

Article 26.

Additional Powers of District Court Judges and Magistrates.

**§ 7A-291. Additional powers of district court judges.**

In addition to the jurisdiction and powers assigned in this Chapter, a district court judge has the following powers:

- (1) To administer oaths;
- (2) To punish for contempt;
- (3) To compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of evidence;
- (4) To set bail;
- (5) To issue arrest warrants valid throughout the State, and search warrants valid throughout the district of issue; and
- (6) To issue all process and orders necessary or proper in the exercise of his powers and authority, and to effectuate his lawful judgments and decrees. (1965, c. 310, s. 1; 1969, c. 1190, s. 27; 1973, c. 1286, s. 11.)

**§ 7A-292. Additional powers of magistrates.**

(a) In addition to the jurisdiction and powers assigned in this Chapter to the magistrate in civil and criminal actions, each magistrate has the following additional powers:

- (1) To administer oaths.
- (2) To punish for direct criminal contempt subject to the limitations contained in Chapter 5A of the General Statutes of North Carolina.
- (3) When authorized by the chief district judge, to take depositions and examinations before trial.
- (4) To issue subpoenas and capiases valid throughout the county.
- (5) To take affidavits for the verification of pleadings.
- (6) To issue writs of habeas corpus ad testificandum, as provided in G.S. 17-41.
- (7) To assign a year's allowance to the surviving spouse and a child's allowance to the children as provided in Chapter 30, Article 4, of the General Statutes.
- (8) To take acknowledgments of instruments, as provided in G.S. 47-1.
- (9) To perform the marriage ceremony, as provided in G.S. 51-1.
- (10) To take acknowledgment of a written contract or separation agreement between husband and wife.
- (11) Repealed by Session Laws 1973, c. 503, s. 9.
- (12) To assess contribution for damages or for work done on a dam, canal, or ditch, as provided in G.S. 156-15.
- (13) Repealed by Session Laws 1973, c. 503, s. 9.
- (14) To accept the filing of complaints and to issue summons pursuant to Article 4 of Chapter 42A of the General Statutes in expedited eviction proceedings when the office of the clerk of superior court is closed.
- (15) When authorized by the chief district judge, as permitted in G.S. 7A-146(11), to provide for appointment of counsel and acceptance of waivers of counsel pursuant to Article 36 of this Chapter.
- (16) To appoint an umpire to determine motor vehicle liability policy diminution in value, as provided in G.S. 20-279.21(d1).

(b) The authority granted to magistrates under G.S. 51-1 and subdivision (a)(9) of this section is a responsibility given collectively to the magistrates in a county and is not a duty

imposed upon each individual magistrate. The chief district court judge shall ensure that marriages before a magistrate are available to be performed at least a total of 10 hours per week, over at least three business days per week. (1965, c. 310, s. 1; 1967, c. 691, s. 25; 1971, c. 377, s. 17; 1973, c. 503, s. 9; 1977, c. 375, s. 4; 1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1080, s. 6; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 4, s. 4; 1999-420, s. 4; 1999-456, s. 9(a), (b); 2009-419, s. 1; 2009-440, s. 2; 2009-566, s. 28; 2009-570, s. 48.2; 2015-75, s. 4; 2015-247, s. 3(b).)

**§ 7A-293. Special authority of a magistrate assigned to a municipality located in more than one county of a district court district.**

A magistrate assigned to an incorporated municipality, the boundaries of which lie in more than one county of a district court district, may, in criminal matters, exercise the powers granted by G.S. 7A-273 as if the corporate limits plus the territory embraced within a distance of one mile in all directions therefrom were located wholly within the magistrate's county of appointment. Appeals from a magistrate exercising the authority granted by this section shall be taken in the district court in the county in which the offense was committed. A magistrate exercising the special authority granted by this section shall transmit all records, reports, and monies collected to the clerk of the superior court of the county in which the offense was committed. In addition, if a magistrate is assigned to an incorporated municipality, the boundaries of which lie in two or more district court districts, the magistrate may exercise the powers described in this section as if the counties were in the same district court district, if the clerks of superior court and the chief district court judges serving the districts in which the municipality is located agree in writing that the exercise of this special authority would promote the administration of justice in the municipality and in the districts. However, if a magistrate is assigned to an incorporated municipality, the boundaries of which lie in four or more counties, each of which is in a separate district court district, the magistrate may exercise the powers described in this section as if all the counties were in the same district court district, without the necessity of such an agreement between the clerks and judges of the affected counties, and the records, reports, and monies collected in connection with the exercise of that authority shall be transmitted to the clerk of the superior court district for the county in which the offense was committed. (1967, c. 691, s. 26; 1989, c. 795, s. 23(c1); 2009-398, s. 2; 2022-47, s. 5(f).)

**§ 7A-294:** Reserved for future codification purposes.

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