People First Language Update: Units 1 through 3

1.(a)

"§ 1-301.2. Transfer or appeal of special proceedings; exceptions.

(a) Applicability. – This section applies to special proceedings heard by the clerk of superior court in the exercise of the judicial powers of that office. If this section conflicts with a specific provision of the General Statutes, that specific provision of the General Statutes controls.

(b) Transfer. – Except as provided in subsections (g) and (h) of this section, when an issue of fact, an equitable defense, or a request for equitable relief is raised in a pleading in a special proceeding or in a pleading or written motion in an adoption proceeding, the clerk shall transfer the proceeding to the appropriate court. In court, the proceeding is subject to the provisions in the General Statutes and to the rules that apply to actions initially filed in that court.

(c) Duty of Judge on Transfer. – Whenever a special proceeding is transferred to a court pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, the judge may hear and determine all matters in controversy in the special proceeding, unless it appears to the judge that justice would be more efficiently administered by the judge's disposing of only the matter leading to the transfer and remanding the special proceeding to the clerk.

(d) Clerk to Decide All Issues. – If a special proceeding is not transferred or is remanded to the clerk after an appeal or transfer, the clerk shall decide all matters in controversy to dispose of the proceeding.

(e) Appeal of Clerk's Decisions. – Except as provided in G.S. 46-28.1(f), a party aggrieved by an order or judgment of a clerk that finally disposed of a special proceeding, may, within 10 days of entry of the order or judgment, appeal to the appropriate court for a hearing de novo. Notice of appeal shall be in writing and shall be filed with the clerk. The order or

judgment of the clerk remains in effect until it is modified or replaced by an order or judgment of a judge. A judge of the court to which the appeal lies or the clerk may issue a stay of the order or judgment upon the appellant's posting of an appropriate bond set by the judge or clerk issuing the stay. Any matter previously transferred and determined by the court shall not be relitigated in a hearing de novo under this subsection.

(f) Service. – Notwithstanding the service requirement of G.S. 1A-1, Rule 58, orders of the clerk shall be served on other parties only if otherwise required by law.

(g) Exception for Incompetency and Foreclosure Proceedings and Proceedings to Permit Sterilization for Medical Necessity. –

(1) Proceedings for adjudication of incompetency or restoration of competency under Chapter 35A of the General Statutes, or proceedings to determine whether a guardian may consent to the sterilization of a ~~mentally ill or mentally retarded ward~~ ward with a mental illness or intellectual disability under G.S. 35A-1245, shall not be transferred even if an issue of fact, an equitable defense, or a request for equitable relief is raised. Appeals from orders entered in these proceedings are governed by Chapter 35A to the extent that the provisions of that Chapter conflict with this section.

(2) Foreclosure proceedings under Article 2A of Chapter 45 of the General Statutes shall not be transferred even if an issue of fact, an equitable defense, or a request for equitable relief is raised. Equitable issues may be raised only as provided in G.S. 45-21.34. Appeals from orders entered in these proceedings are governed by Article 2A of Chapter 45 to the extent that the provisions of that Article conflict with this section.

(h) Exception for Partition Proceedings. – Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (b) of this section, the issue whether to order the actual partition or the sale in lieu of partition of real property that is the subject of a partition proceeding shall not be transferred and shall be

determined by the clerk. The clerk's order determining this issue, though not a final order, may be appealed pursuant to subsection (e) of this section."

1.(b)

"§ 35A-1101. Definitions.

When used in this Subchapter:

(1) "Autism" means a physical disorder of the brain which causes disturbances in the developmental rate of physical, social, and language skills; abnormal responses to sensations; absence of or delay in speech or language; or abnormal ways of relating to people, objects, and events. Autism occurs sometimes by itself and sometimes in conjunction with other brain-functioning disorders.

(2) "Cerebral palsy" means a muscle dysfunction, characterized by impairment of movement, often combined with speech impairment, and caused by abnormality of or damage to the brain.

(3) "Clerk" means the clerk of superior court.

(4) "Designated agency" means the State or local human services agency designated by the clerk in the clerk's order to prepare, cause to be prepared, or assemble a multidisciplinary evaluation and to perform other functions as the clerk may order. A designated agency includes, without limitation, State, local, regional, or area mental health, ~~mental retardation,~~ intellectual disability, vocational rehabilitation, public health, social service, and developmental disabilities agencies, and diagnostic evaluation centers.

(5) "Epilepsy" means a group of neurological conditions characterized by abnormal electrical-chemical discharge in the brain. This discharge is manifested in various forms of physical activity called seizures, which range from momentary lapses of consciousness to convulsive movements.

(6) "Guardian ad litem" means a guardian appointed pursuant to G.S. 1A-1, Rule 17, Rules of Civil Procedure.

(7) "Incompetent adult" means an adult or emancipated minor who lacks sufficient capacity to manage the adult's own affairs or to make or communicate important decisions concerning the adult's person, family, or property whether the lack of capacity is due to mental illness, ~~mental retardation,~~ intellectual disability, epilepsy, cerebral palsy, autism, inebriety, senility, disease, injury, or similar cause or condition.

(8) "Incompetent child" means a minor who is at least 17 1/2 years of age and who, other than by reason of minority, lacks sufficient capacity to make or communicate important decisions concerning the child's person, family, or property whether the lack of capacity is due to mental illness, ~~mental retardation,~~ intellectual disability, epilepsy, cerebral palsy, autism, inebriety, disease, injury, or similar cause or condition.

(9) "Indigent" means unable to pay for legal representation and other necessary expenses of a proceeding brought under this Subchapter.

(10) "Inebriety" means the habitual use of alcohol or drugs rendering a person incompetent to transact ordinary business concerning the person's estate, dangerous to person or property, cruel and intolerable to family, or unable to provide for family.

(10a) "Intellectual disability" means significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested before age 22.

(11) "Interim guardian" means a guardian, appointed prior to adjudication of incompetence and for a temporary period, for a person who requires immediate intervention to address conditions that constitute imminent or foreseeable risk of harm to the person's physical well-being or to the person's estate.

(12) "Mental illness" means an illness that so lessens the capacity of a person to use self-control, judgment, and discretion in the conduct of the person's affairs and social relations as to make it necessary or advisable for the person to be under treatment, care, supervision, guidance, or control. The term "mental illness" encompasses "mental disease", "mental disorder", "lunacy", "unsoundness of mind", and "insanity".

~~(13) "Mental retardation" means significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested before age 22.~~

(14) "Multidisciplinary evaluation" means an evaluation that contains current medical, psychological, and social work evaluations as directed by the clerk and that may include current evaluations by professionals in other disciplines, including without limitation education, vocational rehabilitation, occupational therapy, vocational therapy, psychiatry, speech-and-hearing, and communications disorders. The evaluation is current if made not more than one year from the date on which it is presented to or considered by the court. The evaluation shall set forth the nature and extent of the disability and recommend a guardianship plan and program.

(15) "Respondent" means a person who is alleged to be incompetent in a proceeding under this Subchapter.

(16) "Treatment facility" has the same meaning as "facility" in G.S. 122C-3(14), and includes group homes, halfway houses, and other community-based residential facilities.

(17) "Ward" means a person who has been adjudicated incompetent or an adult or minor for whom a guardian has been appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction."

1.(c)

"§ 35A-1202. Definitions.

When used in this Subchapter, unless a contrary intent is indicated or the context requires otherwise:

(1) "Accounting" means the financial or status reports filed with the clerk, designated agency, respondent, or other person or party with whom such reports are required to be filed.

(2) "Clerk" means the clerk of superior court.

(3) "Designated agency" means the State or local human services agency designated by the clerk in an order to prepare, cause to be prepared, or assemble a multidisciplinary evaluation and to perform other functions as the clerk may order. A designated agency includes, without limitation, State, local, regional or area mental health, ~~mental retardation,~~ intellectual disability, vocational rehabilitation, public health, social service, and developmental disabilities agencies, and diagnostic evaluation centers.

(4) "Disinterested public agent" means the director or assistant directors of a county department of social services. Except as provided in G.S. 35A-1213(f), the fact that a disinterested public agent provides financial assistance, services, or treatment to a ward does not disqualify that person from being appointed as guardian.

(5) "Estate" means any interest in real property, choses in action, intangible personal property, and tangible personal property, and includes any interest in joint accounts or jointly held property.

(6) "Financial report" means the report filed by the guardian concerning all financial transactions, including receipts and expenditures of the ward's

money, sale of the ward's property, or other transactions involving the ward's property.

(7) "General guardian" means a guardian of both the estate and the person.

(8) "Guardian ad litem" means a guardian appointed pursuant to G.S. 1A-1, Rule 17, Rules of Civil Procedure.

(9) "Guardian of the estate" means a guardian appointed solely for the purpose of managing the property, estate, and business affairs of a ward.

(10) "Guardian of the person" means a guardian appointed solely for the purpose of performing duties relating to the care, custody, and control of a ward.

(11) "Incompetent person" means a person who has been adjudicated to be an "incompetent adult" or "incompetent child" as defined in G.S. 35A-1101(7) or (8).

(12) "Minor" means a person who is under the age of 18, is not married, and has not been legally emancipated.

(13) "Multidisciplinary evaluation" means an evaluation that contains current medical, psychological, and social work evaluations as directed by the clerk and that may contain current evaluations by professionals in other disciplines, including without limitation education, vocational rehabilitation, occupational therapy, vocational therapy, psychiatry, speech-and-hearing, and communications disorders. The evaluation is current if made not more than one year from the date on which it is presented to or considered by the court. The evaluation shall set forth the nature and extent of the disability and recommend a guardianship plan and program.

(14) "Status report" means the report required by G.S. 35A-1242 to be filed by the general guardian or guardian of the person.

(15) "Ward" means a person who has been adjudicated incompetent or an adult or minor for whom a guardian has been appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction."

1.(d)

"§ 35A-1241. Powers and duties of guardian of the person.

(a) To the extent that it is not inconsistent with the terms of any order of the clerk or any other court of competent jurisdiction, a guardian of the person has the following powers and duties:

(1) The guardian of the person is entitled to custody of the person of the guardian's ward and shall make provision for the ward's care, comfort, and maintenance, and shall, as appropriate to the ward's needs, arrange for the ward's training, education, employment, ~~rehabilitation~~ rehabilitation, or habilitation. The guardian of the person shall take reasonable care of the ward's clothing, furniture, vehicles, and other personal effects that are with the ward.

(2) The guardian of the person may establish the ward's place of abode within or without this State. In arranging for a place of abode, the guardian of the person shall give preference to places within this State over places not in this State if in-State and out-of-State places are substantially equivalent. The guardian also shall give preference to places that are not treatment facilities. If the only available and appropriate places of domicile are treatment facilities, the guardian shall give preference to community-based treatment facilities, such as group homes or nursing homes, over treatment facilities that are not community-based.

(3) The guardian of the person may give any consent or approval that may be necessary to enable the ward to receive medical, legal, psychological, or other professional care, counsel, treatment, or service; provided that, if the patient has a health care agent appointed pursuant to a valid health care power of attorney, the health care agent shall have the right to exercise the

authority granted in the health care power of attorney unless the Clerk has suspended the authority of that health care agent in accordance with G.S. 35A-1208. The guardian shall not, however, consent to the sterilization of a ~~mentally ill or mentally retarded ward~~ ward with a mental illness or intellectual disability unless the guardian obtains an order from the clerk in accordance with G.S. 35A-1245. The guardian of the person may give any other consent or approval on the ward's behalf that may be required or in the ward's best interest. The guardian may petition the clerk for the clerk's concurrence in the consent or approval.

(b) A guardian of the person is entitled to be reimbursed out of the ward's estate for reasonable and proper expenditures incurred in the performance of ~~his~~ the guardian's duties as guardian of the ward's person.

(c) A guardian of the ~~person, if he~~ person who has acted within the limits imposed ~~on him~~ by this Article or the order of appointment or ~~both, shall not be~~ both is not liable for damages to the ward or the ward's estate, merely by reason of the guardian's:

(1) Authorizing or giving any consent or approval necessary to enable the ward to receive legal, psychological, or other professional care, counsel, treatment, or service, in a situation where the damages result from the negligence or other acts of a third person; or

(2) Authorizing medical treatment or surgery for ~~his~~ the ward, if the guardian acted in good faith and was not negligent."

1.(e)

"§ 35A-1245. Procedure to permit the sterilization of a ~~mentally ill or a mentally retarded ward~~ ward with a mental illness or intellectual disability in the case of medical necessity.

(a) A guardian of the person shall not consent to the sterilization of a ~~mentally ill or mentally retarded ward~~ ward with a mental illness or intellectual disability unless an order from the clerk has been obtained in accordance with this section.

(b) If a ~~mentally ill or mentally retarded ward~~ ward with a mental illness or intellectual disability needs to undergo a medical procedure that would result in sterilization, the ward's guardian shall petition the clerk for an order to permit the guardian to consent to the procedure. The petition shall contain all the following:

(1) A sworn statement from a physician licensed in this State who has examined the ward that the proposed procedure is medically necessary and not for the sole purpose of sterilization or for the purpose of hygiene or convenience.

(2) The name and address of the physician who will perform the procedure.

(3) A sworn statement from a psychiatrist or psychologist licensed in this State who has examined the ward as to whether the ~~mentally ill or mentally retarded ward~~ ward with a mental illness or intellectual disability is able to comprehend the nature of the proposed procedure and its consequences and provide an informed consent to the procedure.

(4) If the ward is able to comprehend the nature of the proposed procedure and its consequences, the sworn consent of the ward to the procedure.

(c) A copy of the petition shall be served on the ward personally. If the ward is unable to comprehend the nature of the proposed procedure and its consequences and is unable to provide an informed consent, the clerk shall appoint an attorney to represent the ward in accordance with rules adopted by the Office of Indigent Defense Services.

(d) Should the ward or the ward's attorney request a hearing, a hearing shall be held. Otherwise, the clerk may enter an order without the appearance of witnesses. If a hearing is held, the guardian and the ward may present evidence.

(e) If the clerk finds all the following, the clerk shall enter an order permitting the guardian to consent to the proposed procedure:

(1) The ward is capable of comprehending the procedure and its consequences and has consented to the procedure, or the ward is unable to comprehend the procedure and its consequences.

(2) The procedure is medically necessary and is not solely for the purpose of sterilization or for hygiene or convenience.

(f) The guardian or the ward, the ward's attorney, or any other interested party may appeal the clerk's order to the superior court in accordance with G.S. 1-301.2(e)."

1.(f)

"**§ 90-275. Article does not affect duty of guardian to obtain order permitting guardian to consent to sterilization of a ~~mentally ill or mentally retarded ward.~~ward with a mental illness or intellectual disability.**

Nothing in this Article ~~shall be deemed to affect~~ affects the provisions of G.S. 35A-1245."

2.(a)

"§ 7B-1111. Grounds for terminating parental rights.

(a) The court may terminate the parental rights upon a finding of one or more of the following:

(1) The parent has abused or neglected the juvenile. The juvenile shall be deemed to be abused or neglected if the court finds the juvenile to be an abused juvenile within the meaning of G.S. 7B-101 or a neglected juvenile within the meaning of G.S. 7B-101.

(2) The parent has willfully left the juvenile in foster care or placement outside the home for more than 12 months without showing to the satisfaction of the court that reasonable progress under the circumstances has been made in correcting those conditions which led to the removal of the juvenile. ~~Provided, however, that no parental rights~~ No parental rights, however, shall be terminated for the sole reason that the parents are unable to care for the juvenile on account of their poverty.

(3) The juvenile has been placed in the custody of a county department of social services, a licensed child-placing agency, a child-caring institution, or a foster home, and the parent, for a continuous period of six months next preceding the filing of the petition or motion, has willfully failed for such period to pay a reasonable portion of the cost of care for the juvenile although physically and financially able to do so.

(4) One parent has been awarded custody of the juvenile by judicial decree or has custody by agreement of the parents, and the other parent whose parental rights are sought to be terminated has for a period of one year or more next preceding the filing of the petition or motion willfully failed without

justification to pay for the care, support, and education of the juvenile, as required by ~~said~~ the decree or custody agreement.

(5) The father of a juvenile born out of wedlock has not, prior to the filing of a petition or motion to terminate parental rights, done any of the following:

a. Filed an affidavit of paternity in a central registry maintained by the Department of Health and Human Services; provided, the petitioner or movant shall inquire of the Department of Health and Human Services as to whether such an affidavit has been so filed and the Department's certified reply shall be submitted to and considered by the court.

b. Legitimated the juvenile pursuant to provisions of G.S. 49-10, G.S. 49-12.1, or filed a petition for this specific purpose.

c. Legitimated the juvenile by marriage to the mother of the juvenile.

d. Provided substantial financial support or consistent care with respect to the juvenile and mother.

e. Established paternity through G.S. 49-14, 110-132, 130A-101, 130A-118, or other judicial proceeding.

(6) That the parent is incapable of providing for the proper care and supervision of the juvenile, such that the juvenile is a dependent juvenile within the meaning of G.S. 7B-101, and that there is a reasonable probability that such incapability will continue for the foreseeable future. Incapability under this subdivision may be the result of substance abuse, ~~mental retardation,~~ intellectual disability, mental illness, organic brain syndrome, or any other cause or condition that renders the parent unable or unavailable to parent the juvenile and the parent lacks an appropriate alternative child care arrangement.

(7) The parent has willfully abandoned the juvenile for at least six consecutive months immediately preceding the filing of the petition or motion, or the parent has voluntarily abandoned an infant pursuant to G.S. 7B-500 for at least 60 consecutive days immediately preceding the filing of the petition or motion.

(8) The parent has committed murder or voluntary manslaughter of another child of the parent or other child residing in the home; has aided, abetted, attempted, conspired, or solicited to commit murder or voluntary manslaughter of the child, another child of the parent, or other child residing in the home; has committed a felony assault that results in serious bodily injury to the child, another child of the parent, or other child residing in the home; or has committed murder or voluntary manslaughter of the other parent of the child. The petitioner has the burden of proving any of these offenses in the termination of parental rights hearing by (i) proving the elements of the offense or (ii) offering proof that a court of competent jurisdiction has convicted the parent of the offense, whether or not the conviction was by way of a jury verdict or any kind of plea. If the parent has committed the murder or voluntary manslaughter of the other parent of the child, the court shall consider whether the murder or voluntary manslaughter was committed in self-defense or in the defense of others, or whether there was substantial evidence of other justification.

(9) The parental rights of the parent with respect to another child of the parent have been terminated involuntarily by a court of competent jurisdiction and the parent lacks the ability or willingness to establish a safe home.

(10) Where the juvenile has been relinquished to a county department of social services or a licensed child-placing agency for the purpose of adoption or

placed with a prospective adoptive parent for adoption; the consent or relinquishment to adoption by the parent has become irrevocable except upon a showing of fraud, duress, or other circumstance as set forth in G.S. 48-3-609 or G.S. 48-3-707; termination of parental rights is a condition precedent to adoption in the jurisdiction where the adoption proceeding is to be filed; and the parent does not contest the termination of parental rights.

(11) The parent has been convicted of a sexually related offense under Chapter 14 of the General Statutes that resulted in the conception of the juvenile.

(b) The burden in such proceedings shall be upon the petitioner or movant to prove the facts justifying such termination by clear and convincing evidence."

2.(b)

"§ 7B-2502. Evaluation and treatment of undisciplined and delinquent juveniles.

(a) In any case, the court may order that the juvenile be examined by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other qualified expert as may be needed for the court to determine the needs of the juvenile. In the case of a juvenile adjudicated delinquent for committing an offense that involves the possession, use, sale, or delivery of alcohol or a controlled substance, the court shall require the juvenile to be tested for the use of controlled substances or alcohol within 30 days of the adjudication. In the case of any juvenile adjudicated delinquent, the court may, if it deems it necessary, require the juvenile to be tested for the use of controlled substances or alcohol. The results of these initial tests conducted pursuant to this subsection shall be used for evaluation and treatment purposes only. In placing a juvenile in out-of-home care under this section, the court shall also consider whether it is in the juvenile's best interest to remain in the juvenile's community of residence.

(b) Upon completion of the examination, the court shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the juvenile is in need of medical, surgical, psychiatric, psychological, or other evaluation or treatment and who should pay the cost of the evaluation or treatment. The county manager, or any other person who is designated by the chair of the board of county commissioners, of the county of the juvenile's residence shall be notified of the hearing, and allowed to be heard. If the court finds the juvenile to be in need of medical, surgical, psychiatric, psychological, or other evaluation or treatment, the court shall permit the parent, guardian, custodian, or other responsible persons to arrange for evaluation or treatment. If the parent, guardian, or custodian declines or is unable to make necessary arrangements, the court may order the needed evaluation or treatment, surgery, or care, and the court may order the parent to pay the cost of the care pursuant to Article 27 of this Chapter. If the court finds the parent is unable to pay the cost of evaluation or treatment, the court shall order the county to arrange for evaluation or treatment of the juvenile and to pay for the cost of the evaluation or

treatment. The county department of social services shall recommend the facility that will provide the juvenile with evaluation or treatment.

(c) If the court believes, or if there is evidence presented to the effect that the juvenile ~~is mentally ill or is developmentally disabled,~~ has a mental illness or a developmental disability, the court shall refer the juvenile to the area mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse services director for appropriate action. A juvenile shall not be committed directly to a State hospital or ~~mental retardation center;~~ center for individuals with an intellectual disability; and orders purporting to commit a juvenile directly to a State hospital or ~~mental retardation center~~ center for individuals with an intellectual disability, except for an examination to determine capacity to ~~proceed~~ proceed, shall be void and of no effect. The area mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse director shall be responsible for arranging an interdisciplinary evaluation of the juvenile and mobilizing resources to meet the juvenile's needs. If institutionalization is determined to be the best service for the juvenile, admission shall be with the voluntary consent of the parent, guardian, or custodian. If the parent, guardian, or custodian refuses to consent to ~~a mental hospital or retardation center admission~~ admission to a mental hospital or center for individuals with an intellectual disability after such institutionalization is recommended by the area mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse director, the signature and consent of the court may be substituted for that purpose. In all cases in which a regional mental hospital refuses admission to a juvenile referred for admission by the court and an area mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse director or discharges a juvenile previously admitted on court referral prior to completion of the juvenile's treatment, the hospital shall submit to the court a written report setting out the reasons for denial of admission or discharge and setting out the juvenile's diagnosis, indications of mental illness, indications of need for treatment, and a statement as to the location of any facility known to have a treatment program for the juvenile in question."

3.(a)

"**Rule 616. Alternative testimony of witnesses with ~~developmental disabilities or mental retardation~~ an intellectual or developmental disability in civil cases and special proceedings.**

(a) Definitions. – The following definitions apply to this section:

(1) The definitions set out in G.S. 122C-3.

(2) "Remote testimony" means a method by which a witness testifies outside of an open forum and outside of the physical presence of a party or parties.

(b) Remote Testimony Authorized. – ~~A person with a developmental disability or a person with mental retardation~~ An individual with an intellectual or developmental disability who is competent to testify may testify by remote testimony in a civil proceeding or special proceeding if the court determines by clear and convincing evidence that the witness would suffer serious emotional distress from testifying in the presence of a named party or parties or from testifying in an open forum and that the ability of the witness to communicate with the trier of fact would be impaired by testifying in the presence of a named party or parties or from testifying in an open forum.

(c) Hearing Procedure. – Upon motion of a party or the court's own motion, and for good cause shown, the court shall hold an evidentiary hearing to determine whether to allow remote testimony. The hearing shall be recorded unless recordation is waived by all parties. The presence of the witness is not required at the hearing unless so ordered by the presiding judge.

(d) Order. – An order allowing or disallowing the use of remote testimony shall state the findings and conclusions of law that support the court's determination. An order allowing the use of remote testimony also shall do all of the following:

(1) State the method by which the witness is to testify.

(2) List any individual or category of individuals allowed to be in or required to be excluded from the presence of the witness during testimony.

(3) State any special conditions necessary to facilitate the cross-examination of the witness.

(4) State any condition or limitation upon the participation of individuals in the presence of the witness during the testimony.

(5) State any other conditions necessary for taking or presenting testimony.

(e) Testimony. – The method of remote testimony shall allow the trier of fact and all parties to observe the demeanor of the witness as the witness testifies in a similar manner as if the witness were testifying in the open forum. Except as provided in this section, the court shall ensure that the counsel for all parties is physically present where the witness testifies and has a full and fair opportunity for examination and cross-examination of the witness. In a proceeding where a party is representing itself, the court may limit or deny the party from being physically present during testimony if the court finds that the witness would suffer serious emotional distress from testifying in the presence of the party. A party may waive the right to have counsel physically present where the witness testifies.

(f) Nonexclusive Procedure and Standard. – Nothing in this section ~~shall prohibit~~ prohibits the use or application of any other method or procedure authorized or required by law for the introduction into evidence of statements or testimony of ~~a person with a developmental disability or a person with mental retardation.~~an individual with an intellectual or developmental disability."

3.(b)

"§ 15A-1225.2. Witnesses with ~~developmental disabilities or mental retardation;~~ an intellectual or development disability; remote testimony.

(a) Definitions. – The following definitions apply to this section:

(1) The definitions set out in G.S. 122C-3.

(2) "Remote testimony" means a method by which a witness testifies outside of an open forum and outside of the physical presence of a party or parties.

(b) Remote Testimony Authorized. – ~~A person with a developmental disability or a person with mental retardation~~ An individual with an intellectual or developmental disability who is competent to testify may testify by remote testimony in a prosecution of a person charged with violating a criminal law of this State and in any hearing or proceeding conducted under Subchapter II of Chapter 7B of the General Statutes where a juvenile is alleged to have committed an offense that would be a criminal offense if committed by an adult if the court determines by clear and convincing evidence that the witness would suffer serious emotional distress from testifying in the presence of the defendant and that the ability of the witness to communicate with the trier of fact would be impaired by testifying in the presence of the defendant.

(c) Hearing Procedure. – Upon motion of a party or the court's own motion, and for good cause shown, the court shall hold an evidentiary hearing to determine whether to allow remote testimony. The hearing shall be recorded unless recordation is waived by all parties. The presence of the witness is not required at the hearing unless so ordered by the presiding judge.

(d) Order. – An order allowing or disallowing the use of remote testimony shall state the findings and conclusions of law that support the court's determination. An order allowing the use of remote testimony also shall do all of the following:

(1) State the method by which the witness is to testify.

(2) List any individual or category of individuals allowed to be in or required to be excluded from the presence of the witness during testimony.

(3) State any special conditions necessary to facilitate the cross-examination of the witness.

(4) State any condition or limitation upon the participation of individuals in the presence of the witness during the testimony.

(5) State any other conditions necessary for taking or presenting testimony.

(e) Testimony. – The method of remote testimony shall allow the trier of fact and all parties to observe the demeanor of the witness as the witness testifies in a similar manner as if the witness were testifying in the open forum. The court shall ensure that the counsel for all parties, except a pro se defendant, is physically present where the witness testifies and has a full and fair opportunity for examination and cross-examination of the witness. The court shall ensure that the defendant or juvenile respondent has the ability to communicate privately with defense counsel during the remote testimony. A party may waive the right to have counsel physically present where the witness testifies. Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the provisions of G.S. 15A-1225.

(f) Nonexclusive Procedure and Standard. – Nothing in this section ~~shall prohibit~~ prohibits the use or application of any other method or procedure authorized or required by law for the introduction into evidence of statements or testimony of ~~a person with a developmental disability or a person with mental retardation.~~an individual with an intellectual or developmental disability."