

1 (a) The Supreme Court shall consist of a ~~Chief Justice and six~~ seven associate
2 justices, elected by the qualified voters of the State for terms of eight years. Before
3 entering upon the duties of his office, each justice shall take an oath of office. Four
4 justices shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of the court. Except
5 as otherwise provided in this subsection, sessions of the court shall be held in the city of
6 Raleigh, and scheduled by rule of court so as to discharge expeditiously the court's
7 business. The court may by rule hold sessions not more than twice annually in the Old
8 Chowan County Courthouse (1767) in the Town of Edenton, which is a State-owned
9 court facility that is designated as a National Historic Landmark by the United States
10 Department of the Interior.

11 (a1) The Governor shall designate one of the associate justices as Chief Justice, to
12 serve in such capacity for the lesser of four years or until the expiration of the term of
13 office that the Associate Justice is holding at the time of designation. If at the expiration
14 of the designation, the Chief Justice has served in that capacity for four consecutive
15 years or more, that person may not again be designated as Chief Justice until the
16 expiration of four more years.

17 (b) ~~The Chief Justice and each of the associate justices~~ justices shall receive the
18 annual salary provided in Current Operations Appropriations Act. Each justice is
19 entitled to reimbursement for travel and subsistence expenses at the rate allowed State
20 employees generally.

21 (c) In lieu of merit and other increment raises paid to regular State employees,
22 the Chief Justice and each of the Associate Justices shall receive as longevity pay an
23 annual amount equal to four and eight-tenths percent (4.8%) of the annual salary set
24 forth in the Current Operations Appropriations Act payable monthly after five years of
25 service, nine and six-tenths percent (9.6%) after 10 years of service, fourteen and
26 four-tenths percent (14.4%) after 15 years of service, and nineteen and two-tenths
27 percent (19.2%) after 20 years of service. "Service" means service as a justice or judge
28 of the General Court of Justice or as a member of the Utilities Commission. Service
29 shall also mean service as a district attorney or as a clerk of superior court."

30 **SECTION 5.** Section 4 of this act becomes effective only if the voters
31 approve the constitutional amendment set out in Section 1 of this act. If the voters
32 approve the constitutional amendment, Section 4 of this act becomes effective upon the
33 next vacancy in the office of Chief Justice.