

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

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HOUSE BILL 953
Committee Substitute Favorable 5/6/25

Short Title: Study Committee on ADA/APD/PAC Pay. (Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 14, 2025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE STUDY COMMITTEE ON ASSISTANT DISTRICT
ATTORNEY, ASSISTANT PUBLIC DEFENDER, AND PRIVATE ASSIGNED
COUNSEL PAY RATES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Committee Established. – There is established the Study Committee on Assistant District Attorney, Assistant Public Defender, and Private Assigned Counsel Pay Rates (Committee). The Committee shall include 12 voting members, as follows:

- (1) Two members of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
- (2) Two members of the Senate, appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.
- (3) The Executive Director of the Conference of District Attorneys or the Executive Director's designee.
- (4) One member appointed by the Conference of District Attorneys.
- (5) The Executive Director of Indigent Defense Services or the Executive Director's designee.
- (6) One member appointed by the Office of Indigent Defense Services.
- (7) Two members of the State Bar that practice criminal law, appointed by the North Carolina Bar Association.
- (8) Two members of the State Bar that practice criminal law, appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

SECTION 2. Cochairs. – The President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall each designate a cochair from their appointees.

SECTION 3. Vacancies. – A vacancy on the Committee shall be filled by the original appointing authority using the criteria for the prior appointment.

SECTION 4. Duties. – The Committee shall serve as a study and advisory committee on the pay rates of assistant district attorneys, assistant public defenders, and private assigned counsel. Pursuant to this work, the Committee shall study, at a minimum, each of the following:

- (1) The current state of assistant district attorney, assistant public defender, and private assigned counsel pay throughout the State, in general, and when separated into the three cost-of-living categories of urban, suburban, and rural.
- (2) The current pay structure for assistant district attorneys, assistant public defenders, and private assigned counsel.



- (3) The comparison between North Carolina's pay and pay structures studied pursuant to subdivisions (1) and (2) of this section and the pay and pay structures of comparable positions in neighboring and nearby states.
- (4) The differences in cost of living, availability of housing, and other associated costs in various cities, counties, and regions of the State.
- (5) Factors that positively or negatively influence law students and attorneys regarding the choice to serve as assistant district attorneys, assistant public defenders, or private assigned counsel, including, at a minimum, the following factors:
 - a. Local amenities.
 - b. Local school quality.
 - c. Economic development opportunities.
- (6) The structured pay model utilized by the Offices of the United States Attorneys.
- (7) The structured pay and amenity allowances utilized by the United States Armed Services.
- (8) Any other subject the Committee finds relevant to its work.

SECTION 5. Administration. – The Committee shall meet upon the call of its cochaIRS, and a quorum of the Committee shall be a majority of its voting members. Members of the Committee shall receive per diem and necessary travel and subsistence expenses in accordance with G.S. 120-3.1, 138-5, and 138-6, as applicable. The Committee may meet in the Legislative Building or the Legislative Office Building. The Legislative Services Officer shall assign professional and clerical staff and provide other necessary resources to assist the Committee in its work.

SECTION 6. Reporting. – No later than March 1, 2026, in an interim report, and March 1, 2027, in a final report, the Committee shall report to the following entities regarding the information studied pursuant to this act, including any related findings and legislative recommendations:

- (1) The Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety.
- (2) The Senate Appropriations Committee on Justice and Public Safety.
- (3) The House Appropriations Committee on Justice and Public Safety.

SECTION 7. This act is effective when it becomes law.