

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
1989 SESSION

CHAPTER 995
SENATE BILL 734

AN ACT TO AMEND THE GENERAL RULES OF PLEADINGS TO ALLOW THE CLAIMANT THIRTY DAYS TO RESPOND TO A REQUEST FOR A STATEMENT OF THE MONETARY RELIEF SOUGHT AND TO MODIFY PROCEDURES OF THE JUDICIAL STANDARDS COMMISSION TO PROVIDE FOR WAIVER OF CONFIDENTIALITY UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. G.S. 1A-1, Rule 8(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Claims for relief. – A pleading which sets forth a claim for relief, whether an original claim, counterclaim, crossclaim, or third-party claim shall contain

- (1) A short and plain statement of the claim sufficiently particular to give the court and the parties notice of the transactions, occurrences, or series of transactions or occurrences, intended to be proved showing that the pleader is entitled to relief, and
- (2) A demand for judgment for the relief to which he deems himself entitled. Relief in the alternative or of several different types may be demanded. In all negligence actions, and in all claims for punitive damages in any civil action, wherein the matter in controversy exceeds the sum or value of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), the pleading shall not state the demand for monetary relief, but shall state that the relief demanded is for damages incurred or to be incurred in excess of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000). However, at any time after service of the claim for relief, any party may request of the claimant a written statement of the monetary relief sought, and the claimant shall, within ~~10~~30 days after such service, provide such statement, which shall not be filed with the clerk until the action has been called for trial or entry of default entered. Such statement may be amended in the manner and at times as provided by Rule 15."

Sec. 2. G.S. 7A-377(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Any citizen of the State may file a written complaint with the Commission concerning the qualifications or conduct of any justice or judge of the General Court of Justice, and thereupon the Commission shall make such investigation as it deems necessary. The Commission may also make an investigation on its own motion. The Commission is authorized to issue process to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of evidence, to administer oaths, to punish for contempt, and to prescribe

its own rules of procedure. No justice or judge shall be recommended for censure or removal unless he has been given a hearing affording due process of law. ~~All papers filed with and proceedings before the Commission are confidential, unless the judge involved shall otherwise request. The recommendations of the Commission to the Supreme Court, and the record filed in support of the recommendations are not confidential.~~ Unless otherwise waived by the justice or judge involved, all papers filed with and proceedings before the Commission, including any preliminary investigation which the Commission may make, are confidential, except as provided herein. After the preliminary investigation is completed, and if the Commission concludes that formal proceedings should be instituted, the notice and complaint filed by the Commission, along with the answer and all other pleadings, are not confidential. Formal hearings ordered by the Commission are not confidential, and recommendations of the Commission to the Supreme Court, along with the record filed in support of such recommendations are not confidential. Testimony and other evidence presented to the Commission is privileged in any action for defamation. ~~No other publication of such testimony or evidence is privileged, except that the record filed with the Supreme Court continues to be privileged.~~ At least five members of the Commission must concur in any recommendation to censure or remove any justice or judge. A respondent who is recommended for censure or removal is entitled to a copy of the proposed record to be filed with the Supreme Court, and if he has objections to it, to have the record settled by the Commission. He is also entitled to present a brief and to argue his case, in person and through counsel, to the Supreme Court. A majority of the members of the Supreme Court voting must concur in any order of censure or removal. The Supreme Court may approve the recommendation, remand for further proceedings, or reject the recommendation. A justice of the Supreme Court or a member of the Commission who is a judge is disqualified from acting in any case in which he is a respondent."

Sec. 3. Section 1 of this act is effective October 1, 1990, and shall apply to all requests made on or after that date. Section 2 is effective October 1, 1990, except that prior law applies to papers filed with the Commission prior to October 1, 1990, and proceedings before the Commission prior to October 1, 1990.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 20th day of July, 1990.