

RULES OF CONTINUING JUDICIAL EDUCATION



CODIFIED BY THE OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE
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Rules of Continuing Judicial Education

Rule 1. Coverage

These rules are applicable only to North Carolina District Court, Superior Court, and Court of Appeals Judges and to the Chief Justice and Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of North Carolina, including retired judges and justices qualified as emergency or recalled judges or justices.

Upon leaving judicial service, a judge or justice shall be bound by the rules of the Supreme Court of North Carolina for continuing legal education of members of the Bar.

Continuing legal education hours earned prior to entering judicial service and judicial education hours earned prior to leaving judicial service shall be recognized and accepted on a pro rata basis by the appropriate accrediting and reporting agency.

History Note.

372 N.C. 964.

Rule 2. Requirements

A. Every judge in the trial division shall, within the first year after appointment or election, attend a course of instruction or orientation for new judges provided by the Administrative Office of the Courts. Attendance will be counted as a part of the hours of instruction required for the biennium in which the instruction is received.

B. Each judge and justice of the trial and appellate division shall attend at least thirty (30) hours of instruction in one or more approved continuing legal or judicial education programs in each biennium, effective with the biennium beginning 1 July 1989 and ending 30 June 1991.

C. At least fifteen (15) of the thirty (30) hours required shall be continuing judicial education courses designed especially for judges and attended exclusively or primarily by judges. All Superior Court Judges are expected to attend the scheduled Superior Court Judges Conferences and the programs there presented. All District Court Judges are expected to attend the scheduled District Court Judges Conferences and the programs there presented.

For District Court Judges designated as Family Court Judges, at least twenty-four (24) of the thirty (30) hours shall be continuing judicial education courses designed especially for Family Court.

D. Judges participating as teachers, lecturers, discussion leaders, or panelists in an approved continuing judicial or legal education program shall receive five hours credit for each hour of actual presentation time. Presentation of the same

material on subsequent occasions shall accrue credit for the actual time of presentation only.

E. Continuing judicial education hours shall be computed by the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{SUM OF THE TOTAL MINUTES OF ACTUAL INSTRUCTION}}{60} = \text{TOTAL HOURS}$$

The instruction may be in no less than fifteen (15) minute segments. Only actual instruction shall be included in computing the total hours of instruction. The following shall not be included: introductory remarks, breaks, business meetings, keynote speeches, and speeches in connection with meals.

Except as otherwise provided in this subsection E and the preceding subsection D, computation for credit of continuing legal education courses shall be computed in accordance with Regulation 5 of the Board of Continuing Legal Education of the North Carolina State Bar.

History Note.

[372 N.C. 964](#); [356 N.C. 705](#); [358 N.C. 744](#); [Order Dated 14 May 2020](#).

Editor’s Note.

References in the Rules of Continuing Judicial Education to outside sources of law have not been updated in this codification.

Rule 3. Accredited Sponsors

A. Continuing legal education programs offered by the Conference of Superior Court Judges or the Conference of District Court Judges or others offered to judges by the Administrative Office of the Courts or the Institute of Government of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill are approved for credit as continuing judicial education under these rules.

B. All continuing legal education programs approved by the Board of Continuing Legal Education of the North Carolina State Bar are approved for credit as continuing legal education under these rules.

C. Programs offered for judges by any law school accredited by the American Bar Association and the following national providers of judicial education are approved for credit as continuing judicial education under these rules:

1. National Judicial College
2. American Academy of Judicial Education
3. National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
4. American Bar Association

5. Institute for Court Management of the National Center for State Courts
6. Institute of Judicial Administration
7. National Institute of Justice
8. American Judges Association

D. Postgraduate law degree programs conducted by a law school accredited by the American Bar Association.

E. Any program not approved under A, B, C, or D above may be approved by the Chief Justice upon application by a judge who has attended or desires to attend the program. To be approved, a program must meet the following standards:

1. It must be an organized program of learning which contributes directly to the professional competency of a judge.
2. It must deal primarily with matter directly related to law or related fields or to the professional responsibility, administrative duties, or ethical obligations of a judge.
3. Instructors in the program must be qualified by practical or academic experience to teach in the topic or area of discipline covered by the course.
4. Thorough, high quality, written topic materials and/or outlines must be distributed to judges attending the program.

History Note.

372 N.C. 964.

Rule 4. Reporting

A. The Administrative Office of the Courts is designated as the office in which all records, reports, and documents pertaining to continuing judicial education shall be filed and compiled.

B. Each judge must report in writing to the Administrative Office of the Courts, no later than July 31 following the end of each year of an educational biennium, the continuing education programs he has attended. Reports may be made sooner after attendance, and the Administrative Office of the Courts will maintain a cumulative record of such reports for the submitting judges. One year after the beginning of each educational biennium, the Administrative Office of the Courts shall notify all judges and justices subject to these rules that reports are required and that they are due by the following July 31. If a program is other than a continuing judicial education program offered by the Conference of Superior Court Judges, the Conference of District Court Judges, or the Administrative Office of the Courts or the Institute of Government, the judge must attach a copy of the program brochure or

other material which outlines the program presentation and identifies the instructors, unless the program is certified as having previously received approval of the Chief Justice, pursuant to Rule 3(E). Forms for the report will be provided by the Administrative Office of the Courts.

C. As soon as practical after August 1 of the second year of each educational biennium, the Administrative Office of the Courts shall notify any judge or justice in writing of his or her delinquency. Any such delinquent judge or justice shall have sixty (60) days within which to comply with the requirements of these rules and notify the Administrative Office of the Courts of his or her compliance.

D. The Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts shall report to the Chief Justice the name of any judge or justice who does not meet the continuing judicial education requirements specified in these rules or who has not filed a timely report of his or her continuing judicial education activities, and the Chief Justice shall make such inquiry or investigation and take such action as he deems appropriate.

History Note.

372 N.C. 964.

Editor's Note.

The cross-reference to Rule 3(E) in subsection B of this rule reads "pursuant to Section III.E" in the Supreme Court's original order. The cross-reference has been changed in this codification to "pursuant to Rule 3(E)" for ease of reading.

Rule 5. Exemptions

The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court shall have the authority to relieve any judge or justice of the requirement of meeting the minimum hours required by these rules for undue hardship by reason of disability or other cause.

History Note.

372 N.C. 964.

Rule 6. Expenses

The Administrative Office of the Courts shall fund the regular judicial conferences of the Judges of the Superior and District Court divisions and shall ensure that a sufficient number of hours of instructional material are provided to permit the judges of the trial division regularly attending the conferences to satisfy the requirements of this Order and shall provide reimbursement for expenses incurred in attending the conferences in accordance with its regular policies and practices.

For Judges and Justices of the Appellate Division, the Administrative Office of the Courts shall ensure the availability of a sufficient number of hours of instruction

to satisfy the requirements of the Order either by providing and funding Appellate Court conferences or providing funding for alternative methods of satisfying such requirements in accordance with its regular policies and practices.

Judges and Justices attending continuing judicial education programs other than those presented at judicial conferences shall be reimbursed for their expenses in accordance with policies and practices established by the Administrative Office of the Courts, subject to the availability of funds.

Priority in allocation of funds by the Administrative Office of the Courts will be given to the regular judicial conferences of the Superior Court and District Court divisions and to other continuing judicial education programs sponsored or co-sponsored by the Administrative Office of the Courts.

History Note.

372 N.C. 964.

A Publication Record of the Rules of Continuing Judicial Education



Reporter Volume	Page(s)	Rules Affected	Key Dates*
372 N.C.	964–70	Complete Rule Set	Adopted 24 October 1988
356 N.C.	705	Rule 2	Adopted 15 August 2002
358 N.C.	744	Rule 2	Adopted 5 February 2004

* The type of date provided for each published entry (e.g., “Adopted,” “Effective,” “Ordered”) reflects the information that was preserved in the North Carolina Reports.

Current Slip Orders	Rules Affected	Key Dates
Order Dated 14 May 2020	Rule 2**	Ordered 14 May 2020

** Order granted emergency relief in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Rules of Continuing Judicial Education – Codified 26 August 2020



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