

A. Traynham Dorn Appointed as Johnston County's First Public Defender



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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RALEIGH — Senior Resident Superior Court Judge Thomas H. Lock appointed A. Traynham Dorn (right) as the first Public Defender in [Johnston County](#). Ms. Dorn's work experience includes over 20 years in private practice where she represented criminal defendants in district and superior court. In addition, her experience includes a community-focused approach through working with indigent clients and serving as a Guardian ad Litem.



"I am excited to appoint Traynham Dorn as Public Defender for Johnston County," said Judge Lock. "She has tried cases in both the superior and district courts of our county for a number of years, and she has proven herself to be a zealous advocate for her clients. She is highly respected by the Bar and court personnel, and I am confident she will excel in her new position."

Ms. Dorn holds a Bachelor of Arts from Queens College in Charlotte, and a Juris Doctor from New England School of Law in Boston, Massachusetts. Her appointment as Public Defender for Defender District 13 takes effect July 1, 2024.

"This was a badly needed position in our state budget and I am grateful to Senator Benton Sawrey for his efforts, and to Representatives Larry Strickland and Donna White for their support on the House side," said Judge Lock. "I am also grateful to Chief Justice Paul Newby for his support of the constitutional right to effective assistance of counsel for all criminal defendants."

ABOUT THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

Pursuant to North Carolina law, the senior resident superior court judge appoints the chief public defender for [each defender district](#). Public defenders provide legal representation at state expense for persons who cannot afford to hire private counsel but are entitled to counsel under constitutional or statutory authority. The cases can range from criminal charges to civil commitment, juvenile proceedings, or loss of parental rights.

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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 2021–22](#) was \$672.4M, 86.2% of which is used to pay salaries and the remaining 13.8% is used for operations. The Judicial Branch receives only 2.59% 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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