



## **About On-Bench Reports for Superior Court Judges**

### *Quick Facts*

### **Statutory Requirement for On-Bench Time Reports**

Pursuant to G.S. 7A-109(a1), the courtroom clerk is required to record “on-bench” time, which reflects the date and time of each convening of court, as well as the date and time of each recess or adjournment of court with no further business before the court.

### **What is Captured in the On-Bench Time Report?**

The on-bench time reports capture only in-court time, and do not record meetings with counsel in chambers, settlement conferences, supervision of staff, review of pleadings, motions, and other documents, drafting of orders and judgments, legal research or other matters conducted during regular office hours. Therefore, the on-bench time report is not a complete reflection of what comprises a judicial workday.

### **Case-Related Components of a Judicial Work Day**

On-bench time in court is only one case-related component of the time required of a judge to dispose of any case. Other case-related components of a judicial work day include the following:

#### Pretrial

- *Initial appearances*
- *Pretrial motions that do not fully dispose of the case*
- Settlement conferences
- Attorney status meetings
- Search warrants
- Temporary restraining orders
- Preparation of findings and orders related to pretrial matters

#### Non-Trial Disposition

- *Entry of guilty pleas and sentencing*
- *Motions to dismiss that dispose of all issues*
- *Motions for summary judgment*
- Preparation of findings and orders related to non-trial dispositions

## Trials

- *Bench trials*
- *Jury selection*
- *Jury trials*
- *Sentencing after conviction at trial*
- Preparation of findings and orders related to bench and jury trials

## Post-Judgment/Post Disposition

- *Post-trial motions*
- *Probation violation hearings*
- Motions for Appropriate Relief
- Post-adjudication juvenile delinquency reviews
- Responding to prisoner mail
- Preparation of findings and orders related to post-adjudication matters

Of the events listed, those *in italics* occur in the courtroom. The on-bench time report does not reflect any of the other case-related components of a judicial work day that occur outside of public view.

## **Non-Case-Related Components of a Judicial Workday**

In addition to the case-related events noted above, a judicial work day also includes other non-case-related events such as travel, education and training, and administrative work. North Carolina has eight superior court divisions, and the state Constitution requires superior court judges to rotate within their divisions. Given the nature of the state's geography, the travel required by a superior court judge can be significant. In addition, judges are required to participate in education and training, and to handle administrative responsibilities. The on-bench time report does not reflect any of these non-case-related components; it also does not account for any state holidays, illness, vacation, military leave or other individualized circumstances.