

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2025**

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**HOUSE BILL 953**

Short Title: Study Committee on ADA/APD/PAC Pay. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Budd, Carson Smith, and T. Brown (Primary Sponsors).  
*For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.*

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

April 14, 2025

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE STUDY COMMITTEE ON ASSISTANT DISTRICT  
3 ATTORNEY, ASSISTANT PUBLIC DEFENDER, AND PRIVATE ASSIGNED  
4 COUNSEL PAY RATES.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 **SECTION 1.** Committee Established. – There is established the Study Committee  
7 on Assistant District Attorney, Assistant Public Defender, and Private Assigned Counsel Pay  
8 Rates (Committee). The Committee shall include 12 voting members, as follows:

- 9 (1) Two members of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of  
10 the House of Representatives.  
11 (2) Two members of the Senate, appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the  
12 Senate.  
13 (3) Two members appointed by the Conference of District Attorneys.  
14 (4) Two members appointed by the Office of Indigent Defense Services.  
15 (5) Two members of the State Bar that practice criminal law, appointed by the  
16 North Carolina Bar Association.  
17 (6) Two members of the State Bar that practice criminal law, appointed by the  
18 Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

19 **SECTION 2.** Nonvoting Members; Cochairs. – The Executive Director of the  
20 Conference of District Attorneys and the Executive Director of Indigent Defense Services shall  
21 serve as nonvoting ex officio members of the Committee and shall serve as cochairs of the  
22 Committee.

23 **SECTION 3.** Vacancies. – A vacancy on the Committee shall be filled by the original  
24 appointing authority using the criteria for the prior appointment.

25 **SECTION 4.** Duties. – The Committee shall serve as a study and advisory committee  
26 on the pay rates of assistant district attorneys, assistant public defenders, and private assigned  
27 counsel. Pursuant to this work, the Committee shall study, at a minimum, each of the following:

- 28 (1) The current state of assistant district attorney, assistant public defender, and  
29 private assigned counsel pay throughout the State, in general, and when  
30 separated into the three cost-of-living categories of urban, suburban, and rural.  
31 (2) The current pay structure for assistant district attorneys, assistant public  
32 defenders, and private assigned counsel.  
33 (3) The comparison between North Carolina's pay and pay structures studied  
34 pursuant to subdivisions (1) and (2) of this section and the pay and pay  
35 structures of comparable positions in neighboring and nearby states.



- 1 (4) The differences in cost of living, availability of housing, and other associated  
2 costs in various cities, counties, and regions of the State.
- 3 (5) Factors that positively or negatively influence law students and attorneys  
4 regarding the choice to serve as assistant district attorneys, assistant public  
5 defenders, or private assigned counsel, including, at a minimum, the following  
6 factors:
- 7 a. Local amenities.  
8 b. Local school quality.  
9 c. Economic development opportunities.
- 10 (6) The structured pay model utilized by the Offices of the United States  
11 Attorneys.
- 12 (7) The structured pay and amenity allowances utilized by the United States  
13 Armed Services.
- 14 (8) Any other subject the Committee finds relevant to its work.

15 **SECTION 5.** Administration. – The Committee shall meet upon the call of its  
16 cochairs, and a quorum of the Committee shall be a majority of its voting members. Members of  
17 the Committee shall receive per diem and necessary travel and subsistence expenses in  
18 accordance with G.S. 120-3.1, 138-5, and 138-6, as applicable. The Committee may meet in the  
19 Legislative Building or the Legislative Office Building. The Legislative Services Officer shall  
20 assign professional and clerical staff and provide other necessary resources to assist the  
21 Committee in its work.

22 **SECTION 6.** Reporting. – No later than March 1, 2026, in an interim report, and  
23 March 1, 2027, in a final report, the Committee shall report to the following entities regarding  
24 the information studied pursuant to this act, including any related findings and legislative  
25 recommendations:

- 26 (1) The Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety.  
27 (2) The Senate Appropriations Committee on Justice and Public Safety.  
28 (3) The House Appropriations Committee on Justice and Public Safety.

29 **SECTION 7.** This act is effective when it becomes law.