



CHAPTER 7B

ARTICLE 1 - PURPOSES; DEFINITIONS; LIMITATION

N.C.G.S. § 7B-101.

Definitions.

SOURCE	LAST AMENDMENT IN THIS TEXT	RETRIEVED	SOURCE FINGERPRINT
General Statutes of North Carolina, as published by the General Assembly	S.L. 2025-16, ss. 1.1, 1.10(a) — fifty-first act in the lineage	21 September 2026, 02:05 UTC	f61025493e0d2880c092a5cc - 803227273560e465f681b272 - 7f22dc8862350ec0

As used in this Subchapter, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the following words have the listed meanings:

Abused juveniles. - Any juvenile less than 18 years of age (i) who is found to be a minor victim of human trafficking under G.S. 14-43.15 or unlawful sale, surrender, or purchase of a minor under G.S. 14-43.14 or (ii) whose parent, guardian, custodian, or caretaker:

a. Inflicts or allows to be inflicted upon the juvenile a serious physical injury by other than accidental means;

b. Creates or allows to be created a substantial risk of serious physical injury to the juvenile by other than accidental means;

c. Uses or allows to be used upon the juvenile cruel or grossly inappropriate procedures or cruel or grossly inappropriate devices to modify behavior;

d. Commits, permits, or encourages the commission of a violation of the following laws by, with, or upon the juvenile: a sexually violent offense as provided in G.S. 14-208.6(5); crime against nature, as provided in G.S. 14-177; preparation of obscene photographs, slides, or motion pictures of the juvenile, as provided in G.S. 14-190.5; dissemination of obscene material to the juvenile as provided in G.S. 14-190.7 and G.S. 14-190.8; and displaying or disseminating material harmful to the juvenile as provided in G.S. 14-190.14 and G.S. 14-190.15.

e. Creates or allows to be created serious emotional damage to the juvenile; serious emotional damage is evidenced by a juvenile's severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, or aggressive behavior toward himself or others;

f. Encourages, directs, or approves of delinquent acts involving moral turpitude committed by the juvenile; or

g. Commits or allows to be committed an offense under G.S. 14-43.11 (human trafficking), G.S. 14-43.12 (involuntary servitude), or G.S. 14-43.13 (sexual servitude) against the child.

Repealed by Session Laws 2015-136, s. 1, effective October 1, 2015, and applicable to actions filed or pending on or after that date.

Caretaker. - Any person other than a parent, guardian, or custodian who has responsibility for the health and welfare of a juvenile in a residential setting. A person responsible for a juvenile's health and welfare means a stepparent; foster parent; an adult member of the juvenile's household; an adult entrusted with the juvenile's care; a potential adoptive parent during a visit or trial placement with a juvenile in the custody of a department; any person such as a house parent or cottage parent who has primary responsibility for supervising a juvenile's health and welfare in a residential child care facility or residential educational facility; or any employee or volunteer of a division, institution, or school operated by the Department of Health and Human Services. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to impose a legal duty of support under Chapter 50 or Chapter 110 of the General Statutes. The duty imposed upon a caretaker as defined in this subdivision shall be for the purpose of this Subchapter only.

Clerk. - Any clerk of superior court, acting clerk, or assistant or deputy clerk.

Repealed by Session Laws 2013-129, s. 1, effective October 1, 2013, and applicable to actions filed or pending on or after that date.

Court. - The district court division of the General Court of Justice.

Court of competent jurisdiction. - A court having the power and authority of law to act at the time of acting over the subject matter of the cause.

Criminal history. - A local, State, or federal criminal history of conviction or pending indictment of a crime, whether a misdemeanor or a felony, involving violence against a person.

Custodian. - The person or agency that has been awarded legal custody of a juvenile by a court.

Department. - Each county's child welfare agency. Unless the context clearly implies otherwise, when used in this Subchapter, "department" or "department of social services" shall refer to the county agency providing child welfare services, regardless of the name of the agency or whether the county has consolidated human services, pursuant to G.S. 153A-77 and shall include a regional social services department created pursuant to Part 2B of Article 1 of Chapter 108A of the General Statutes.

Dependent juvenile. - A juvenile in need of assistance or placement because (i) the juvenile has no parent, guardian, or custodian responsible for the juvenile's care or supervision or (ii) the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian is unable to provide for the juvenile's care or supervision and lacks an appropriate alternative child care arrangement.

Director. - The director of the department of social services in the county in which the juvenile resides or is found, or the director's representative as authorized in G.S. 108A-14.

District. - Any district court district as established by G.S. 7A-133.

Division. - The Division of Social Services of the Department of Health and Human Services.

Family assessment response. - A response to selected reports of child neglect and dependency as determined by the Director using a family-centered approach that is protection and prevention oriented and that evaluates the strengths and needs of the juvenile's family, as well as the condition of the juvenile.

Investigative assessment response. - A response to reports of child abuse and selected reports of child neglect and dependency as determined by the Director using a formal information gathering process to determine whether a juvenile is abused, neglected, or dependent.

Judge. - Any district court judge.

Judicial district. - Any district court district as established by G.S. 7A-133.

Juvenile. - A person who has not reached the person's eighteenth birthday and is not married, emancipated, or a member of the Armed Forces of the United States.

(Effective April 1, 2026 - see note) **Legal counsel for the department.** - An attorney representing the department in proceedings under this Subchapter, regardless of whether the attorney is a county attorney, department attorney, or contract attorney.

Neglected juvenile. - Any juvenile less than 18 years of age (i) who is found to be a minor victim of human trafficking under G.S. 14-43.15 or (ii) whose parent, guardian, custodian, or caretaker does any of the following:

a.Does not provide proper care, supervision, or discipline.

b.Has abandoned the juvenile, except where that juvenile is a safely surrendered infant as defined in this Subchapter.

c.Has not provided or arranged for the provision of necessary medical or remedial care.

d.Or whose parent, guardian, or custodian has refused to follow the recommendations of the Juvenile and Family Team made pursuant to Article 27A of this Chapter.

e.Creates or allows to be created a living environment that is injurious to the juvenile's welfare.

f.Has participated or attempted to participate in the unlawful transfer of custody of the juvenile under G.S.14-321.2.

g.Has placed the juvenile for care or adoption in violation of law.

In determining whether a juvenile is a neglected juvenile, it is relevant whether that juvenile lives in a home where another juvenile has died as a result of suspected abuse or neglect or lives in a home where another juvenile has been subjected to abuse or neglect by an adult who regularly lives in the home.

Nonrelative kin. - An individual having a substantial relationship with the juvenile. In the case of a juvenile member of a State-recognized tribe as set forth in G.S. 143B-407(a), nonrelative kin also includes any member of a State-recognized tribe or a member of a federally recognized tribe, whether or not there is a substantial relationship with the juvenile.

Non-surrendering parent. - A parent of a safely surrendered infant other than the parent who physically surrenders the parent's infant pursuant to Article 5A of this Subchapter.

Petitioner. - The individual who initiates court action, whether by the filing of a petition or of a motion for review alleging the matter for adjudication.

Post-adoption contact agreement and order. - A voluntary mediated agreement that is approved by a district court judge and incorporated into a district court order under Article 9 of this Subchapter that allows specifically described post-adoption contact with a child, including visitation, sharing of information, and communication such as the exchange of letters, electronic communication, and telephone contact.

Prosecutor. - The district attorney or assistant district attorney assigned by the district attorney to juvenile proceedings.

Reasonable efforts. - The diligent use of preventive or reunification services by a department of social services when a juvenile's remaining at home or returning home is consistent with achieving a safe, permanent home for the juvenile within a reasonable period of time. If a court of competent jurisdiction determines that the juvenile is not to be returned home, then reasonable efforts means the diligent and timely use of permanency planning services by a department of social services to develop and implement a permanent plan for the juvenile.

Relative. - An individual directly related to the juvenile by blood, marriage, or adoption, including, but not limited to, a grandparent, sibling, aunt, or uncle.

Responsible individual. - A parent, guardian, custodian, caretaker, or individual responsible for subjecting a juvenile to human trafficking under G.S. 14-43.11, 14-43.12, or 14-43.13, who abuses or seriously neglects a juvenile.

Return home or reunification. - Placement of the juvenile in the home of either parent or placement of the juvenile in the home of a guardian or custodian from whose home the child was removed by court order.

Safe home. - A home in which the juvenile is not at substantial risk of physical or emotional abuse or neglect.

Safely surrendered infant. - An infant reasonably believed to be not more than 30 days of age and without signs of abuse or neglect who is voluntarily delivered to an individual in accordance with Article 5A of this

Subchapter by the infant's parent who does not express an intent to return for the infant. In determining whether there are signs of neglect, the act of surrendering the infant, in and of itself, does not constitute neglect.

Serious neglect. - Conduct, behavior, or inaction of the juvenile's parent, guardian, custodian, or caretaker that evidences a disregard of consequences of such magnitude that the conduct, behavior, or inaction constitutes an unequivocal danger to the juvenile's health, welfare, or safety, but does not constitute abuse.

Repealed by Session Laws 2013-129, s. 1, effective October 1, 2013, and applicable to actions filed or pending on or after that date.

Substantial evidence. - Relevant evidence a reasonable mind would accept as adequate to support a conclusion.

Surrendering parent. - A parent who physically surrenders the parent's infant pursuant to Article 5A of this Subchapter.

Working day. - Any day other than a Saturday, Sunday, or a legal holiday when the courthouse is closed for transactions.

The singular includes the plural, the masculine singular includes the feminine singular and masculine and feminine plural unless otherwise specified.

END OF SECTION TEXT

APPARATUS FOLLOWS — DERIVED, NOT ENACTED

APPARATUS I 51 ACTS

Amendment lineage

The State prints this history as a single parenthetical at the foot of the section. It is reproduced verbatim in the colophon and unpacked below in order of enactment.

Nº	YEAR	ACT	CHARACTER
01	1979	c. 815, s. 1	ENACTED
02	1981	c. 336	AMENDED
03	1981	c. 359, s. 2	AMENDED
04	1981	c. 469, ss. 1-3	AMENDED
05	1981	c. 716, s. 1	AMENDED
06	1985	c. 648	AMENDED

07	1985	c. 757, s. 156(q)	AMENDED
08	1985	1985 (Reg. Sess., 1986), c. 852, s. 16	AMENDED
09	1987	c. 162	AMENDED
10	1987	c. 695	AMENDED
11	1987	1987 (Reg. Sess., 1988), c. 1037, ss. 36, 37	AMENDED
12	1987	1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 815, s. 1	AMENDED
13	1991	c. 258, s. 3	AMENDED
14	1991	c. 273, s. 11	AMENDED
15	1991	1991 (Reg. Sess., 1992), c. 1030, s. 3	AMENDED
16	1993	c. 324, s. 1	AMENDED
17	1993	c. 516, ss. 1-3	AMENDED
18	1997	S.L. 1997-113, s. 1	AMENDED
19	1997	S.L. 1997-390, s. 3	AMENDED
20	1997	S.L. 1997-390, s. 3.2	AMENDED
21	1997	S.L. 1997-443, s. 11A.118(a)	AMENDED
22	1997	S.L. 1997-506, s. 30	AMENDED
23	1998	S.L. 1998-202, s. 6	AMENDED
24	1998	S.L. 1998-229, ss. 1, 18	AMENDED
25	1999	S.L. 1999-190, s. 1	AMENDED
26	1999	S.L. 1999-318, s. 1	AMENDED
27	1999	S.L. 1999-456, s. 60	AMENDED
28	2005	S.L. 2005-55, s. 1	AMENDED
29	2005	S.L. 2005-399, s. 1	AMENDED
30	2009	S.L. 2009-38, s. 1	AMENDED
31	2010	S.L. 2010-90, ss. 1, 2	AMENDED
32	2011	S.L. 2011-183, s. 2	AMENDED
33	2012	S.L. 2012-153, s. 2	AMENDED
34	2013	S.L. 2013-129, s. 1	AMENDED
35	2013	S.L. 2013-368, s. 16	AMENDED
36	2015	S.L. 2015-123, s. 1	AMENDED

37	2015	S.L. 2015-136, s. 1	AMENDED
38	2015	S.L. 2015-181, s. 21	AMENDED
39	2016	S.L. 2016-94, s. 12C.1(d)	AMENDED
40	2016	S.L. 2016-115, s. 3	AMENDED
41	2017	S.L. 2017-41, s. 4.3	AMENDED
42	2018	S.L. 2018-68, s. 8.1(a), (b)	AMENDED
43	2018	S.L. 2018-75, s. 5(a)	AMENDED
44	2018	S.L. 2018-145, s. 11(d)	AMENDED
45	2019	S.L. 2019-33, s. 1	AMENDED
46	2019	S.L. 2019-245, s. 6(a)	AMENDED
47	2021	S.L. 2021-100, s. 1(a)	AMENDED
48	2021	S.L. 2021-123, s. 5(a)	AMENDED
49	2021	S.L. 2021-132, s. 1(a)	AMENDED
50	2023	S.L. 2023-14, s. 6.2(b)	AMENDED
51	2025	S.L. 2025-16, ss. 1.1, 1.10(a)	AMENDED

APPARATUS II
18 AUTHORITIES

Authorities referenced

Every G.S. cross-reference appearing in the text of this section, in order of first appearance. Nothing is characterized; the operative language is quoted from the section itself.

REFERENCE	APPEARS IN	OPERATIVE LANGUAGE IN THIS SECTION
G.S. 14-43.15	(null)(1)	"minor victim of human trafficking under"
G.S. 14-43.14 or (ii)	(null)(1)	"or purchase of a minor under"
G.S. 14-208.6(5)		"sexually violent offense as provided in"
G.S. 14-177		"crime against nature, as provided in"
G.S. 14-190.5		"of the juvenile, as provided in"
G.S. 14-190.7		"to the juvenile as provided in"
G.S. 14-190.8		"as provided in G.S. 14-190.7 and"
G.S. 14-190.14		"to the juvenile as provided in"
G.S. 14-190.15		"as provided in G.S. 14-190.14 and"
G.S. 14-43.11		"to be committed an offense under"

G.S. 14-43.12		"offense under G.S. 14-43.11 (human trafficking),"
G.S. 14-43.13		"trafficking), G.S. 14-43.12 (involuntary servitude), or"
G.S. 153A-77	(null)(8a)	"has consolidated human services, pursuant to"
G.S. 108A-14	(null)(10)	"the director's representative as authorized in"
G.S. 7A-133	(null)(11)	"district court district as established by"
G.S. 14-43.15 or (ii)	(null)(15)	"minor victim of human trafficking under"
G.S.14-321.2		"of custody of the juvenile under"
G.S. 143B-407(a)	(null)(15a)	"State-recognized tribe as set forth in"

APPARATUS III

Citation

FULL SECTION

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 7B-101 (2025).

Pinpoint keys are set in the left margin of the text rather than line numbers: subsection designators are stable across editions and paper sizes, line numbers are not.

COLOPHON

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HISTORY PARENTHETICAL, AS PRINTED BY THE STATE

(1979, c. 815, s. 1; 1981, c. 336; c. 359, s. 2; c. 469, ss. 1-3; c. 716, s. 1; 1985, c. 648; c. 757, s. 156(q); 1985 (Reg. Sess., 1986), c. 852, s. 16; 1987, c. 162; c. 695; 1987 (Reg. Sess., 1988), c. 1037, ss. 36, 37; 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 815, s. 1; 1991, c. 258, s. 3; c. 273, s. 11; 1991 (Reg. Sess., 1992), c. 1030, s. 3; 1993, c. 324, s. 1; c. 516, ss. 1-3; 1997-113, s. 1; 1997-390, s. 3; 1997-390, s. 3.2; 1997-443, s. 11A.118(a); 1997-506, s. 30; 1998-202, s. 6; 1998-229, ss. 1, 18; 1999-190, s. 1; 1999-318, s. 1; 1999-456, s. 60; 2005-55, s. 1; 2005-399, s. 1; 2009-38, s. 1; 2010-90, ss. 1, 2; 2011-183, s. 2; 2012-153, s. 2; 2013-129, s. 1; 2013-368, s. 16; 2015-123, s. 1; 2015-136, s. 1; 2015-181, s. 21; 2016-94, s. 12C.1(d); 2016-115, s. 3; 2017-41, s. 4.3; 2018-68, s. 8.1(a), (b); 2018-75, s. 5(a); 2018-145, s. 11(d); 2019-33, s. 1; 2019-245, s. 6(a); 2021-100, s. 1(a); 2021-123, s. 5(a); 2021-132, s. 1(a); 2023-14, s. 6.2(b); 2025-16, ss. 1.1, 1.10(a).)

