

North Carolina Court of Appeals to Release New Information Related to Petitions



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Date 2022-07-29 09:24



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 29, 2022



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RALEIGH — On August 1, 2022, the [North Carolina Court of Appeals](#) will begin disclosing, on a 90-day delay, the identity and votes of the judges who rule on petitions filed with the Court. The Court will also disclose, in real-time, whether a petition was decided by a unanimous or majority vote.



"Since its founding, the Court has not disclosed the judges who rule on the hundreds of petitions the Court receives each year," said [Chief Judge Donna Stroud](#). "The Court has been discussing potential changes to this practice for some time, and we have been working on our internal procedures and configuring our electronic docketing system to make these new disclosures possible. We're glad to take this step to give the public additional information regarding petitions."

A petition is a request for the Court to provide some form of relief, such as staying a trial court's judgment while the parties appeal their case, compelling a trial court to act in a case, or asking the Court to review a trial court's decision when there is no right to appeal. Each petition is decided by a three-judge panel, and the ruling takes the form of a brief order signed by the clerk of court.

Under the Court's new policy, on the day an order ruling on a petition is released, it will state whether the panel's decision was unanimous or by a majority vote. The order will not, however, identify the three judges who heard the petition or how they voted. Ninety days after the order is filed, the [Court of Appeals - Orders webpage](#) will list the three judges who voted on the petition and note a dissenting judge, if any. The Court has been electronically recording judges' votes since March 10, 2022. This means that on the go-live date, the judges' votes on petitions reach the 90-day mark, the judges and their votes will be disclosed.

Historically, the Court has not disclosed the membership of a panel as a measure to prevent judge shopping. Waiting 90 days to reveal panel membership allows the Court to maintain this policy goal, as the current panel will continue to be anonymous and the composition of future panels will remain difficult to predict.

The public can search and view orders on the [Court of Appeals-Orders webpage](#).

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About North Carolina Judicial Branch

The [North Carolina Judicial Branch](#) is an equal and distinctively separate branch and core function of government. More than 7,000 Judicial Branch employees statewide administer justice in courthouses in North Carolina's 100 counties. The [Judicial Branch budget for FY 2020-21](#) was \$598.2M, 89.2% of which is used to pay salaries and the remaining 10.8% is used for operations. The Judicial Branch receives only 2.44% of the overall State budget.

About North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts

The North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts (NCAOC) is the administrative agency for the [North Carolina Judicial Branch](#), providing administrative services to help the North Carolina court system operate more efficiently and effectively, taking into account each courthouse's diverse needs, caseloads, and available resources.

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