

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2011

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HOUSE BILL 356

Short Title: Psychological Counseling for Jurors. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives M. Alexander, Cotham, and Killian (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of Sponsors, see Bill Information on the NCGA Web Site.

Referred to: Judiciary.

March 16, 2011

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING FOR JURORS WHO ARE
3 EXPOSED TO GRAPHIC EVIDENCE OR TESTIMONY.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.** Chapter 9 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new
6 Article to read:

7 "Article 6.

8 "Juror Counseling.

9 "**§ 9-33. Psychological counseling for jurors exposed to graphic evidence or testimony.**

10 (a) A judge who has presided over a trial involving graphic evidence or testimony may
11 offer not more than 10 hours of posttrial psychological counseling, without charge, to a person
12 who served as a juror or alternate juror in that trial and who requests posttrial psychological
13 counseling not later than 180 days after the date on which the jury in the trial was dismissed.

14 (b) A judge offering counseling under subsection (a) of this section may authorize
15 counseling coordinated by the Administrative Office of the Courts through the State Employee
16 Assistance Program or through other arrangements made with a county-operated area mental
17 health provider.

18 (c) Counseling provided under this section may be individual or group counseling.

19 (d) As provided in G.S. 7A-312(b), jurors may waive their juror fees to offset the cost
20 of counseling provided under this section."

21 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 7A-312(b) reads as rewritten:

22 "(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, the Administrative Office of the
23 Courts may select a judicial district to operate a pilot program in which a juror may waive
24 payment of the per diem fees provided for in that subsection. A juror waiving the fee may
25 designate that the fee be used for any of the following services, if such services are provided in
26 the district: (i) client treatment and service programs associated with a drug treatment or DWI
27 treatment court program; (ii) courthouse self-help centers; (iii) courthouse child care centers;
28 (iv) legal aid programs operated by a nonprofit corporation operating within the district; ~~and~~ (v)
29 the Crime Victims Compensation Fund; and (vi) psychological counseling for jurors
30 exposed to graphic evidence or testimony under G.S. 9-33. If no such services are provided
31 within the district, then waived fees are transferred to the Crime Victims Compensation Fund."

32 **SECTION 3.** Of the funds appropriated to the Judicial Department for the
33 2011-2013 biennium, the Department may use up to the sum of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000)
34 for the 2011-2012 fiscal year and the sum of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for the 2012-2013
35 fiscal year to implement the provisions of this act.



1 **SECTION 4.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2011, and applies to persons
2 serving as jurors on or after that date.