

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2025**

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**SENATE BILL 311  
Judiciary Committee Substitute Adopted 3/25/25**

Short Title: Utility Worker Protection Act.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 18, 2025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT TO INCREASE THE PUNISHMENT FOR COMMITTING AN ASSAULT  
AGAINST A UTILITY OR COMMUNICATIONS WORKER.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** G.S. 14-33(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) Unless ~~his~~the conduct is covered under some other provision of law providing greater punishment, any person who commits any assault, assault and battery, or affray is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor if, in the course of the assault, assault and battery, or affray, ~~he~~he or she does any of the following:

...

(9) Commits an assault and battery against a sports official when the sports official is discharging or attempting to discharge official duties at a sports event, or immediately after the sports event at which the sports official discharged official duties. A "sports official" is a person at a sports event who enforces the rules of the event, such as an umpire or referee, or a person who supervises the participants, such as a coach. A "sports event" includes any interscholastic or intramural athletic activity in a primary, middle, junior high, or high school, college, or university, any organized athletic activity sponsored by a community, business, or nonprofit organization, any athletic activity that is a professional or semiprofessional event, and any other organized athletic activity in the State.

(10) Assaults a utility or communications worker while the worker is (i) readily identifiable as a worker and (ii) discharging or attempting to discharge his or her duties. For purposes of this subdivision, the term "utility or communications worker" means an employee of, agent of, or under contract with an organization, entity, or company, whether State-created or privately, municipally, county, or cooperatively owned, that provides electricity, natural gas, liquid petroleum, water, wastewater, telecommunications services, or internet access services. For purposes of this subdivision, the term "readily identifiable as a worker" shall be construed to include the worker wearing, at the time of the assault, a uniform, hat, or other outerwear bearing the logo of the utility or communications company for which the worker is an employee of, agent of, or under contract with.

**SECTION 2.** Prosecutions for offenses committed before the effective date of this act are not abated or affected by this act, and the statutes that would be applicable but for this act remain applicable to those prosecutions.



1                   **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective December 1, 2025, and applies to offenses  
2 committed on or after that date.