

**§ 15A-303. Criminal summons.**

(a) Definition. – A criminal summons consists of a statement of the crime or infraction of which the person to be summoned is accused, and an order directing that the person so accused appear and answer to the charges made against him. It is based upon a showing of probable cause supported by oath or affirmation.

(b) Statement of the Crime or Infraction. – The criminal summons must contain a statement of the crime or infraction of which the person summoned is accused. No criminal summons is invalid because of any technicality of pleading if the statement is sufficient to identify the crime or infraction.

(c) Showing of Probable Cause; Record. – The showing of probable cause for the issuance of a criminal summons, and the record thereof, is the same as provided in G.S. 15A-304(d) for the issuance of a warrant for arrest.

(d) Order to Appear. – The summons must order the person named to appear in a designated court at a designated time and date and answer to the charges made against him and advise him that he may be held in contempt of court for failure to appear. Except for cause noted in the criminal summons by the issuing official, an appearance date may not be set more than one month following the issuance or reissuance of the criminal summons.

(e) Enforcement. –

(1) If the offense charged is a criminal offense, a warrant for arrest, based upon the same or another showing of probable cause, may be issued by the same or another issuing official, notwithstanding the prior issuance of a criminal summons.

(2) If the offense charged is a criminal offense, an order for arrest, as provided in G.S. 15A-305, may issue for the arrest of any person who fails to appear as directed in a duly executed criminal summons.

(3) A person served with criminal summons who willfully fails to appear as directed may be punished for contempt as provided in G.S. 5A-11.

(4) Repealed by Session Laws 1975, c. 166, s. 4.

(f) Who May Issue. – A criminal summons, valid throughout the State, may be issued by any person authorized to issue warrants for arrest. (1973, c. 1286, s. 1; 1975, c. 166, ss. 4, 5; 1975, 2nd Sess., c. 983, s. 138; 1983, c. 294, s. 3; 1985, c. 764, s. 5.)