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STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
JUDICIAL DISTRICT 30B  
HAYWOOD and JACKSON COUNTIES

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE  
SUPERIOR COURT DIVISION  
DISTRICT COURT DIVISION

2023 SEP 25 A 8:41  
2023 SEP 28 A 11:55

IN THE MATTER OF PROMULGATING  
LOCAL RULES RELATING TO BAIL  
AND PRETRIAL RELEASE FOR  
JUDICIAL DISTRICT 30B

HAYWOOD CO., C.S.C.  
JACKSON CO., C.S.C.  
BY BB ORDER §

Pursuant to the authority granted by Article 26 of Chapter 15A of the North Carolina General Statutes, and specifically the requirement in said Article that the Senior Resident Superior Court Judge issue recommended policies on bail, and the specified, implied and inherent powers of our respective offices, the undersigned, acting separately and collectively, do hereby approve and enter this order.

IT IS NOW, THEREFORE, ORDERED THAT:

1. The "Bail and Pretrial Release Policy for District 30B" attached hereto, and incorporated herein by reference, is hereby adopted in compliance with G.S. 15A-535;
2. These policies supersede all prior such policies and shall be effective October 1, 2023.
3. The Clerk shall serve copies of this Order and this Policy upon each judge, magistrate, sheriff and each chief of police in the judicial district.

ENTERED in our respective chambers on this the 28 day of September, 2023.

THE HONORABLE BRADLEY B. LETTS  
Senior Resident Superior Court Judge  
Superior Court Judicial District 30B

THE HONORABLE ROY T. WIJEWICKRAMA  
Chief District Court Judge  
District Court Judicial District 30

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STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
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HAYWOOD and JACKSON COUNTIES

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE  
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IN THE MATTER OF PROMULGATING  
LOCAL RULES RELATING TO BAIL  
AND PRETRIAL RELEASE FOR  
JUDICIAL DISTRICT 30B

### BAIL AND PRETRIAL RELEASE POLICY FOR DISTRICT 30B

1. **Name.** This policy shall be officially known as the "Bail and Pretrial Release Policy for District 30B."
2. **Authority.** G.S. 15A-535 provides: "Subject to the provisions of this Article [26], the Senior Resident Superior Court Judge of each judicial district in consultation with the Chief District Court Judge *must* advise and issue *recommended policies* to be followed within the district in *determining whether, and upon what conditions, a defendant may be released before trial.*" (emphases added)
3. **Purpose.** The purpose of this policy is to provide recommendations and guidance for the implementation of Article 26, which is not amended, abrogated, or repealed by this policy. Certain sections of Article 26 are explained in this policy, and they may be set forth herein almost verbatim, with re-arrangement to facilitate better understanding. But in all cases the pertinent statute controls over any content of this policy. This policy also supports the increased use of citation in lieu of arrest by law enforcement officers when in their discretion a citation protects the public safety and promotes the interests of justice.
4. **Scope.** This policy shall apply in all criminal actions or proceedings in Judicial District 30B, and is recommended to be followed by all judicial officials and all other persons dealing with bail bonds and pretrial release of criminal defendants in this Judicial District (referred to sometimes herein as "District").
5. **Definitions.** The definitions set forth in G.S. 15A-531 shall apply in this policy. Additional terms are defined as follows:
  - (a) **Capital Offense.** A criminal offense for which the death penalty is an authorized form of punishment. Such an offense is "capital" regardless of whether the District Attorney is seeking the death penalty in the particular case.
  - (b) **Cash.** Cash money, cashier's check, certified check, or money order.
  - (c) **Clerk.** The clerk of superior court, acting clerk, or assistant or deputy clerk in the county where the defendant is detained. G. S. 15A-101(2).
  - (d) **Court.** Court shall mean the judicial official setting conditions of pretrial release which shall include Clerks, Magistrates, District Court and Superior Court Judges.
  - (e) **Judge.** A superior court Judge or a district court Judge.
  - (f) **Judicial Official.** A magistrate, clerk, district court Judge and superior court Judge.
  - (g) **NC IDS.** North Carolina Office of Indigent Defense Services.
  - (h) **Obligor.** A principal or a surety on a bail bond.
  - (i) **Post-trial Release.** Release after guilt is established in superior court.

- (j) Pretrial Release. Release prior to guilt being established in superior court. This may be referred to interchangeably as “bail” or “bond”.
- (k) Principal. A defendant obligated to appear in court as required upon penalty of forfeiting bail under a bail bond.
- (l) Victim. A person against whom there is probable cause to believe one of the crimes has been committed as listed in 15A-830(a)(7), (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g).
- (m) “He”, “his”, etc. For ease of reading, natural persons will be referred to herein in the male gender, but such references shall be construed in all instances to apply equally to females.

6. **Background on the purpose of pretrial release.** The purpose of this bond policy is to ensure no defendant is held in custody prior to trial solely because the defendant cannot afford to post bail, to ensure fairness and the elimination of unjustifiable delay in the administration of justice, to facilitate the just determination of every criminal proceeding, and to preserve the public welfare and secure the rights of individuals with interests in criminal court cases. In general, the purpose of pretrial release is to impose the least restrictive conditions that will reasonably assure a defendant’s appearance in court and community safety. The right to pretrial release recognizes the presumption of innocence and promotes a defendant’s right to a fair trial, by allowing access to counsel, freedom of movement to secure witnesses, and the general ability to prepare a defense. It is recognized that any release on bail will create the risks that the accused will flee, commit another crime while out on bail, destroy evidence, or intimidate witnesses against him. These are calculated and accepted risks that must be taken as the price of our system of justice. Bail in an amount higher than an amount reasonably calculated to minimize these risks is “excessive” and unlawful under the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and under Article I, Section 27 of the Constitution of the North Carolina. Bail may not be used as punishment.

7. **Early Involvement of Counsel in 30B.**

The use of early involvement of counsel at 72 hour hearings in Judicial District 30B is temporarily suspended.

8. **Opportunity to observe defendant; Video appearances, 15A-532.**

- (a) The determination of bail and conditions of pretrial release should be made by a judicial official with a clear opportunity to witness the defendant in person and gather information about the defendant.
- (b) Conditions of pretrial release may be made, modified, or revoked in a noncapital case by an audio and video transmission between the judicial official and the defendant in which the parties can see and hear each other. The following rules apply to such video communications:
  - 1. If the defendant has counsel, the defendant shall be allowed to communicate fully and confidentially with his attorney during the proceeding.
  - 2. Upon motion of the defendant, the court may not use an audio and video transmission.
  - 3. Prior to the use of audio and video transmission under this section, the procedures and type of equipment for audio and video transmission shall be submitted for approval to the Administrative Office of the Courts by the senior resident superior court Judge.
  - 4. If the defendant has not moved to require an in-person proceeding, the defendant shall be subject to the law of contempt in a video proceeding the same as if the proceeding were in person.

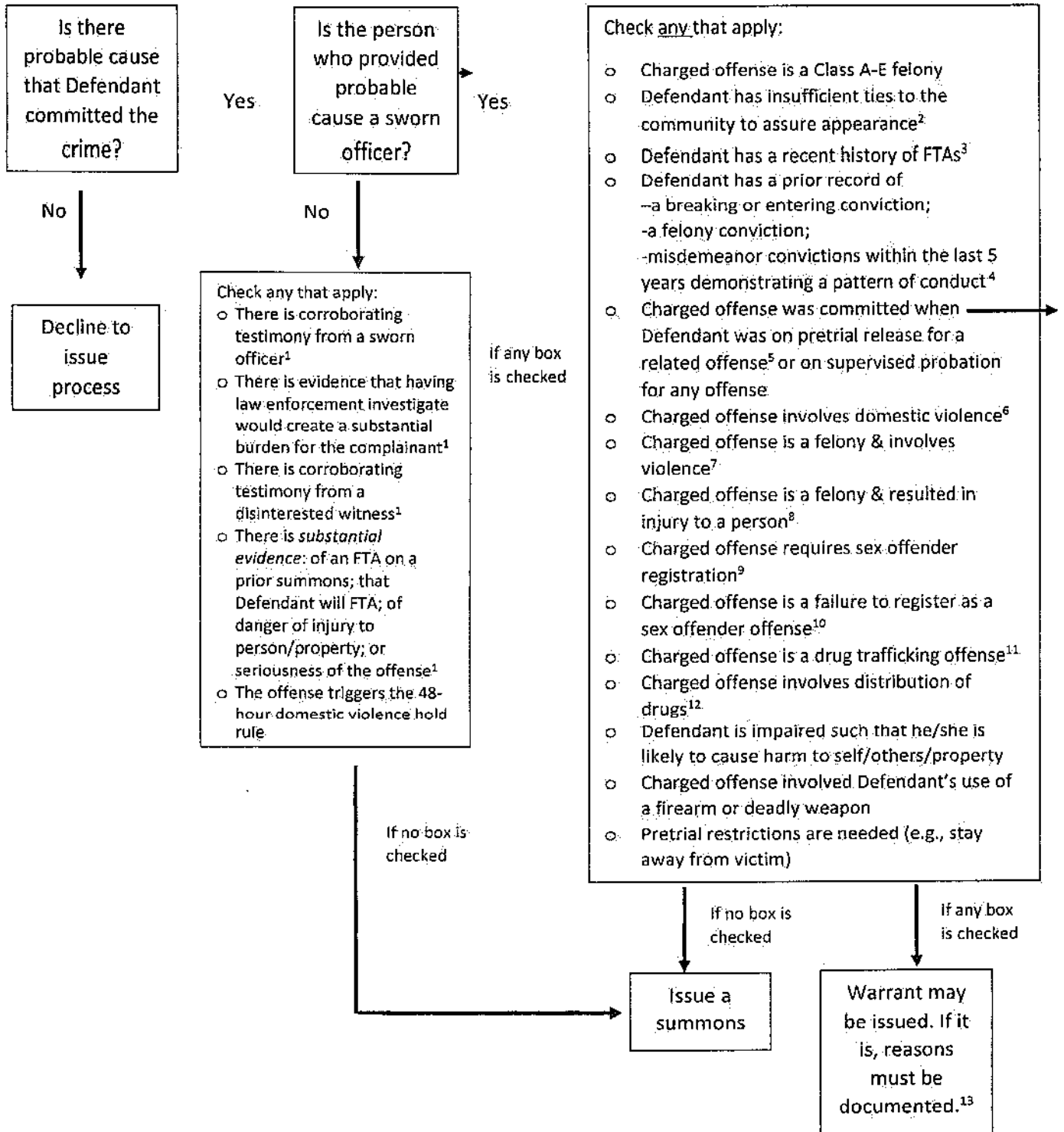
9. **Forms of Pretrial Release.** G.S. 15A-534(a) authorizes the following forms of pretrial release:
- (a) Written Promise to Appear. The defendant is released upon his execution of a written promise to appear in court as necessary.
  - (b) Unsecured Appearance Bond. The Appearance Bond is executed solely by the defendant. No surety or security is required to secure the Appearance Bond.
  - (c) Supervised Release. The defendant is placed into the custody of a designated person or organization agreeing to supervise him. Note that the defendant has the right to choose a secured Appearance Bond in lieu of supervised release.
  - (d) Secured Appearance Bond. The Appearance Bond is secured by a cash deposit of the full amount of the Appearance Bond, a mortgage pursuant to G.S. 58-74-5, or at least one solvent surety.
  - (e) House Arrest with Electronic Monitoring. This requires a secured appearance bond.

10. **Choosing the Form of Pretrial Release.** G.S. 15A-534(b).

- (a) Unless subsection (b) applies or North Carolina General Statutes or this Policy require otherwise, the judicial official in granting pretrial release must either:
  - 1. release the defendant on his written promise to appear;
  - 2. release the defendant upon his execution of an unsecured appearance bond in an amount specified by the judicial official; or
  - 3. place the defendant in the custody of a designated person or organization agreeing to supervise him (subject to the right of the defendant to elect a secured appearance bond instead).
- (b) Unless the North Carolina General Statutes or this Policy require otherwise, the judicial official *must* grant a release under section (a) (no secured bond required) *unless* the judicial official determines the existence of one of the following:
  - 1. That the conditions under section (a) will not reasonably assure the presence of the defendant as required;
  - 2. That the release of defendant under section (a) will pose a danger of injury to any person; or
  - 3. That the release of defendant under section (a) will likely result in the destruction of evidence, subornation of perjury, or intimidation of witnesses.
- (c) Except where the North Carolina General Statutes or this Policy require otherwise, when determining conditions of pretrial release judicial officials shall consider the factors specified in Section 12 below and shall use the decision making flowchart provided in Appendix A to this Policy. Although a judicial official may deviate from the recommendations in that flowchart, reasons for the deviations must be documented in writing.
- (d) If it is determined, in a proceeding under Article 5 of Chapter 122C of the General Statutes, that the defendant is mentally ill and dangerous to himself or others or a substance abuser and dangerous to himself or others, a Judge should be the judicial official who issues an unsecured bond, or modifies a secured bond to be unsecured, on the belief that involuntary commitment of the defendant will reasonably assure defendant's presence and protect the public from the defendant, as it is possible that the defendant could be committed, and then be released by the mental health system, in which event the defendant would be at large under an unsecured Appearance Bond. The determination of conditions of release is a completely different and independent determination from the findings that would mandate confinement under the provisions of Article 5 of Chapter 122C.
- (e) If a judicial official determines the existence of one or more of the dangers set forth in section (b), then the judicial official may impose an appearance bond, in a specified

amount, which shall be secured by a cash deposit of the full amount of the Appearance Bond, by a mortgage pursuant to G.S. 58-74-5, or by at least one solvent surety and may include an additional condition of electronic house arrest. In imposing a secured bond, the judicial official shall consult the maximum bond tables provided in Appendix A.

Figure 1: Decision-Making Framework for Magistrates: Summons Versus Warrant



<sup>1</sup> G.S. 15A-304(b)(3) (effective October 1, 2018, as enacted by S.L. 2018-40).

<sup>2</sup> The mere fact that the Defendant is homeless and does not have a home address does not warrant checking this box; inquiry should be focused on the Defendant's connections to the community.

<sup>3</sup> FTAs within the last 2 years are most relevant.

<sup>4</sup> The pattern of conduct must relate to the present offense. For example: The current charge involves drug possession and the Defendant has 3 priors within the last 5 years for misdemeanor drug or drug paraphernalia possession.

<sup>5</sup> This factor covers situations where the Defendant continues to engage in the same type of conduct (e.g., repeat larceny) or an escalating course of conduct (e.g., the defendant is charged with injury to real property while the defendant was on pretrial release for communicating threats to the property owner).

<sup>6</sup> An offense involves domestic violence when the relationship between the parties is one of the following:

- Current or former spouses
- Currently or formerly lived together as if married
- Currently or formerly in a dating relationship
- Have a child in common
- Parent (or one in parental role)/child
- Grandparent/grandchild
- Current or former members of the same household

Note: this list is drawn from G.S. 15A-534.1, the 48-hour domestic violence hold statute.

<sup>7</sup> For example, robbery.

<sup>8</sup> This factor applies when the offense involved harm to a person (e.g., assaultive conduct). It does not apply to offenses in which property is taken or harmed (e.g., larceny, embezzlement, obtaining property by false pretenses, etc.).

<sup>9</sup> For a list of offenses requiring sex offender registration, see JAMIE MARKHAM & SHEA DENNING, NORTH CAROLINA SENTENCING HANDBOOK 2017-18 (UNC School of Government, forthcoming 2018).

<sup>10</sup> See G.S. 14-208.11(a); JESSICA SMITH, NORTH CAROLINA CRIMES: A GUIDEBOOK ON THE ELEMENTS OF CRIME 268 (7<sup>th</sup> Ed. 2012) (discussing this offense).

<sup>11</sup> See G.S. 90-95(h); NORTH CAROLINA CRIMES *supra* note 9, at 721-739 (discussing trafficking offenses).

<sup>12</sup> For example, sale and delivery of a controlled substance and possession with intent to manufacture, sell, or deliver.

<sup>13</sup> If the charged offense is a Class A-E felony, the default is to issue a warrant.

11. **Factors that must be considered in every case.** N.C. Gen. Stat. §15a-534(c). In determining which conditions of pretrial release to impose, the judicial official must, on the basis of available information, take into account the following factors:

- (a) the nature and circumstances of the offense charged;
- (b) the weight of the evidence against the defendant;
- (c) the defendant's family ties in the county. (Ordinarily, and especially in cases where extradition back to North Carolina is not a possibility, a person who is not a resident of the State of North Carolina or lives in another state in a county near Haywood or Jackson counties should only be released upon a secured or cash appearance bond.)
- (d) the defendant's employment status and history;
- (e) the defendant's financial resources, including ownership of real property;
- (f) the defendant's character and reputation;
- (g) the defendant's mental condition;
- (h) whether the defendant is intoxicated to such a degree that he would be endangered by being released without supervision (see paragraph 34 below for special provisions related to impaired drivers);
- (i) the length of defendant's residence in the community;
- (j) the defendant's record of prior convictions, and whether the defendant's prior record level would allow for (or require) a substantial active sentence;
- (k) whether the defendant is on probation for a prior offense; if so, the judicial official must:
  - 1. Determine whether the defendant poses a danger to the public. If the judicial official does not have sufficient information to make this determination, he must follow the following procedure:
    - (A) Retain the defendant until this subsection can be completely followed;
    - (B) Set forth in writing:
      - i. that the defendant is being held for this determination;
      - ii. the basis for the determination that additional information is needed;
      - iii. the nature of the additional information needed;
      - iv. a date, within 96 hours of the time of arrest, when the defendant will be brought before a Judge for a first appearance;
      - v. that if the additional information is acquired before the 96-hour appearance, the first available judicial official will set conditions of release.
    - (C) File the written determination with the Clerk.
- (l) the defendant's history to avoid prosecution or failure to appear at court proceedings, and in this connection the judicial official must consider the following:
  - 1. The conditions of pretrial release must be at least as great as were in the order for arrest for the defendant's most recent failure to appear;
  - 2. If the order for arrest did not set forth conditions, then there must be a secured Appearance Bond in an amount at least double the amount of the most recent previous bond for the charges, or if no Appearance Bond was set, then at least \$1000 secured; and
  - 3. Restrictions on travel, associations, conduct, or place of abode.
- (m) **Offense Committed While on Pretrial Release.** If a defendant is arrested for a new offense allegedly committed while the defendant was on pretrial release for another pending proceeding, for the first 48 hours after arrest only a Judge may determine conditions of release for the new offense.



If a Judge has not acted pursuant to this section within 48 hours from the time of arrest of the defendant, a magistrate shall set conditions of pretrial release in accordance with G.S. 15A-534.

The Judge shall direct a law enforcement officer, pretrial services program, or a district attorney to provide a criminal history report and risk assessment, if available, for the defendant and shall consider the criminal history when setting conditions of pretrial release. After setting conditions of pretrial release, the Judge shall return the report to the providing agency or department. No 3 shall unreasonably delay the determination of conditions of pretrial release for the purpose of reviewing the defendant's criminal history report.

**NOTE:**

If a session of court with a judge presiding is occurring in the county during that initial 48-hour window, a magistrate or clerk conducting the initial appearance at arrest should order the defendant produced at that session to have conditions set.

New subsection G.S. 15A-533(h) does not direct that the defendant be held for a flat 48 hours; it provides that during that initial period, only a judge may set conditions of release. Consistent with legislative enactments by the General Assembly, the procedures related to the detention and conditions of pretrial release for defendants within 48 hours charged with Domestic Violence offenses continues to be governed by the specific requirements enumerated under G.S. 15A-534.1.

Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, a magistrate may set the conditions of pretrial release at any time if the new offense is a violation of Chapter 20 of the General Statutes, other than a violation of Impaired driving (G.S. 20-138.1), Impaired driving in commercial vehicle (G.S. 20-138.2), Operating a commercial vehicle after consuming alcohol (G.S. 20-138.2A), Operating a school bus, school activity bus, child care vehicle, ambulance, other EMS vehicle, firefighting vehicle, or law enforcement vehicle after consuming alcohol (G.S. 20-138.2B), Habitual impaired driving (G.S. 20-138.5), or Felony and misdemeanor death by vehicle; felony serious injury by vehicle; aggravated offenses; repeat felony death by vehicle (G.S. 20-141.4).

G.S. 15A-534(d3) provides that when a judicial official determines conditions of release for a defendant charged with an offense while on pretrial release for another offense, the judicial official may impose a secured bond double the amount of any monetary bond for the previous offense, and if there was no prior monetary bond, a secured bond of at least \$1,000.

If the new arrest or charge is for an offense alleged to have been committed before the offense for which the defendant already is on pretrial release, the provisions of G.S. 15A-534(d3) shall not be applied.

- (n) Violations of Conditions of Release. When a Defendant is arrested pursuant to G.S. 15A-401(b)(1) or (2) for a violation of a condition of pretrial release, the Magistrate at Initial Appearance shall set new conditions of release as follows: (1) In a case where the violated Appearance Bond was a written promise, a new secured Appearance Bond in an

amount of at least \$1000.00; (2) In a case where the violated Appearance Bond was an unsecured bond, a new secured Appearance Bond of at least the same amount as the unsecured Appearance Bond, and; (3) In a case where the violated Appearance Bond was a secured Appearance Bond, a new secured Appearance Bond of at least double the amount of the original secured Appearance Bond. In all cases, any other conditions of release shall be restated in the new release order.

(o) Any other evidence relevant to the issue of pretrial release.

**12. Further Conditions of Release.** In addition to an Appearance Bond, a judicial official should consider imposition of the following conditions in appropriate cases, and based upon the individualized circumstances of the defendant and the crime for which he is charged:

- (a) The provision by the defendant of fingerprints or DNA sample under G.S. 15A-534(a).
- (b) Restrictions on the defendant's travel;
- (c) Restrictions on the persons or types of persons with whom the defendant may associate;
- (d) Restrictions on the defendant's conduct, such as committing other crimes or possession of non-prescribed controlled substances or weapons;
- (e) Restriction on where the defendant may live;
- (f) Restriction on contact with victims and potential witnesses;
- (g) Requirement that the defendant refrain from the use of alcohol and submit to a continuous alcohol monitoring system (with violation to be reported by the provider directly to the district attorney).

In DWI cases where the defendant has one or more pending DWI charges and/or has a prior conviction for DWI within the previous ten (10) years, the judicial official also may include as a condition of pretrial release that the defendant abstain from alcohol consumption, as verified by the use of a continuous alcohol monitoring system, of a type approved by the Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice of the Department of Public Safety, and that any violation of this condition be reported by the monitoring provider to the district attorney. G.S. 15A-534(a). When imposing CAM in non-domestic violence cases, the judicial official shall use form AOC-CR-242.

**13. Prior Breaking and Entering Convictions.** If a defendant has a prior conviction for breaking and entering, the magistrate will consider if a secured bond is warranted and necessary to reduce criminal activity and reduce the danger of injury to any person pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §15A-534.

**14. Form of Release.** The judicial official must issue an order using AOC-CR-200 or AOC-CR-242. The defendant must be given a copy of the release order and must be advised that his arrest will be ordered immediately upon any violation of the order. The release order must be filed with the Clerk.

**15. Summons in Lieu of Arrest.** When determining whether to issue a summons or warrant for arrest, the magistrate shall give effect to the statutory preference of the issuance of a summons over a warrant for arrest pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §15A-304 by applying the decision making framework shown in Figure 1 below.

**16. Unauthorized Absence from Involuntary Commitment in Mental Health Facility.** G.S. 15A-533(a). A defendant charged with any crime, whether capital or noncapital, who is alleged to have committed the crime while still residing in or subsequent to his escape or during an unauthorized absence from involuntary commitment in a mental health facility designated or licensed by the Department of Human Resources, and whose commitment is determined to be

still valid by the judicial official authorized to determine pretrial release, has no right to pretrial release. In lieu of pretrial release, the defendant shall be returned to the treatment facility in which he was residing at the time of the alleged crime or from which he escaped or absented himself for continuation of treatment pending additional proceedings on the criminal offense. No other conditions of pretrial release are to be imposed at that time.

#### 17. Authority to Determine and Modify Conditions of Pretrial Release.

- (a) Magistrate. For non-capital felonies and misdemeanors, the initial responsibility for determining the conditions of pretrial release usually is assigned for a magistrate to determine.

A magistrate cannot authorize the release of a defendant charged with a capital offense or a noncapital offense listed in Section 18, Pretrial Release in Capital and Noncapital Cases. G.S. 15A-533(c) & (h) for defendants on pretrial release [see below].

- (b) Clerk of Superior Court. A clerk can determine conditions of pretrial release for misdemeanors and non-capital felonies.
- (c) Modification by Magistrate or Clerk. A magistrate or clerk may modify his pretrial release order at any time prior to the first appearance before a district court judge. G.S. 15A-534(e).
- (d) District Court Judge. A district court judge may determine conditions of pretrial release for misdemeanors and felonies, including capital felonies. Except when the conditions of pretrial release have been reviewed by a superior court judge, a district court judge may modify a pretrial release order of a magistrate or the clerk, or himself. A district court judge may modify a pretrial release order entered by a judicial official other than a superior court judge at any time prior to: (1) In a misdemeanor case tried in the district court, the noting of an appeal; and (2) In a case in the original trial jurisdiction of the superior court, the binding of the defendant over to superior court after the holding, or waiver, of a probable cause hearing. G.S. 15A-534(e). For good cause shown, any judge may at any time revoke an order of pretrial release and the defendant may then apply for new conditions to be set.
- (e) Superior Court Judge. A superior court judge may determine conditions of pretrial release for misdemeanors and felonies, including capital felonies. After a case is before the superior court, and at any time prior to the guilt of the defendant being established in superior court, a superior court judge may modify the pretrial release order of a magistrate, clerk, district court judge, himself, or another superior court judge. G.S. 15A-534(e). For good cause shown, a superior court judge may at any time revoke an order of pretrial release and the defendant may then apply for new conditions to be set.
- (f) Motions. Motions to modify conditions of release must be in writing, and may be made by a defendant or the district attorney.

**Defendant's Motion.** G.S. 15A-538(a) provides that a defendant who is detained or objects to conditions of release imposed or allowed to stand by order of a district court judge may apply in writing to a superior court judge to modify the order.

**State's Motion.** The State may at any time apply to an appropriate district or superior court judge for modification or revocation of a release order. G.S. 15A-539(a).

**Substitution of Sureties.** The power to modify an order includes the power to substitute sureties upon any Appearance Bond. Substitution or addition of acceptable sureties may be made at the request of any obligor on an Appearance Bond or, in the interests of justice, at the request of a prosecutor. G.S. 15A-538(b).

**18. Pretrial Release in Capital and Noncapital Cases. G.S. 15A-533(b).**

(a) A Judge shall determine in the Judge's discretion whether a defendant charged with any of the following crimes may be released before trial:

- (1) First or second degree murder or and attempt to commit first or second degree murder. G.S. 14-17.
- (2) First or second degree kidnapping. G.S. 14-39.
- (3) First degree forcible rape. G.S. 14-27.21.
- (4) Second degree forcible rape. G.S. 14-27.22.
- (5) Statutory rape of a child by an adult. G.S. 14-27.23.
- (6) First degree statutory rape. G.S. 14-27.24.
- (7) Statutory rape of a person who is 15 years of age or younger. G.S. 14-27.25.
- (8) First degree forcible sexual offense. G.S. 14-27.26.
- (9) Second degree forcible sexual offense. G.S. 14-27.27.
- (10) Statutory sexual offense with a child by an adult. G.S. 14-27.28.
- (11) First degree statutory sexual offense. G.S. 14-27.29.
- (12) Statutory sexual offense with a person who is 15 years of age or younger. G.S. 14-27.30.
- (13) Human trafficking. G.S. 14-43.11.
- (14) Assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill inflicting serious injury. G.S. 14-32(a).
- (15) Discharging certain barreled weapons or a firearm into occupied property. G.S. 14-34.1.
- (16) First degree burglary. G.S. 14-51.
- (17) First degree arson. G.S. 14-58.
- (18) Robbery with firearms or other dangerous weapons. G.S. 14-87.

If the Judge determines that release is warranted for a defendant charged with a crime listed above, the Judge shall set conditions of pretrial release in accordance with G.S. 15A-534.

A defendant charged with a noncapital offense that is not listed above, must otherwise have conditions of pretrial release determined in accordance with G.S. 15A-534.

**19. Maximum Secured**  
circumstances of  
govern the decision  
setting bond  
schedule is  
individualized  
pretrial release shall

Except as provided by the NC General Statutes or by this Policy, there shall be a presumption that **ALL** defendants shall be released on written promise, custody release, or, unsecured bond.

**Appearance Bond.** The  
each individual case will  
of a judicial official in  
amounts. A rigid bail  
incompatible with such an  
decision. Decisions of  
consider all individualized

factors and considerations in determining the applicable statutory factors in each case and shall consider the defendant's ability to pay, as detailed below. In setting secured bonds judicial officials should abide by the Maximum Bond Tables set out in Appendix A to this Policy. If the judicial official sets a secured bond in excess of the maximum amount recommended by those tables, the reasons for doing so must be documented in writing. When setting bail, there shall be a presumption that any conditions of release imposed shall be non-monetary in nature, and the court shall impose the least restrictive conditions or combination of conditions necessary to reasonably assure the appearance of the defendant for further court proceedings, except where statute requires otherwise.<sup>1</sup> Said conditions shall include conditions reasonably necessary to

<sup>1</sup> N.C. Gen. Stat. §15A-534(d1) (Where the requirement for doubling a bond is required for a FTA).

protect safety and ensure that the defendant appears in court as required. The court shall consider the defendant's social and economic circumstances when setting conditions of release.

Prior to setting or modifying a condition of release that includes monetary bail, the court shall conduct an inquiry into the defendant's ability to pay monetary bail. Such inquiry shall allow the prosecutor, defense counsel, and the defendant the opportunity to provide the court with information pertinent to the defendant's ability to pay monetary bail. This information may be provided by proffer, and may include statements by the defendant's relatives or other persons who are present at the hearing and have information about the defendant's ability to pay monetary bail. All information shall be admissible if it is relevant and reliable, regardless of whether it would be admissible under the rules of evidence applicable at criminal trials.

When the court determines as required by law<sup>2</sup> that a written promise, unsecured Appearance Bond, or custody release is not appropriate and that monetary bail is a necessary condition of release, the court shall in substance, make the following findings and state them orally, together with sufficient supporting facts, on the record in open court:

- (1) No other conditions of release except monetary bail, including a written promise to appear, unsecured Appearance Bond, or custody release, will:
  - a. Reasonably assure the defendant's appearance in court;
  - b. The defendant poses a danger of injury to any person;
  - c. Release of the defendant is likely to result in destruction of evidence;
  - d. Release of the defendant is likely to result subornation of perjury; or
  - e. Release of the defendant is likely to result in the intimidation of witnesses;
- (2) The amount of bail is not oppressive, is considerate of the financial ability of the defendant, and the defendant has the present ability to pay the amount necessary to secure his or her release on bail; and
- (3) The defendant will comply with the other conditions of release.

**\*\*This policy does not require the court to reduce these findings to writing. Written findings are however required when the judicial official deviates from the recommendations in Appendix A\*\***

The procedures required above are not required when the court imposes non-monetary conditions of release.

If the court is presented with insufficient information to make a finding regarding the defendant's ability to pay the ordered amount, it shall so state on the record in open court.

Nothing in this order shall limit a court's authority to revoke bail, in accordance with present law, where the defendant has violated conditions of his or her release on bail.

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<sup>2</sup> N.C. Gen. Stat. §15A-534(b).

20. **Fugitive warrants.** On a fugitive warrant, set a secured Appearance Bond at the top of the range for the underlying offense.

<b>CLASS</b>	<b>SUGGESTED BAIL</b>
Crime punishable by death or life imprisonment	NO BOND
A	Set by Judge
B1	\$ 300,000
B2	\$ 250,000
C	\$ 100,000
D	\$ 70,000
E	\$ 50,000
F	\$25,000
G	
H	\$ 10,000
I	

21. **Other warrants.** On a Governor's warrant and a parole warrant, NO BOND is authorized. When a Governor's warrant is received, the fugitive should be rearrested if they are out on bond and issued a new release order with No Bond. If the fugitive is still in the detention center, they should be brought in front of the magistrate on duty and issued a new release order with No Bond. In both cases, the magistrate should set the fugitive a new court date on the next district court session.

	<b>REQUIRED BAIL</b>
Governor's Warrant	NO BOND
Parole Warrant	NO BOND
Pre-signed Waiver of Extradition	NO BOND
Transferred under Interstate Compact	NO BOND

22. **Probation Violations.**

- (a) Except where the General Statutes require otherwise (see, e.g., N.C. Gen. Stat. §15A-1345(b1)), when determining conditions of bond for a defendant who has been arrested for a probation violation, the judicial official shall, in addition to the Suggested Bail Amounts contained hereinafter, consider all factors promulgated in Appendix A and also shall contact the defendant's probation officer or the designated officer on call to review any relevant information the probation officer can provide. Furthermore, the judicial official shall review eWarrants and/or Odyssey to ensure all pending processes are being served at the time of arrest.

(b) Suggested Bail Amounts.

CLASS	RECOMMENDED BAIL AMOUNTS
Felony	Minimum \$ 15,000 secured per case
Misdemeanor	Minimum \$ 7,500 secured per case

CLASS	RECOMMENDED BAIL AMOUNTS (ABSCONDER OR NEW CRIMINAL OFFENSE)
Felony	Minimum \$ 30,000 secured per case
Misdemeanor	Minimum \$ 15,000 secured per case

(c) Probation Violator with Pending Felony or Conviction Requiring Sex Offender Registration

When a judicial official determines conditions of release for a defendant arrested for a probation violation, if the defendant has either

- (1) a pending felony charge; or
- (2) a prior conviction for an offense that requires registration as a sex offender under G.S. Chapter 14, Article 27A, or that would have required registration but for the effective date of the legislative acts establishing the sex offender registration program under that Article and the offenses subject to it, the judicial official shall determine whether the defendant poses a "danger to the public." G.S. 15A-1345(b1). If the judicial official determines that the defendant presents a danger to the public, then the official shall deny conditions of release pending the probation violation hearing. G.S. 15A-1345(b1)(1). If the judicial official determines that the defendant does not present a danger to the public, then the official shall set conditions of release as normal and as otherwise provided in this policy. G.S. 15A-1345(b1)(2). If the judicial official has insufficient information to make the required determination, then the judicial official shall proceed as instructed in section IV.L above.

(d) Seven Day Hearings. Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §15A-1345(c) those defendants arrested and alleged to have violated their probation requirements shall be entitled to a hearing before a Judge no later than seven (7) days after they are arrested and served with the violation report, unless waived by the defendant or the violation hearing has been held. The seven day hearing shall be heard at a time and in a manner as deemed appropriate by the presiding Judge in the county in which the defendant is held.

(e) Orders for Arrest. Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §15A-305 Magistrates may issue orders for arrest when a defendant has violated the conditions of probation. If the magistrate chooses to enter a recommended bond on said order, the recommendation shall be in accordance with the policies herein and if a secured bond is recommended, a Magistrate-Bail Explanation form shall be completed and forwarded to the Clerk of Court for filing in the defendant's case file.

(f) Unsupervised Probation Violations. In the event a magistrate has probable cause that a violation of unsupervised probation has occurred, the magistrate shall refer the matter to

the District Attorney's Office for further review and the District Attorney's Office may then file a Violation of Unsupervised Probation. Magistrates shall not issue a charge of Violation of Court Order for said matters.

23. **Probationer Charged With Felony.** G.S. 15A-534(d2) provides that when determining conditions of release for a defendant who is (1) charged with a felony and (2) currently on probation for a prior offense, the judicial official shall determine whether the defendant poses a "danger to the public." If the judicial official finds that the defendant poses a danger to the public, then the judicial shall impose a secured bond. G.S. 15A-534(d2)(1). If the judicial official finds that the defendant does not pose a danger to the public, then the official shall set conditions of release as normal and as otherwise provided in this policy. G.S. 15A-534(d2)(2). If the judicial official has insufficient information to make the required determination, then the judicial official shall make required written findings and set the case for first appearance before a district court Judge. When determining conditions of pretrial release in cases where the defendant is a probationer being charged with a felony, in addition to all other factors considered under this bond policy, all evidence available pursuant to N.C.G.S 15A-534(c) and (g), and the statutory presumption of consideration of the least restrictive detention option under N.C.G.S 15A-534(b), The judicial official may in their discretion impose a secured bond for each new felony offense in a minimum recommended amount of \$25,000. This discretionary authority should be exercised only in extraordinary circumstances and the judicial official shall ensure that the new condition appropriately contemplates the circumstances and conduct associated with the new offense. Said bond shall be reviewed by the District Court Judge presiding at the 72 Hour First Appearance

24. **Rebuttable presumptions.** A defendant subject to the rebuttable presumptions in the following sections may only be released by a District or Superior Court Judge upon a finding that there is reasonable assurance that the person will appear and release does not pose an unreasonable risk of harm to the community.

(a) **Drug Trafficking.** G.S. 15A-533(d). It shall be rebuttably presumed that no conditions of release will reasonably assure the appearance of the defendant and the safety of the community if a judicial finds all three of the following:

1. There is reasonable cause to believe that the defendant committed an offense involving trafficking in a controlled substance; and
2. The drug trafficking offense was committed while the defendant was on pretrial release for another offense; and
3. The defendant has been previously convicted of a Class A, B, C, D, or E Felony or an offense involving trafficking in a controlled substance and not more than five years has elapsed since the date of the defendant's conviction or release from prison for the offense, whichever is later.

(b) **Street Gangs.** G.S. 15A-533(e). It shall be rebuttably presumed that no condition of release will reasonably assure the appearance of the defendant as required and the safety of the community, if a judicial official finds the following:

1. There is reasonable cause to believe that the defendant committed an offense for the benefit of, at the direction of, or in association with, any criminal street gang, as defined in G.S. 14-50.16; and
2. The offense described in the previous paragraph was committed while the defendant was on pretrial release for another offense; and
3. The person has been previously convicted of an offense described in G.S. 14-50.16 through G.S. 14-50.20, and not more than five years has elapsed since the date of defendant's conviction or release for the offense, whichever is later.



- (c) **Firearms.** G.S. 15A-533(f). It shall be rebuttably presumed that no condition of release will reasonably assure the appearance of the defendant as required and the safety of the community, if a judicial official finds there is reasonable cause to believe that the defendant committed a felony or Class A1 misdemeanor offense involving the illegal use, possession, or discharge of a firearm and the judicial official also finds either of the following:
1. The offense was committed while the defendant was on pretrial release for another felony or Class A1 misdemeanor offense involving the illegal use, possession, or discharge of a firearm; or
  2. The defendant has previously been convicted of a felony or Class A1 misdemeanor offense involving the illegal use, possession, or discharge of a firearm and not more than five years have elapsed since the date of defendant's conviction or release for the offense, whichever is later.
- (d) **Methamphetamine Manufacture.** N.C. Gen. Stat. § 15A-534.6 In all cases in which the defendant is charged with any violation of G.S. 90-95(b)(1a) or G.S. 90-95(d1)(2)(b), in determining Appearance Bond and other conditions of release, the magistrate, Judge, or court shall consider any evidence that the defendant is in any manner dependent upon methamphetamine or has a pattern of regular illegal use of methamphetamine. A rebuttable presumption that no conditions of release on Appearance Bond would assure the safety of the community or any person therein shall arise if the State shows by clear and convincing evidence both:
1. The defendant was arrested for a violation of G.S. 90-95(b)(1a) or G.S. 90-95(d1)(2)(b), relating to the manufacture of methamphetamine or possession of an immediate precursor chemical with knowledge or reasonable cause to know that the chemical will be used to manufacture methamphetamine; and
  2. The defendant is in any manner dependent upon methamphetamine or has a pattern of regular illegal use of methamphetamine, and the violation referred to in subdivision (1) of this section was committed or attempted in order to maintain or facilitate the dependence or pattern of illegal use in any manner.

**25. Habitual Felons.**

- (a) For a defendant who is being indicted as a habitual felon the charge level of the offense, for purposes of applying Appendix A, is the "habitualized" charge level of the underlying felony charge.
- (b) The secured bond shall not be set in the indictment or warrant for arrest alleging the status of habitual felon has been attained; a secured bond only may be set on the "habitualized" underlying offense.
- (c) The better practice adopted in District 30B shall not authorize the setting of separate conditions of release in an Appearance Bond in the indictment in which the habitual offender is charged. Release conditions should not be set in a habitual felon indictment since being a habitual offender is a status and not a crime and generally release conditions may only set only in connection with a new a criminal offense pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §§533, 534. The State shall arrange for the bond to be modified in the underlying, predicate felon upon which the habitual felon offense is based.

- 26. Habitual DWI.** For a defendant who is charged with habitual DWI he will be treated as a class F felon for the purpose of applying Appendix A. Unlike a Habitual Felon where a secured bond is not set in the charge alleging a status, a charge of habitual DWI is a criminal offense and a secured bond may be set.

27. **Prison Inmates.** The setting of conditions of pretrial release for a defendant while serving an active sentence upon a commitment issued by District or Superior Court Division is not authorized. A release order should be entered by the judicial official specifying that the defendant is presently in lawful custody and denying conditions of pretrial release for such reason. The release order shall require the defendant to be brought before a judicial official upon the completion of their present active sentence for the purpose of setting pretrial release conditions.
28. **Stacking or Splitting Appearance Bonds Prohibited.** "Stacking" or "splitting" of any form of an Appearance Bond, is prohibited.
29. **Cash Appearance Bonds.** When a defendant fails to appear and fails to comply with a judgment (show cause), a cash Appearance Bond should be set in the amount the defendant owes to satisfy the judgment. If it is not already referenced on the OFA then it can be found on ACIS by using the CR number, if the case is a criminal case. This practice will allow the court to collect the outstanding fines in a more expedient manner. Do not set a secured Appearance Bond on these types of OFAs. Only cash will satisfy this condition, not a bondsman with insurance power-of-attorney, or another individual using real property. This applies to any orders for arrest where the cash Appearance Bond amount is pre-set.
30. **Child Support Contempt.**
- (a) In addition to the other factors listed hereinabove, in determining conditions of pretrial release in child support contempt proceedings, the judicial official may consider the amount of the arrearage of such child support and the payment record of the person charged with contempt.
  - (b) Cash Appearance Bonds set in child support contempt proceedings shall not be satisfied in any manner other than the deposit of cash. G.S. 15A-531(1).
  - (c) Once a presiding District Court Judge sets cash Appearance Bonds in child support contempt proceedings, these shall not be modified by a magistrate.
31. **First Appearance for Defendants Detained by Secured Appearance Bonds on Felony and/or Misdemeanor Offenses.**
- (a) Pursuant to N.C.G.S. §15A-601(a), Within 72 hours of being taken into custody, any defendant charged with a felony in a magistrate's order under G.S. 15A-511 or criminal process under Article 17 of this Chapter, Criminal Process, in the original jurisdiction of the superior court or a misdemeanor in the original jurisdiction of the district court and who is in custody must be brought before a district court Judge in the district court district as defined in G.S. 7A-133 in which the crime charged was committed.
  - (b) The clerk of the superior court in the county in which the defendant is taken into custody may conduct a first appearance as provided in this Article if a district court Judge is not available in the county within 72 hours after the defendant is taken into custody. N.C.G.S. §15A-601(e).
  - (c) A defendant is not in custody if the defendant was never taken into custody or has been released pursuant to Article 26 of Chapter 15A of the North Carolina General Statutes prior to a first appearance.
  - (d) A defendant charged with a felony offense who is not in custody requires a first appearance at the next session of district court held in the county. N.C.G.S. §15A-601(c).
  - (e) A defendant charged with a misdemeanor offense who is not in custody does not require a first appearance. N.C.G.S. §15A-601(a).

- (f) A first appearance within 72 hours does not apply to a defendant whose first appearance before a district court Judge was set in a criminal summons under N.C.G.S. §§15A-303(d), 601(c).
- (g) If the courthouse is closed for transaction for longer than 72 hours, a first appearance is required within 96 hours after the defendant is taken into custody or at the first regular session of the district court in the county, whichever arrives first. N.C.G.S. §15A-601(c).
- (h) If a magistrate has insufficient information regarding whether or not a defendant charged with a felony while on probation is a danger to public, the magistrate shall detain the defendant pursuant to N.C.G.S. §15A-534(d2)(3) and order defendant to be brought before a Judge for a first appearance within 72 hours. If the information sought is subsequently received prior to the first appearance before a Judge, the magistrate shall have defendant returned before them and set conditions of release. (See also hereinabove, Section 23. Probationer Charged With Felony.)

32. **Detention Bond Hearing.** In cases where the defendant is intentionally detained pretrial through an unattainably high secured bond, the court must, on its own motion or on motion by a party, hold a prompt Detention Bond Hearing affording the defendant appropriate procedural protection as approved by the United States Supreme Court in *United States v. Salerno*, 481 U.S. 739 (1987). At the hearing, the defendant has the right to counsel, to testify, to present evidence and to cross-examine witnesses. In order to continue the Detention Bond, the State must demonstrate probable cause to believe that the defendant committed the charged crime and to prove, by clear and convincing evidence that no conditions of release can reasonably assure the safety of the community or any person and the person's appearance in court as required. If the Judge determines to continue the detention bond, the case shall be, to the extent practicable, placed on an expedited trial calendar and the Judge must make written findings of fact and provide a written statement of reasons for the continuation of the detention bond.

33. **Restrictions upon Defendants in Domestic Violence Cases. G.S. 15A-534.1.**

- (a) This section applies to defendants charged with any one or more of the following offenses against a spouse, former spouse, or a person with whom the defendant lives or has lived as if married:
  1. Assault (common law);
  2. Stalking. G.S. 14-277.3A;
  3. Communicating a threat. G.S. 14-277.1;
  4. A felony under Chapter 14, Article 7A ("Rape and other Sex Offenses");
  5. A felony under Chapter 14, Article 8 ("Assaults");
  6. A felony under Chapter 14, Article 10 ("Kidnapping and Abductions");
  7. A felony under Chapter 14, Article 15 ("Arson and other Burnings");
  8. Domestic criminal trespass; and
  9. A violation of an order entered pursuant to Chapter 50B (Domestic Violence) of the General Statutes (For more specific information, please refer to the attached 48 Hour DV Chart published by the UNC SOG in December 2015.)
- (b) The conditions of pretrial release must be determined by a Judge, who must consider the criminal history report, which must be presented to the Judge by law enforcement or the district attorney.
- (c) Upon a determination by the Judge that the immediate release of the defendant will pose a danger of injury to the alleged victim or to any other person or is likely to result in intimidation of the alleged victim and upon a further determination that the execution of an appearance bond will not reasonably assure that such injury or intimidation will not

occur, a Judge may retain the defendant in custody for a reasonable period of time while determining the conditions of pretrial release.

(d) A Judge may impose any of the following additional conditions on pretrial release if he feels that this is necessary to prevent injury to other persons or a danger to the public in general:

1. That the defendant stay away from the home, school, business or place of employment of the alleged victim;
2. That the defendant refrain from assaulting, beating, molesting, or wounding the alleged victim;
3. That the defendant refrain from removing, damaging or injuring specifically identified property;
4. That the defendant may visit his child or children at times and places provided by the terms of any existing order entered by a Judge;
5. That the defendant abstain from alcohol consumption, as verified by the use of a continuous alcohol monitoring system, with any violation to be reported directly from the provider to the district attorney;
6. That the defendant not own, use, or possess controlled substances (except pursuant to prescription);
7. That the defendant not own, use, or possess firearms, and that the defendant designate some person to remove firearms from defendant's possession or control within a specified time; or
8. Secured appearance bond.

(e) Should the defendant be mentally ill and dangerous to himself or others or a substance abuser and dangerous to himself or others, the provisions of Article 5 of Chapter 122C of the General Statutes shall apply.

(f) A defendant may be retained in custody not more than 48 hours from the time of arrest without a determination by a Judge. If a Judge has not acted pursuant to this rule within 48 hours of arrest, a magistrate shall act in his stead.

**34. Restrictions upon Defendants charged with Communicating a Threat of Mass Violence. G.S. 15A-534.7.**

In all cases where a defendant is charged with communicating a threat of mass violence on educational property or at a place of religious worship, as provided by statute a Judge shall set conditions of pretrial release during the first 48 hours of the defendant's detention.

**35. Restrictions upon Defendant Charged with Riot Offenses and Looting/Trespass during Emergency. G.S. 15A-534.8.**

*\*Effective for offenses committed on or after December 1, 2023\**

In all cases where a defendant is charged with an offense under G.S. 14-288.2 (riot; inciting to riot; punishments) or G.S. 14-288.6 (Looting; trespass during an emergency), for the first 24 hours after arrest, only a Judge may set the defendant's condition of release. The Judge shall direct a law enforcement officer, pretrial services program, or a district attorney to provide a criminal history report and risk assessment, if available, for the defendant and shall consider the criminal history when setting conditions of pretrial release. After setting conditions of pretrial release, the Judge shall return the report to the providing agency or department. No Judge shall unreasonably delay the determination of conditions of pretrial release for the purpose of reviewing the defendant's criminal history report. If a Judge has not acted within 24 hours to

determine the defendant's eligibility for and conditions of release, a magistrate must set conditions of release.

Upon finding that defendant's immediate release "will pose a danger of injury to persons" and that an appearance bond will not reasonably assure that such injury will not occur, the Judge may retain the defendant in custody for a reasonable period of time while determining conditions of release. Additional conditions may be imposed requiring defendant stay away from specific locations or property where the charge occurred.

**36. Restrictions upon Defendants in Sex Offenses and Crimes of Violence Against Child Victims. G.S. 15A-534.4.**

(a) The following provisions apply to the following offenses:

1. felonious child abuse;
2. misdemeanor child abuse;
3. taking indecent liberties with a minor in violation of G.S. 14-202.1;
4. rape;
5. any sex offense in violation of Article 7A, Chapter 14 of the General Statute against a minor victim;
6. incest with a minor in violation of G.S. 14-178;
7. kidnapping;
8. abduction;
9. felonious restraint involving a minor victim, with a violation of G.S. 14-320.1;
10. assault against a minor victim;
11. any crime of violence against a minor; and
12. communicating a threat against a minor.

(b) For any offense listed above, a judicial official may impose the following conditions on pretrial release:

1. That the defendant stay away from the home, temporary residence, school, business, or place of employment of the alleged victim;
2. That the defendant refrain from communicating or attempting to communicate, directly or indirectly, with the victim, except under circumstances specified in an order entered by a Judge with knowledge of the pending charges; and
3. That the defendant refrain from assaulting, beating, intimidating, stalking, threatening, or harming the alleged victim.

(c) The first two conditions of the previous paragraph may be waived by the judicial official if he makes written findings of fact that it is not in the best interest of the alleged victim that the condition be imposed on the defendant. The above conditions may be imposed in addition to any other conditions that the judicial official may impose under other provisions of Article 26.

(d) For any offense listed above in which the alleged victim is a minor child and the charging documents identify the minor child by initials or pseudonym, the conditions of release shall identify the minor child in the same way as identified in the charging document.

**37. Detention of Impaired Drivers. G.S. 15A-534.2**

(a) A judicial official conducting an initial appearance for an offense involving impaired driving must follow the procedure in G.S. 15A-511, except as modified by G.S. 15A-534.2. Neither statute should be interpreted to impede a defendant's right to communicate with family, friends and counsel.

(b) If, at the time of the initial appearance, the judicial official finds by clear and convincing evidence that the impairment of the defendant's physical or mental faculties presents a

danger, if he is released, of physical injury to himself or others or damage to property, the judicial official must order that the defendant be held in custody and inform the defendant that he will be held in custody until one of the requirements of subsection c below is met. Regardless of whether the judicial official makes the determination specified in subsection c, the judicial official must initially determine the appropriate conditions of pretrial release under G.S. 15A-511.

- (c) A defendant subject to detention for impaired driving has the right to pretrial release when the judicial official determines any of the following:
    - 1. The defendant's physical and mental faculties are no longer impaired to the extent that he presents a danger of physical injury to himself or to others or of damage to property if he is released; or
    - 2. A sober responsible adult is willing and able to assume responsibility for the defendant until his physical and mental faculties are no longer impaired; or
    - 3. The passage of 24 hours from defendant's being detained.
  - (d) In making the determination whether a defendant detained under this rule remains impaired, the judicial official may follow the provisions of G.S. 15A-534.2(d) (providing for periodic breath tests).
38. **Detention for Communicable Diseases. 15A-534.3.** If a judicial official conducting an initial appearance or first appearance hearing finds probable cause that an individual had an exposure to the defendant in a manner that poses a significant risk of transmission of the AIDS virus or hepatitis B by such defendant, the judicial official shall order the defendant to be detained for a reasonable period of time, not to exceed 24 hours, for investigation by public health officials and for testing for AIDS virus infection or Hepatitis B infection if required by the public health officials pursuant to G.S. 130A-144 and G.S. 130A-148. Upon conclusion of such testing, or the expiration of 24 hours, a judicial official must then determine the appropriate conditions of pretrial release in accordance with these rules.
39. **Detention as Result of Terrorist Attack or Quarantine.** If a judicial official conducting an initial appearance finds by clear and convincing evidence that a person arrested for violation of an order limiting freedom of movement or access issued pursuant to G.S. 130A-475 or G.S. 130A-145 poses a threat to the health and safety of others, the judicial official shall deny pretrial release and shall order the person to be confined in an area or facility designated by the judicial official. Such pretrial confinement shall terminate when a judicial official determines that the confined person does not pose a threat to the health and safety of others. These determinations shall be made only after the State Health Director or local health director has made recommendations to the court.
40. **Property Bonds of \$10,000 or more.**
- (a) All Accommodation bondspersons shall be advised by the Magistrate of the following:

"If the Defendant fails to appear in court as required, you could lose your property as provided in G.S. 15A-544.1 through 15A-544.8 and as stated on AOC-CR-201 Appearance Bond for Pretrial Release"
  - (b) Property Bonds of \$10,000 or more must be approved by the Clerk.
  - (c) Defendants should be advised by the judicial official conducting the initial appearance to seek a non-binding preliminary approval from the Clerk before investing in a title search and attorney fees.
  - (d) The Clerk has no liability for expenses incurred for a property bond, even if the Clerk has given a preliminary approval as to a certain property.

- (e) The following documents are required for a property bond of \$10,000 or greater:
1. a recorded deed of trust as follows:
    - (A) prepared by a North Carolina licensed attorney using a standard bar form deed of trust;
    - (B) grantor(s) will be all record owners of an interest in the property or properties, and the spouses of the record owners (a "record owner" including life tenants, remaindermen, etc.);
    - (C) the trustee of the deed of trust will be the Clerk;
    - (D) the beneficiary will be the State of North Carolina f/b/o the county school board;
    - (E) the description will be adequate to describe the property conveyed, but a metes and bounds description will not be required; reference to a recorded survey will suffice.
- (f) The following documents are required for a property bond of \$20,000 or greater:
1. a recorded deed of trust prepared as described in section (d);
  2. a title certificate or title opinion prepared by a licensed attorney, which will state the following:
    - (A) That the proposed sureties are the record owners of all interests in the property;
    - (B) That there are either no recorded liens encumbering the property or identifying any existing liens and stating that the value of the property net of said liens is sufficient to meet the bond-value ratio requirement.
  3. an affidavit as to the fair market value of the subject property, prepared by a person who is not interested in the matter, action, or proceeding (G.S. 58-74-30) who has knowledge of the property's value, and who may be (but is not required to be) an appraiser, or a real estate broker;
  4. a printout from the tax office showing the tax value of the property;
  5. an affidavit of the owner of the property as to all liens and encumbrances against the property, showing the lienholder(s) and the amount of the payoff(s) (preferably the payoff information should come from the lienholder).
  6. a completed AOC-CR-201, which serves as a promissory note.
- (g) All documentation shall be provided to the Magistrate and delivered to the Clerk of Superior Court.
- (h) **Bond-Value Ratio:** The fair market value of the proposed property or properties owned by the proposed surety must be sufficiently in excess of the bond amount to cover costs in the action, fines, costs of sale and existing liens. The general rule is that the value of the property, net of liens, must be at least twice the amount of the bond. (Example: If the bond is \$20,000, then the net value of the property must be at least \$40,000.) However, each bond request will be looked at on a case by case basis to insure that the property value is sufficient to satisfy the amount of the bond plus any cost of collection. Exemptions under 1C-1601 should not be considered as they are not applicable to claims for appearance bonds. G.S. 1C-1601(e).

- (i) Proposed sureties (i.e. property owners) must be identified individuals. No Appearance Bonds will be allowed on property titled to "heirs," corporations or other entities.
- (j) A promissory note in favor of the State of North Carolina in the amount of the bond is NOT required. However, all sureties (i.e. property owners) must execute the AOC-CR-201, Appearance Bond for Pre-Trial Release, which acts as the promissory note. The parcel number(s) of the property or properties to secure the Appearance Bond must be placed on the form AOC-CR-201.
- (k) Following approval by the Clerk, the same documents must be presented to the Magistrate.
- (l) If the property bond is not approved following recording of the Deed of Trust, the Clerk will cause the unaccepted Deed of Trust to be cancelled of record.
- (m) Magistrates will confirm approval by the Clerk before authorizing release pursuant to a property bond and provide such documentation to the Clerk's office upon release.
- (n) If a judicial official has determined that a secured Appearance Bond is necessary, and holidays or weekends may delay completion of requisite documents to post the Appearance Bond, such delay should not normally be used as a reason to withhold the requirement of a secured Appearance Bond.

**41. Persons Authorized to Effect Release. G.S. 15A-537.**

- (a) Following any authorization of release of a defendant, any judicial official must effect the release of the person upon satisfying himself that the conditions of release have been met. In the absence of a judicial official, an officer or official of a law-enforcement agency who has been previously authorized to effect release, may, upon careful determination that such authorization has in fact been given, effect the release of a defendant under the authorized conditions.
- (b) Upon release of the person, the official or officer effecting release must file any bond, deposit or mortgage and other papers pertaining to the release with the clerk.
- (c) Any surety posting bond for a defendant, whether licensed bondsman or unlicensed accommodation bondsman, must be given a copy of the release order.

**42. Motions to Modify or Revoke Pretrial Release Orders:**

- (a) Motions by Sheriff. The sheriff or his representative shall have standing to apply to any appropriate judicial official for modification of the conditions of pretrial release for a person in the custody of a county detention facility ("prisoner"). In considering such an application, in addition to all other appropriate factors, such judicial official may consider:
  1. the number of such prisoners confined in the jail;
  2. the medical condition of the prisoner;
  3. any violations of jail rules and regulations by the prisoner; and
  4. whether the prisoner is cooperating with law enforcement in any ongoing criminal investigation.
- (b) Motions by Prisoners. G.S. 15A-538. A prisoner may apply to a superior court Judge in writing for modification of the conditions of pretrial release



imposed by a district court judge. In considering such an application, in addition to all other appropriate factors, the judge may consider:

1. whether the prisoner has filed a motion for a speedy trial;
2. the length of time the prisoner has been incarcerated on such charges;
3. the number of times the cases of the prisoner have appeared on a trial calendar;
4. the number of times the cases of the prisoner have appeared on a trial list;
5. the number of defendants on pretrial release whose cases have been tried since the prisoner was incarcerated on such charges;
6. any violations of jail rules and regulations while confined; and
7. any recommendation or position of the appropriate law enforcement agency.

(c) Motions by Prosecutor. The District Attorney may at any time apply to a judge for modification or revocation of an order of pre-trial release. G.S. 15A-539.

**43. Revocation of Pretrial Release Orders. G.S. 15A-534(f).**

- (a) For good cause shown any judge may at any time revoke an order of pretrial release.
- (b) Upon application of any defendant whose order of pretrial release has been revoked, the judge must set new conditions of pretrial release.

**44. Rules of Evidence.** In imposing conditions of pretrial or post-trial release and in modifying and revoking such orders, the judicial official must take into account all evidence available to him, which the judicial official considers reliable and is not strictly bound by the rules of evidence applicable to criminal trials. G.S. §§15A-534(g), 15A-536(f), and 8C-1101.

**45. Approved Forms.** Reserved for future use.

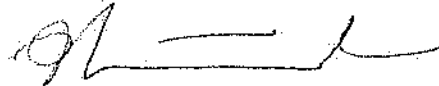
**46. Appendices to Policy.** Currently "Judicial District 30B: Determining Conditions of Pretrial Release" is attached as "Appendix A". This and any future Appendix may be amended as needed or required without modifying this policy.

**Effective Date.** This Policy shall be effective October 1, 2023.



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THE HONORABLE BRADLEY B. LETTS  
Senior Resident Superior Court Judge  
Superior Court Judicial District 30B



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THE HONORABLE ROY T. WIJEWICKRAMA  
Chief District Court Judge  
District Court Judicial District 30

## Appendix "A"

### JUDICIAL DISTRICT 308: DETERMINING CONDITIONS OF PRETRIAL RELEASE

Pursuant to Judicial District 308's Local Pretrial Release Policy, judicial officials must use the flowchart contained here, with accompanying footnotes and tables, when determining conditions of release in all cases except where the North Carolina General Statutes prescribe a different outcome or result.

May 1, 2021

New Criminal Offense or Probation Violation<sup>1</sup>

Misdemeanor, Class I- F Felony, Or A-E Felony

Probation Violation

- Check any that apply:
- Defendant has insufficient ties to the community to assure appearance<sup>2</sup>
  - Defendant has recent history of FTAs<sup>3</sup>
  - Defendant has prior record of
    - a breaking or entering conviction
    - a felony conviction; or
    - misdemeanor convictions within the last five years demonstrating a pattern of conduct<sup>4</sup>
  - Charged offense was committed when Defendant was on pretrial release for any prior offense<sup>5</sup>
  - Defendant is on supervised probation for any offense
  - Charged offense is drug trafficking offense<sup>6</sup> or an offense involving the distribution of drugs<sup>7</sup>
  - Charged offense demonstrates continued pattern of illegal drug use which is a danger to self and others
  - Charged offense involves domestic violence<sup>8</sup>
  - Charged offense involved Defendant's use of a firearm or deadly weapon
  - Charged offense is a felony & involved violence<sup>9</sup> or is a felony & resulted in injury to a person<sup>10</sup>
  - Charged offense requires sex offender registration<sup>11</sup> or failure to register as a sex offender<sup>12</sup>
  - Defendant is impaired such that immediate release is likely to cause harm to self/others/property<sup>13</sup>

If no box is checked

**Recommendation:**  
Impose a written promise, custody release, or unsecured bond<sup>17</sup>  
Deviations from the recommendation are permissible but must be documented

If any box is checked

Make the statutory determination

Statute *requires* the judicial official to impose a written promise, custody release, or unsecured bond *unless* he/she determines that such a release

- Will not reasonably assure the appearance of the defendant as required;
- Will pose a danger of injury to any person; or
- Is likely to result in destruction of evidence, subornation of perjury, or intimidation of potential witnesses<sup>14</sup>

If no box is checked

If any box is checked

**Recommendation:** Impose a secured bond<sup>15</sup> & record reasons for doing so<sup>16</sup>  
Deviations from the recommendation are permissible but must be documented

1. If the matter is before a judge on the State's motion to increase conditions after the return of a habitual felon indictment, the judge should treat the offense at its "habitualized" offense Class level.
2. The mere fact that the Defendant is homeless and does not have a home address does not warrant checking this box; inquiry should be focused on the Defendant's connections to the community.
3. FTAs within the last 2 years are most relevant.
4. The pattern of conduct must relate to the present offense. For example; the current charge involves drug possession and the Defendant has 3 priors within the last 5 years for misdemeanor drug or drug paraphernalia possession.
5. This factor covers situations where the Defendant continues to engage in the same type of conduct (e.g., repeat larceny) or continues to commit new offenses or demonstrates an escalating course of conduct (e.g., the defendant is charged with injury to real property while on pretrial release for communicating threats to the property owner).
6. See G.S. 90-95(h); North Carolina Crimes *supra* note 10, at 721-739 (discussing trafficking offenses).
7. For example, sale and delivery of a controlled substance and possession with intent to manufacture, sell, or deliver.
8. An offense involves domestic violence when the relationship between the parties is one of the following:
  - o Current or former spouses
  - o Currently or formerly lived together as if married
  - o Currently or formerly in a dating relationship
  - o Have a child in common
  - o Parent (or one in parental role)/child
  - o Grandparent/grandchild
  - o Current or former members of the same household

Note: this list is drawn from G.S. 15A-534.1, the 48-hour domestic violence hold statute.
9. For Example Robbery
10. This factor applies when the offense involved harm to a person (e.g., assaultive conduct). It does not apply to offenses in which property is taken or harmed (e.g., larceny, embezzlement obtaining property by false pretense, etc.)
11. For a list of offenses requiring sex offender registration, see Jamie Markham & Shea Denning North Carolina Sentencing handbook 2017-18 (UNC School of Government, forthcoming 2018).
12. See G.S. 14-208.11(a); Jessica Smith, North Carolina Crimes: a guidebook on elements of Crime 268 (7<sup>th</sup> ED 212) (discussing this offense.)
13. For defendants in impaired driving cases, follow impaired driving procedures. In all other cases if a secured bond is imposed only because of this factor and the defendant remains detained, conditions must be revised without consideration of this factor when the defendant's impairment no longer presents a danger of physical injury to himself or herself or others or of damage to property, but in any event, no later than 24 hours after secured bond was set.
14. G.S. 15A-534(b). When making this inquiry, judicial officials should consider whether pretrial restrictions (e.g., restrictions on travel, associations, conduct or place of abode, as well as abstention from alcohol consumption, as verified by the use of an approved continuous alcohol monitoring system), which can be imposed with a written promise, custody release or unsecured bond can sufficiently mitigate pretrial risk. See G.S. 15A-534(a).
15. If a secured appearance bond is imposed: (1) the judicial official must consider—among other relevant factors—the defendant's ability to pay; and (2) if a secured bond is set in excess of these recommended maximums, reasons for doing so must be documented.
16. See G.S. 15A-534(b) (when judicial official imposes secured bond instead of written promise, custody release or unsecured bond, the judicial official "must record the reasons for so doing in writing to the extent provided in the policies or requirements issued by the senior resident superior court judge").
17. Pretrial restrictions can accompany any pretrial condition. See G.S. 15A-534(a) & note 14 above.

**Recommended Maximum Secured Appearance Bond Amounts—Drug Trafficking\***

If a bond is set in excess of these recommendations, reasons for doing so must be documented.

Drug	Amount	Class	Recommended Maximum Secured Bond
Marijuana	>10 lbs - 49 lbs.	H	\$5,000
	50-1,999	G	\$25,000
	2,000-9,999	F	\$50,000
	10,000 or more	D	\$200,000
Methaqualone	1,000 - 4,999 dosage units	G	\$25,000
	5,000 - 9,999	F	\$50,000
	10,000 or more	D	\$200,000
Cocaine	28-199 grams	G	\$50,000
	200-399	F	\$100,000
	400 or more	D	\$250,000
Methamphetamine	28-199 grams	F	\$50,000
	200-399 grams	E	\$100,000
	400 or more	C	\$250,000
Amphetamine	28-199 grams	H	\$5,000
	200-399	G	\$25,000
	400 or more	E	\$100,000
Opium/Opiate/ Oploid/Heroin	4-13 grams	F	\$50,000
	14-27	E	\$100,000
	28 or more	C	\$500,000
LSD	100-499 dosage units	G	\$25,000
	500-999	F	\$50,000
	1,000 or more	D	\$200,000
MDA/MDMA	100-499 units/28-199 grams	G	\$25,000
	500-999 units/200-399 grams	F	\$50,000
	1,000 units/400 grams or more	D	\$250,000
Substituted Cathinones	28-199 grams	F	\$50,000
	200-399	E	\$100,000
	400 or more	C	\$250,000
Synthetic Cannabinoids	In excess of 50-249 dosage units**	H	\$5,000
	250-1,249	G	\$25,000
	1,250-3,749	F	\$50,000
	3,750 or more	D	\$200,000

\* The recommended maximum secured bonds included in this table are taken from the minimum fines required for the respective offenses.

\*\*A "dosage unit" is 3 grams of synthetic cannabinoid or any mixture containing such substance

**Recommended maximum Secured Appearance Bond Amounts—Felonies (Other Than Drug Trafficking)**

If a bond is set in excess of these recommendations, reasons for doing so must be documented.

Punishment Class	Recommended Maximum Secured Bond
A	Set by Judge
B1	\$200,000
B2	\$200,000
C	\$100,000
D	\$50,000
E	\$25,000
F	\$20,000
G	\$15,000
H	\$10,000
I	\$2,500

**Recommended Maximum Secured Appearance Bond Amounts—Misdemeanors**

If a bond is set in excess of these recommendations, reasons for doing so must be documented.

Punishment Class	Recommended Maximum Secured Bond
A1	\$1,000
1	\$500
2	Use written promise, custody release or unsecured bond
3	Use written promise, custody release or unsecured bond
DWI (non-felony)	\$500