

# VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2014 RECONVENED SESSION

## CHAPTER 812

*An Act to amend and reenact §§ 16.1-69.6:1 and 17.1-507 of the Code of Virginia, relating to number of judges.*

[H 606]

Approved May 23, 2014

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That §§ 16.1-69.6:1 and 17.1-507 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:**

**§ 16.1-69.6:1. Maximum number of judges.**

For the several judicial districts there shall be full-time general district court judges and juvenile and domestic relations district court judges, the *maximum* number as hereinafter set forth, who shall during their service reside within their respective districts, except as provided in § 16.1-69.16, and whose compensation and powers shall be the same as now and hereafter prescribed for general district court judges and juvenile and domestic relations district court judges.

The *maximum* number of judges of the districts shall be as follows:

|  | General District Court<br>Judges | Juvenile and Domestic<br>Relations District<br>Court Judges |
|--|----------------------------------|---|
| First  | 4                                | 3 4   |
| Second   | 7                                | 7   |
| Two-A  | 1                                | 1   |
| Third  | 3 2                              | 3   |
| Fourth   | 6                                | 5   |
| Fifth  | 3 2                              | 2   |
| Sixth  | 4                                | 2   |
| Seventh  | 4                                | 4   |
| Eighth   | 3                                | 3   |
| Ninth  | 3                                | 3 4   |
| Tenth  | 3                                | 3 4   |
| Eleventh   | 2 3                              | 2 3   |
| Twelfth  | 4 5                              | 5 6   |
| Thirteenth   | 8 6                              | 5 4   |
| Fourteenth   | 4 5                              | 5   |
| Fifteenth  | 6 8                              | 7 10  |
| Sixteenth  | 4                                | 4 6   |
| Seventeenth  | 4 3                              | 2   |
| Eighteenth   | 2                                | 2   |
| Nineteenth   | 11                               | 8 7   |
| Twentieth  | 4                                | 3   |
| Twenty-first   | 2 1                              | 2   |
| Twenty-second  | 2                                | 3 4   |
| Twenty-third   | 5 4                              | 4 5   |
| Twenty-fourth  | 4 3                              | 5 6   |
| Twenty-fifth   | 5 3                              | 4 5   |
| <del>The general district court judges of the twenty fifth district shall render assistance on a regular basis to the general district court judges of the twenty sixth district by appropriate designation.</del> |                                  |   |
| Twenty-sixth   | 4 5                              | 5 7   |
| Twenty-seventh   | 5                                | 4 5   |
| Twenty-eighth  | 2                                | 2 3   |
| Twenty-ninth   | 3 2                              | 2 3   |
| Thirtieth  | 2                                | 2   |
| Thirty-first   | 4 5                              | 5   |

The election or appointment of any district judge shall be subject to the provisions of § 16.1-69.9:3.

**§ 17.1-507. Maximum number of judges; residence requirement; compensation; powers; etc.**

A. For the several judicial circuits there shall be judges, the *maximum* number as hereinafter set

forth, who shall during their service reside within their respective circuits and whose compensation and powers shall be the same as now and hereafter prescribed for circuit judges.

The *maximum* number of judges of the circuits shall be as follows:

First - 5  
 Second - ~~10~~ 9  
 Third - ~~5~~ 4  
 Fourth - ~~9~~ 8  
 Fifth - 3  
 Sixth - ~~2~~ 3  
 Seventh - ~~5~~ 6  
 Eighth - 4 3  
 Ninth - 4  
 Tenth - ~~3~~ 4  
 Eleventh - 3  
 Twelfth - ~~5~~ 6  
 Thirteenth - 8  
 Fourteenth - 5  
 Fifteenth - ~~9~~ 11  
 Sixteenth - ~~5~~ 6  
 Seventeenth - 4 3  
 Eighteenth - ~~3~~ 4  
 Nineteenth - 15  
 Twentieth - 4 5  
 Twenty-first - ~~3~~ 2  
 Twenty-second - 4 5  
 Twenty-third - ~~6~~ 5  
 Twenty-fourth - 5  
 Twenty-fifth - 4 5  
 Twenty-sixth - ~~5~~ 8  
 Twenty-seventh - ~~5~~ 7  
 Twenty-eighth - ~~3~~ 4  
 Twenty-ninth - 4 5  
 Thirtieth - ~~3~~ 4  
 Thirty-first - ~~5~~ 6

B. No additional circuit court judge shall be authorized or provided for any judicial circuit until the Judicial Council has made a study of the need for such additional circuit court judge and has reported its findings and recommendations to the Courts of Justice Committees of the House of Delegates and Senate. The boundary of any judicial circuit shall not be changed until a study has been made by the Judicial Council and a report of its findings and recommendations made to said Committees.

C. If the Judicial Council finds the need for an additional circuit court judge after a study is made pursuant to subsection B, the study shall be made available to the Compensation Board and the Courts of Justice Committees of the House of Delegates and Senate and Council shall publish notice of such finding in a publication of general circulation among attorneys licensed to practice in the Commonwealth. The Compensation Board shall make a study of the need to provide additional courtroom security and deputy court clerk staffing. This study shall be reported to the Courts of Justice Committees of the House of Delegates and the Senate, and to the Department of Planning and Budget.

**2. That the provisions of this act reducing the number of authorized judgeships in the Twenty-first Judicial Circuit shall become effective upon the death, resignation, or retirement on or after January 1, 2014, of any judge of that court.**

**3. That the provisions of this act reducing the number of authorized judgeships in the General District Court of the Third Judicial District shall become effective upon the death, resignation, or retirement on or after January 1, 2014, of any judge of that court.**

**4. That the provisions of this act reducing the number of authorized judgeships in the General District Court of the Fifth Judicial District shall become effective upon the death, resignation, or retirement on or after January 1, 2014, of any judge of that court.**

**5. That the provisions of this act reducing the number of authorized judgeships in the General District Court of the Thirteenth Judicial District shall become effective upon the death, resignation, or retirement on or after January 1, 2014, of any judge of that court; except that the number of authorized judgeships in the General District Court of the Thirteenth Judicial District shall be reduced to seven on the effective date of this act.**

**6. That the provisions of this act reducing the number of authorized judgeships in the General District Court of the Twenty-fifth Judicial District shall become effective upon the death, resignation, or retirement on or after January 1, 2014, of any judge of that court; except that the number of authorized judgeships in the General District Court of the Twenty-fifth Judicial District**

shall be reduced to four on the effective date of this act.

7. That the provisions of this act reducing the number of authorized judgeships in the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court of the Thirteenth Judicial District shall become effective upon the death, resignation, or retirement on or after January 1, 2014, of any judge of that court.

8. That the provisions of this act reducing the number of authorized judgeships in the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court of the Nineteenth Judicial District shall become effective upon the death, resignation, or retirement on or after January 1, 2014, of any judge of that court.

9. That in order to follow up on the implementation of the Virginia Judicial Workload Assessment Report, dated November 15, 2013, by the National Center for State Courts and in order to assess more accurately the added weight to be given in cases requiring the use of interpreters in Circuit, General District and Juvenile and Domestic Relations Courts in the Commonwealth, the Virginia Supreme Court shall gather empirical data on the reliance of interpreters and make recommendations to the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees by November 1, 2015.

10. That the Chief Justice shall utilize her authority to designate any judge serving in any circuit or district where the number of authorized judgeships is reduced under this act after July 1, 2014, to provide judicial assistance to any circuit or district court, as appropriate.