

Part 3. Misdemeanor Sentencing.

§ 15A-1340.20. Procedure and incidents of sentence of imprisonment for misdemeanors.

(a) Application to Misdemeanors Only. – This Part applies to sentences imposed for misdemeanor convictions.

(b) Procedure Generally; Term of Imprisonment. – A sentence imposed for a misdemeanor shall contain a sentence disposition specified for the class of offense and prior conviction level, and any sentence of imprisonment shall be within the range specified for the class of offense and prior conviction level, unless applicable statutes require otherwise. The kinds of sentence dispositions are active punishment, intermediate punishment, and community punishment. Except for the work and earned time credits authorized by G.S. 162-60, or earned time credits authorized by G.S. 15A-1355(c), if applicable, an offender whose sentence of imprisonment is activated shall serve each day of the term imposed.

(c) Suspension of Sentence. – Unless otherwise provided, the court shall suspend a sentence of imprisonment if the class of offense and prior conviction level requires community or intermediate punishment as a sentence disposition.

(c1) Active Punishment Exception. – The court may impose an active punishment for a class of offense and prior conviction level that does not otherwise authorize the imposition of an active punishment if the term of imprisonment is equal to or less than the total amount of time the offender has already spent committed to or in confinement in any State or local correctional, mental, or other institution as a result of the charge that culminated in the sentence.

(d) Earned Time Authorization. – An offender sentenced to a term of imprisonment that is activated is eligible to receive earned time credit for misdemeanant offenders awarded by the Division of Prisons of the Department of Adult Correction or the custodian of a local confinement facility, pursuant to rules adopted in accordance with law and pursuant to G.S. 162-60. These rules and statute combined shall not award misdemeanant offenders more than four days of earned time credit per month of incarceration. (1993, c. 538, s. 1; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(b); 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 767, s. 1; 1997-79, s. 1; 2011-145, s. 19.1(h); 2017-186, s. 2(jjj); 2021-180, s. 19C.9(p).)