

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

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SENATE BILL 836

Short Title: Domestic Violence Divorce Reform Act. (Public)

Sponsors: Senator Bradley (Primary Sponsor).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

April 28, 2026

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO AMEND SEPARATION LAWS FOR ABSOLUTE DIVORCE AND TO
3 ABOLISH THE COMMON LAW CIVIL ACTIONS OF ALIENATION OF AFFECTION
4 AND CRIMINAL CONVERSATION.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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7 **PART I. SEPARATION LAW REVISIONS**

8 **SECTION 1.(a)** G.S. 50-6 reads as rewritten:

9 "**§ 50-6. Divorce after separation of ~~one year~~ six months on application of either party.**

10 (a) Marriages may be dissolved and the parties thereto divorced from the bonds of
11 matrimony on the application of either party, if and when the ~~husband and wife~~ spouses have
12 lived separate and apart for ~~one year~~, six months, except as provided in subsections (b) and (c)
13 of this section, and the plaintiff or defendant in the suit for divorce has resided in the State for a
14 period of six months.

15 (b) The six-month period of separation may be waived upon agreement of both parties if
16 the divorce is uncontested and does not involve minor children.

17 (c) If a person in the marriage is a victim of domestic violence, as defined under
18 G.S. 50B-1, and the person's spouse by marriage is responsible for committing that act of
19 domestic violence, the person who is the victim of domestic violence may seek a divorce without
20 having to meet the six-month period of separation. In making application for divorce pursuant to
21 this subsection, the application shall contain each of the following:

22 (1) A statement by the applicant that the applicant is a victim of domestic
23 violence.

24 (2) Evidence that the applicant is a victim of domestic violence, which evidence
25 shall include at least two of the following:

26 a. Law enforcement, court, or other federal or State agency records or
27 files.

28 b. Documentation from a domestic violence program, if the applicant is
29 alleged to be the victim of domestic violence.

30 c. Documentation from a medical or other professional from whom the
31 applicant has sought assistance in dealing with the alleged domestic
32 violence.

33 (d) A divorce under this section shall not be barred to either party by any defense or plea
34 based upon any provision of G.S. 50-7, a plea of res judicata, or a plea of recrimination.
35 Notwithstanding the provisions of G.S. 50-11, or of the common law, a divorce under this section



1 shall not affect the rights of a dependent spouse with respect to alimony which have been asserted
2 in the action or any other pending action.

3 (e) Whether there has been a resumption of marital relations during the period of
4 separation shall be determined pursuant to G.S. 52-10.2. Isolated incidents of sexual intercourse
5 between the parties or cohabitation for financial reasons shall not toll the statutory period required
6 for divorce predicated on separation of ~~one year-six months~~."

7 **SECTION 1.(b)** G.S. 50-8 reads as rewritten:

8 "**§ 50-8. Contents of complaint; verification; venue and service in action by nonresident;
9 certain divorces validated.**

10 In all actions for divorce the complaint shall be verified in accordance with the provisions of
11 Rule 11 of the Rules of Civil Procedure and G.S. 1-148. The plaintiff shall set forth in his or her
12 complaint that the complainant or defendant has been a resident of the State of North Carolina
13 for at least six months next preceding the filing of the complaint, and that the facts set forth
14 therein as grounds for divorce, except in actions for divorce from bed and board, have existed to
15 his or her knowledge for at least six months prior to the filing of the complaint: Provided,
16 however, that if the cause for divorce is ~~one year-six month~~ separation, then it shall not be
17 necessary to allege in the complaint that the grounds for divorce have existed for at least six
18 months prior to the filing of the complaint; it being the purpose of this proviso to permit a divorce
19 after such separation of ~~one year-six months~~ without awaiting an additional six months for filing
20 the complaint: Provided, further, that if the complainant is a nonresident of the State action shall
21 be brought in the county of the defendant's residence, and summons served upon the defendant
22 personally or service of summons accepted by the defendant personally in the manner provided
23 in G.S. 1A-1, Rule 4(j)(1). Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, any suit or action
24 for divorce heretofore instituted by a nonresident of this State in which the defendant was
25 personally served with summons or in which the defendant personally accepted service of the
26 summons and the case was tried and final judgment entered in a court of this State in a county
27 other than the county of the defendant's residence, is hereby validated and declared to be legal
28 and proper, the same as if the suit or action for divorce had been brought in the county of the
29 defendant's residence.

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31 **SECTION 1.(c)** This section does not affect cases pending when this act becomes
32 law.

33 **PART II. ABOLISH ALIENATION OF AFFECTION/CRIMINAL CONVERSATION**

34 **SECTION 2.(a)** G.S. 52-13 is repealed.

35 **SECTION 2.(b)** Chapter 52 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new
36 section to read:

37 **"§ 52-14. Abolish causes of action for alienation of affection; criminal conversation.**

38 The common-law causes of action for alienation of affection and criminal conversation are
39 abolished."

40 **SECTION 2.(c)** This section does not affect cases pending when this act becomes
41 law.

42 **PART III. APPROPRIATION**

43 **SECTION 3.** Effective July 1, 2026, there is appropriated from the General Fund to
44 the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Health Benefits, the sum of three
45 million dollars (\$3,000,000) in nonrecurring funds for the 2026-2027 fiscal year to be used to
46 expand education programs related to the NC Medicaid Family Planning Program, also known
47 as the "Be Smart" program. These funds shall provide a State match for three million dollars
48 (\$3,000,000) in nonrecurring federal funds for the 2026-2027 fiscal year, and those federal funds
49 are appropriated to the Division of Health Benefits to be used for this same purpose.
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PART IV. EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 4. Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes law and applies to actions commenced on or after that date.