maximum additional sum of two hundred dollars (\$200.00). Fair market value is determined by the sale price if there is a sale, the appraiser's valuation if there is no sale, or the appraised value from the property tax records if there is neither a sale nor an appraiser's valuation. Sums collected under this subdivision shall be remitted to the State Treasurer. The State Treasurer shall remit ~~the sum of one dollar and five cents (\$1.05)~~ a portion of each thirty-dollar (\$30.00) General Court of Justice fee collected under this ~~subdivision~~ subdivision, in an amount equal to that specified in the table below, to the North Carolina State Bar for the provision of services described in ~~G.S. 7A-474.4.~~ G.S. 7A-474.4:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>
<u>January 2002</u>	
<u>Through 2003-2004</u>	<u>\$1.05</u>
<u>2004-2005</u>	<u>2.00</u>
<u>2005-2006</u>	<u>3.00</u>

1                            2006-2007                            4.00  
 2                            2007-2008 and after                            5.00."

3                    **SECTION 4.** G.S. 7A-307(a) reads as rewritten:

4            "(a) In the administration of the estates of decedents, minors, incompetents, of  
 5 missing persons, and of trusts under wills and under powers of attorney, in trust  
 6 proceedings under G.S. 36A-23.1, and in collections of personal property by affidavit,  
 7 the following costs shall be assessed:

8            (1) For the use of the courtroom and related judicial facilities, the sum of  
 9 ~~ten dollars (\$10.00)~~, seventeen dollars (\$17.00), to be remitted to the  
 10 county. Funds derived from the facilities fees shall be used in the same  
 11 manner, for the same purposes, and subject to the same restrictions, as  
 12 facilities fees assessed in criminal actions.

13            (2) For support of the General Court of Justice, the sum of ~~thirty dollars~~  
 14 ~~(\$30.00)~~, seventy-five dollars (\$75.00), plus an additional forty cents  
 15 (40¢) per one hundred dollars (\$100.00), or major fraction thereof, of  
 16 the gross estate, not to exceed three thousand dollars (\$3,000). Gross  
 17 estate shall include the fair market value of all personalty when  
 18 received, and all proceeds from the sale of realty coming into the  
 19 hands of the fiduciary, but shall not include the value of realty. In  
 20 collections of personal property by affidavit, the fee based on the gross  
 21 estate shall be computed from the information in the final affidavit of  
 22 collection made pursuant to G.S. 28A-25-3 and shall be paid when that  
 23 affidavit is filed. In all other cases, this fee shall be computed from the  
 24 information reported in the inventory and shall be paid when the  
 25 inventory is filed with the clerk. If additional gross estate, including  
 26 income, comes into the hands of the fiduciary after the filing of the  
 27 inventory, the fee for such additional value shall be assessed and paid  
 28 upon the filing of any account or report disclosing such additional  
 29 value. For each filing the minimum fee shall be fifteen dollars  
 30 (\$15.00). Sums collected under this subdivision shall be remitted to the  
 31 State Treasurer. The State Treasurer shall remit the ~~sum of one dollar~~  
 32 ~~and five cents (\$1.05)~~ a portion of each ~~thirty dollar (\$30.00)~~  
 33 ~~seventy-five-dollar (\$75.00)~~ General Court of Justice fee collected  
 34 under this subdivision, in an amount equal to that specified  
 35 in the table below, to the North Carolina State Bar for the provision of  
 36 services described in ~~G.S. 7A-474.4~~. G.S. 7A-474.4:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>
<u>January 2002</u>	
<u>Through 2003-2004</u>	<u>\$1.05</u>
<u>2004-2005</u>	<u>2.00</u>
<u>2005-2006</u>	<u>3.00</u>
<u>2006-2007</u>	<u>4.00</u>
<u>2007-2008 and after</u>	<u>5.00.</u>

1           (2a) Notwithstanding subdivision (2) of this subsection, the fee of forty  
2           cents (40¢) per one hundred dollars (\$100.00), or major fraction, of the  
3           gross estate, not to exceed three thousand dollars (\$3,000), shall not be  
4           assessed on personalty received by a trust under a will when the estate  
5           of the decedent was administered under Chapters 28 or 28A of the  
6           General Statutes. Instead, a fee of twenty dollars (\$20.00) shall be  
7           assessed on the filing of each annual and final account.

8           (2b) Notwithstanding subdivisions (1) and (2) of this subsection, no costs  
9           shall be assessed when the estate is administered or settled pursuant to  
10          G.S. 28A-25-6.

11          (2c) Notwithstanding subdivision (2) of this subsection, the fee of forty  
12          cents (40¢) per one hundred dollars (\$100.00), or major fraction, of the  
13          gross estate shall not be assessed on the gross estate of a trust that is  
14          the subject of a proceeding under G.S. 36A-23.1 if there is no  
15          requirement in the trust that accountings be filed with the clerk.

16          (3) For probate of a will without qualification of a personal representative,  
17          the clerk shall assess a facilities fee as provided in subdivision (1) of  
18          this subsection and shall assess for support of the General Court of  
19          Justice, the sum of twenty dollars (\$20.00)."

20          **SECTION 5.** Section 1 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2004, and  
21          applies to all costs assessed or collected on or after that date, except that in  
22          misdemeanor or infraction cases disposed of on or after that date by written appearance,  
23          waiver of trial or hearing, and plea of guilt or admission of responsibility pursuant to  
24          G.S. 7A-180(4) or G.S. 7A-273(2), in which the citation or other criminal process was  
25          issued before that date, the cost shall be the lesser of those specified in G.S. 7A-304(a),  
26          as amended by Section 1 of this act, or those specified in the notice portion of the  
27          defendant's or respondent's copy of the citation or other criminal process, if any costs  
28          are specified in that notice. The remainder of this act becomes effective July 1, 2004,  
29          and applies to fees assessed or collected on or after that date.