

§ 7A-272. Jurisdiction of district court; concurrent jurisdiction in guilty or no contest pleas for certain felony offenses; appellate and appropriate relief procedures applicable.

(a) Except as provided in this Article, the district court has exclusive, original jurisdiction for the trial of criminal actions, including municipal ordinance violations, below the grade of felony, and the same are hereby declared to be petty misdemeanors.

(b) The district court has jurisdiction to conduct preliminary examinations and to bind the accused over for trial upon waiver of preliminary examination or upon a finding of probable cause, making appropriate orders as to bail or commitment.

(c) When the prosecutor and defendant consent, the district court has jurisdiction to accept a defendant's plea of guilty or no contest to a Class H or I felony if one of the following criteria is met:

- (1) The defendant is charged with a felony in an information filed pursuant to G.S. 15A-644.1, the felony is pending in district court, and the defendant has not been indicted for the offense.
- (2) The defendant has been indicted for a criminal offense but the defendant's case is transferred from superior court to district court pursuant to G.S. 15A-1029.1.

The chief district court judge may schedule and assign sessions of court to accept pleas of guilty or no contest pursuant to this subsection, and the district attorney shall cause agreed-upon pleas to be calendared for these sessions.

(d) Provisions in Chapter 15A of the General Statutes apply to a plea authorized under subsection (c) of this section as if the plea had been entered in superior court, so that a district court judge is authorized to act in these matters in the same manner as a superior court judge would be authorized to act if the plea had been entered in superior court, and appeals that are authorized in these matters are to the appellate division.

(e) With the consent of the chief district court judge and the senior resident superior court judge, the district court has jurisdiction to preside over the supervision of a probation judgment entered in superior court in which the defendant is required to participate in a local judicially managed accountability and recovery court program pursuant to G.S. 15A-1343(b1)(2b) or is participating in a local judicially managed accountability and recovery court program pursuant to a deferred prosecution agreement under G.S. 15A-1341(a2) or the terms of a conditional discharge under G.S. 15A-1341(a5). The district court may modify or extend the probation judgment, but jurisdiction to revoke probation supervised under this subsection is as provided in G.S. 7A-271(f).

(f) Repealed by Session Laws 2022-6, s. 8.2(b), effective March 17, 2022. (1965, c. 310, s. 1; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 725, ss. 1, 2; 2009-452, s. 2; 2009-516, s. 8(a), (b); 2010-96, s. 26(b); 2010-97, s. 13; 2014-119, s. 2(b); 2022-6, s. 8.2(b); 2023-97, s. 3(a).)