

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 1999

SESSION LAW 1999-372
SENATE BILL 966

AN ACT RELATING TO THE AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO CONTRACTS FOR
CONDUCTING MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY BUILDING INSPECTIONS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. G.S. 153A-353 reads as rewritten:

"§ 153A-353. Joint inspection department; other arrangements.

A county may enter into and carry out contracts with one or more other counties or cities under which the parties agree to create and support a joint inspection department for enforcing those State and local laws and local ordinances and regulations specified in the agreement. The governing bodies of the contracting units may make any necessary appropriations for this purpose.

In lieu of a joint inspection department, a county may designate an inspector from another county or from a city to serve as a member of the county inspection department, with the approval of the governing body of the other county or ~~city, or may city.~~ A county may also contract with an individual who is not a city or county employee but who holds one of the applicable certificates as provided in G.S. 153A-351.1 or ~~G.S. 160A-411.1.~~ G.S. 160A-411.1 or with the employer of an individual who holds one of the applicable certificates as provided in G.S. 153A-351.1 or G.S. 160A-411.1. Contracts with an individual or with the employer of an individual who is not an employee of another county or a city may be entered into only for specifically designated projects. The inspector, if designated from another county or city under this section, while exercising the duties of the position, is a county employee. The county shall have the same potential liability, if any, for inspections conducted by an individual who is not an employee of the county as it does for an individual who is an employee of the county. The company or individual with whom the county contracts shall have errors and omissions and other insurance coverage acceptable to the county."

Section 2. G.S. 153A-355 reads as rewritten:

"§ 153A-355. Conflicts of interest.

Unless he or she is the owner of the building, no member of an inspection department ~~or other individual contracting with a county to conduct inspections~~ shall be financially interested or employed by a business that is financially interested in furnishing labor, material, or appliances for the construction, alteration, or maintenance of any building within the county's territorial jurisdiction or any part or system thereof, or in making plans or specifications therefor. No member of any inspection department or other individual or an employee of a company contracting with a county to conduct

inspections may engage in any work that is inconsistent with his or her duties or with the interest of the ~~county~~ county, as determined by the county. The county must find a conflict of interest if any of the following is the case:

- (1) If the individual, company, or employee of a company contracting to perform inspections for the county has worked for the owner, developer, contractor, or project manager of the project to be inspected within the last two years.
- (2) If the individual, company, or employee of a company contracting to perform inspections for the county is closely related to the owner, developer, contractor, or project manager of the project to be inspected.
- (3) If the individual, company, or employee of a company contracting to perform inspections for the county has a financial or business interest in the project to be inspected."

Section 3. G.S. 160A-413 reads as rewritten:

"§ 160A-413. Joint inspection department; other arrangements.

A city council may enter into and carry out contracts with another city, county, or combination thereof under which the parties agree to create and support a joint inspection department for the enforcement of State and local laws specified in the agreement. The governing boards of the contracting parties are authorized to make any necessary appropriations for this purpose.

In lieu of a joint inspection department, a city council may designate an inspector from any other city or county to serve as a member of its inspection department with the approval of the governing body of the other city or ~~county~~, or ~~may~~ county. A city may also contract with an individual who is not a city or county employee but who holds one of the applicable certificates as provided in G.S. 160A-411.1 or ~~G.S. 153A-351.1~~. G.S. 153A-351.1 or with the employer of an individual who holds one of the applicable certificates as provided in G.S. 160A-411.1 or G.S. 153A-351.1. Contracts with an individual or with the employer of an individual who is not an employee of another city or a county may be entered into only for specifically designated projects. The inspector, if designated from another city or county under this section, shall, while exercising the duties of the position, be considered a municipal employee. The city shall have the same potential liability, if any, for inspections conducted by an individual who is not an employee of the city as it does for an individual who is an employee of the city. The company or individual with whom the city contracts shall have errors and omissions and other insurance coverage acceptable to the city.

The city council of any city may request the board of county commissioners of the county in which the city is located to direct one or more county building inspectors to exercise their powers within part or all of the city's jurisdiction, and they shall thereupon be empowered to do so until the city council officially withdraws its request in the manner provided in G.S. 160A-360(g)."

Section 4. G.S. 160A-415 reads as rewritten:

"§ 160A-415. Conflicts of interest.

No member of an inspection department ~~or other individual contracting with a city to conduct inspections~~ shall be financially interested or employed by a business that is financially interested in the furnishing of labor, material, or appliances for the construction, alteration, or maintenance of any building within the city's jurisdiction or any part or system thereof, or in the making of plans or specifications therefor, unless he is the owner of the building. No member of an inspection department or other individual or an employee of a company contracting with a city to conduct inspections shall engage in any work that is inconsistent with his or her duties or with the interest of the ~~city~~ city, as determined by the city. The city must find a conflict of interest if any of the following is the case:

- (1) If the individual, company, or employee of a company contracting to perform inspections for the city has worked for the owner, developer, contractor, or project manager of the project to be inspected within the last two years.
- (2) If the individual, company, or employee of a company contracting to perform inspections for the city is closely related to the owner, developer, contractor, or project manager of the project to be inspected.
- (3) If the individual, company, or employee of a company contracting to perform inspections for the city has a financial or business interest in the project to be inspected.

The provisions of this section do not apply to a firefighter whose primary duties are fire suppression and rescue, but who engages in some fire inspection activities as a secondary responsibility of the firefighter's employment as a firefighter, except no firefighter may inspect any work actually done, or materials or appliances supplied, by the firefighter or the firefighter's business within the preceding six years."

Section 5. G.S. 143-151.8 reads as rewritten:

"§ 143-151.8. Definitions.

- (a) As used in this Article, unless the context otherwise requires:
 - (1) "Board" means the North Carolina Code Officials Qualification Board.
 - (2) "Code" means the North Carolina State Building Code and related local building rules approved by the Building Code Council heretofore or hereinafter enacted, adopted or approved pursuant to G.S. 143-138.
 - (3) "Code enforcement" means the examination and approval of plans and specifications, or the inspection of the manner of construction, workmanship, and materials for construction of buildings and structures and components thereof, or the enforcement of fire code regulations as an employee of the State or local government ~~or other~~ as an individual contracting with the State or a local government to conduct inspections, or as an individual who is employed by a company contracting with a county or a city to conduct inspections, except an employee of the State Department of Labor engaged in the administration and enforcement of those sections of the Code which

pertain to boilers and elevators, to assure compliance with the State Building Code and related local building rules.

(4) "Local inspection department" means the agency or agencies of local government with authority to make inspections of buildings and to enforce the Code and other laws, ordinances, and rules enacted by the State and the local government which establish standards and requirements applicable to the construction, alteration, repair, or demolition of buildings, and conditions that may create hazards of fire, explosion, or related hazards.

(5) "Qualified Code-enforcement official" means a person qualified under this Article to engage in the practice of Code enforcement.

(b) For purposes of this Article, the population of a city or county shall be determined according to the most current federal census, unless otherwise specified."

Section 6. This act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 19th day of July, 1999.

s/ Dennis A. Wicker
President of the Senate

s/ James B. Black
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ James B. Hunt, Jr.
Governor

Approved 9:03 p.m. this 4th day of August, 1999