

§ 20-79.6. Special registration plates for members of the judiciary.

(a) Supreme Court. – A special plate issued to a Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court shall bear the words "Supreme Court" and the Great Seal of North Carolina and a number from 1 through 7. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of North Carolina shall be issued the plate bearing the number 1 and the remaining plates shall be issued to the Associate Justices on the basis of seniority.

Special plates issued to retired members of the Supreme Court shall bear a number indicating the member's position of seniority at the time of retirement followed by the letter "X" to indicate the member's retired status.

(a1) Court of Appeals. – A special plate issued to a Judge of the North Carolina Court of Appeals shall bear the words "Court of Appeals" and the Great Seal of North Carolina and a number beginning with the number 1. The Chief Judge of the North Carolina Court of Appeals shall be issued a plate with the number 1 and the remaining plates shall be issued to the Associate Judges with the numbers assigned on the basis of seniority.

Special plates issued to retired members of the Court of Appeals shall bear a number indicating the member's position of seniority at the time of retirement followed by the letter "X" to indicate the member's retired status.

(b) Superior Court. – A special plate issued to a resident superior court judge shall bear the letter "J" followed by a number indicative of the judicial district the judge serves. The number issued to the senior resident superior court judge shall be the numerical designation of the judge's judicial district, as defined in G.S. 7A-41.1(a)(1). If a district has more than one regular resident superior court judge, a special plate for a resident superior court judge of that district shall bear the number issued to the senior resident superior court judge followed by a hyphen and a letter of the alphabet beginning with the letter "A" to indicate the judge's seniority.

For any grouping of districts having the same numerical designation, other than districts where there are two or more resident superior court judges, the number issued to the senior resident superior court judge shall be the number the districts in the set have in common. A special plate issued to the other regular resident superior court judges of the set of districts shall bear the number issued to the senior resident superior court judge followed by a hyphen and a letter of the alphabet beginning with the letter "A" to indicate the judge's seniority among all of the regular resident superior court judges of the set of districts. The letter assigned to a resident superior court judge will not necessarily correspond with the letter designation of the district the judge serves.

Where there are two or more regular resident superior court judges for the district or set of districts, the registration plate with the letter "A" shall be issued to the judge who, from among all the regular resident superior court judges of the district or set of districts, has the most continuous service as a regular resident superior court judge; provided if two or more judges are of equal service, the oldest of those judges shall receive the next letter registration plate. Thereafter, registration plates shall be issued based on seniority within the district or set of districts.

A special judge, emergency judge, or retired judge of the superior court shall be issued a special plate bearing the letter "J" followed by a number designated by the Administrative Office of the Courts with the approval of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of North Carolina. The plate for a retired judge shall have the letter "X" after the designated number to indicate the judge's retired status.

(b1) Clerk of Superior Court. – A special plate issued to a clerk of superior court shall bear the words "Clerk Superior Court" and the letter "C" followed by a number indicative of the county the clerk serves. Special plates issued to retired clerks of superior court shall bear a number indicating the clerk's county of service at the time of retirement followed by the letter "X" to indicate the clerk's retired status.

(c) District Court. – A special plate issued to a North Carolina district court judge shall bear the letter "J" followed by a number. For the chief judge of the district court district, the number shall be equal to the sum of the numerical designation of the district court district the chief judge serves, plus 100. The number for all other judges of the district courts serving within the same district court district shall be the same number as appears on the special plate issued to the chief district judge followed by a letter of the alphabet beginning with the letter "A" to indicate the judge's seniority. A retired district court judge shall be issued a similar plate except that the numerical designation shall be followed by the letter "X" to indicate the judge's retired status.

(d) United States. – A special plate issued to a Justice of the United States Supreme Court, a Judge of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals, or a District Judge of the United States District Court residing in North Carolina shall bear the words "U.S. J" followed by a number beginning with "1". The number shall reflect the judge's seniority based on continuous service as a United States Judge as designated by the Secretary of State. A judge who has retired or taken senior status shall be issued a similar plate except that the number shall be based on the date of the judge's retirement or assumption of senior status and shall follow the numerical designation of active justices and judges. (1991, c. 672, s. 2; c. 726, s. 23; 1999-403, s. 5; 1999-456, s. 67.1; 2022-6, s. 19.1(b).)