

**§ 15A-1022. Advising defendant of consequences of guilty plea; informed choice; factual basis for plea; admission of guilt not required.**

(a) Except in the case of corporations or in misdemeanor cases in which there is a waiver of appearance under G.S. 15A-1011(a)(3), a superior court judge may not accept a plea of guilty or no contest from the defendant without first addressing him personally and:

- (1) Informing him that he has a right to remain silent and that any statement he makes may be used against him;
- (2) Determining that he understands the nature of the charge;
- (3) Informing him that he has a right to plead not guilty;
- (4) Informing him that by his plea he waives his right to trial by jury and his right to be confronted by the witnesses against him;
- (5) Determining that the defendant, if represented by counsel, is satisfied with his representation;
- (6) Informing him of the maximum possible sentence on the charge for the class of offense for which the defendant is being sentenced, including that possible from consecutive sentences, and of the mandatory minimum sentence, if any, on the charge; and
- (7) Informing him that if he is not a citizen of the United States of America, a plea of guilty or no contest may result in deportation, the exclusion from admission to this country, or the denial of naturalization under federal law.

(b) By inquiring of the prosecutor and defense counsel and the defendant personally, the judge must determine whether there were any prior plea discussions, whether the parties have entered into any arrangement with respect to the plea and the terms thereof, and whether any improper pressure was exerted in violation of G.S. 15A-1021(b). The judge may not accept a plea of guilty or no contest from a defendant without first determining that the plea is a product of informed choice.

(c) The judge may not accept a plea of guilty or no contest without first determining that there is a factual basis for the plea. This determination may be based upon information including but not limited to:

- (1) A statement of the facts by the prosecutor.
- (2) A written statement of the defendant.
- (3) An examination of the presentence report.
- (4) Sworn testimony, which may include reliable hearsay.
- (5) A statement of facts by the defense counsel.

(d) The judge may accept the defendant's plea of no contest even though the defendant does not admit that he is in fact guilty if the judge is nevertheless satisfied that there is a factual basis for the plea. The judge must advise the defendant that if he pleads no contest he will be treated as guilty whether or not he admits guilt. (1973, c. 1286, s. 1; 1975, c. 166, s. 27; 1989, c. 280; 1993, c. 538, s. 10; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(b).)