A county may, pursuant to G.S. 160A-167, provide for the defense of:

(1) Any county officer or employee, including the county board of elections or any county election official.

(2) Any member of a volunteer fire department or rescue squad which receives public funds.

(2a) Any soil and water conservation supervisor, and any local soil and water conservation employee, whether the employee is a county employee or an employee of a soil and water conservation district.

(3) Any person or professional association who at the request of the board of county commissioners provides medical or dental services to inmates in the custody of the sheriff and is sued pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 with respect to the services. (1957, c. 436; 1973, c. 822, s. 1; 1977, c. 307, s. 1; 1989, c. 733, s. 2; 2001-300, s. 1.)