

A SPECIAL MESSAGE *from*
CHIEF JUSTICE CHERI BEASLEY
SUPREME COURT OF NORTH CAROLINA

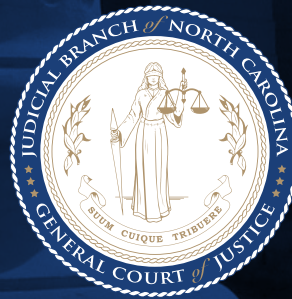


“The North Carolina Constitution, like the federal constitution, provides for three separate but equal branches of state government: the legislative, the executive, and the judicial. North Carolina’s Judicial Branch is headed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court who is responsible for overseeing the functioning of our unified, statewide court system.

The General Court of Justice is comprised of more than 100 county courthouses, two appellate courts, and the Administrative Office of the Courts — the state agency that handles the operations for the Judicial Branch. I’m excited to lead our Judicial Branch and the nearly 7,000 dedicated public servants who keep our court system running smoothly.

Our courts handle more than three million cases each year; cases that help keep our citizens safe, our economy vibrant, and our rights and liberties secure. We each have a vested interest in the strength and integrity of our courts. I am so proud of the wonderful work we are doing to ensure that we provide a fair, independent, and accessible forum for every North Carolinian.”

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WITHIN NORTH CAROLINA'S
JUDICIAL BRANCH OF
STATE GOVERNMENT



1966-2016

UNIFIED COURTS

The North Carolina Constitution establishes the Judicial Branch as a distinctively separate and co-equal branch of state government with the legislative and executive branches. North Carolina's court system, called the General Court of Justice, is a state operated and state-funded unified court system.



1967-2017

COURT OF APPEALS

The Court of Appeals is the state's intermediate appellate court that decides questions of law in cases appealed from superior and district courts and from some administrative agencies of the executive branch.



1966-2016

NCAOC

The 1962 amendment of the State Constitution that created the current Judicial Branch also establishes the North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts (NCAOC) to manage this third branch of government.



1777-2017

SUPERIOR COURT

All felony criminal cases, civil cases involving more than \$25,000, and misdemeanor and infraction appeals from district court are tried in superior court. Business court is a specialized forum that hears cases involving complex and significant issues of corporate and commercial law.



1966-2016

DISTRICT COURT

District courts hear cases involving civil, criminal, and juvenile matters, as well as appeals from the magistrate. Like superior court, district court sits in the county seat of each county. It may also sit in certain other cities and towns specifically authorized by the General Assembly.



1819-2019

SUPREME COURT

The Supreme Court of North Carolina is the state's highest court, and there is no further appeal in the state from its decisions. The Court hears appeals of the decisions from the other divisions of the General Court of Justice as well as appeals of the decisions of some other state agencies.

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