

Article 7B.

Rape and Other Sex Offenses.

§ 14-27.20. Definitions.

The following definitions apply in this Article:

- (1) Repealed by Session Laws 2018-47, s. 4(a), effective December 1, 2018.
- (1a) Against the will of the other person. – Either of the following:
 - a. Without consent of the other person.
 - b. After consent is revoked by the other person, in a manner that would cause a reasonable person to believe consent is revoked.
- (2) Mentally incapacitated. – A victim who due to any act is rendered substantially incapable of either appraising the nature of his or her conduct, or resisting the act of vaginal intercourse or a sexual act.
- (2a) Person who has a mental disability. – A victim who has an intellectual disability or a mental disorder that temporarily or permanently renders the victim substantially incapable of appraising the nature of his or her conduct, or of resisting the act of vaginal intercourse or a sexual act, or of communicating unwillingness to submit to the act of vaginal intercourse or a sexual act.
- (3) Physically helpless. – Any of the following:
 - a. A victim who is unconscious.
 - b. A victim who is physically unable to resist an act of vaginal intercourse or a sexual act or communicate unwillingness to submit to an act of vaginal intercourse or a sexual act.
- (4) Sexual act. – Cunnilingus, fellatio, anilingus, or anal intercourse, but does not include vaginal intercourse. Sexual act also means the penetration, however slight, by any object into the genital or anal opening of another person's body. It is an affirmative defense that the penetration was for accepted medical purposes.
- (5) Sexual contact. – Any of the following:
 - a. Touching the sexual organ, anus, breast, groin, or buttocks of any person.
 - b. A person touching another person with their own sexual organ, anus, breast, groin, or buttocks.
 - c. A person ejaculating, emitting, or placing semen, urine, or feces upon any part of another person.
- (6) Touching. – As used in subdivision (5) of this section, means physical contact with another person, whether accomplished directly, through the clothing of the person committing the offense, or through the clothing of the victim. (1979, c. 682, s. 1; 2002-159, s. 2(a); 2003-252, s. 1; 2006-247, s. 12(a); 2015-181, s. 2; 2018-47, s. 4(a); 2019-245, ss. 5(a), 6(c).)

§ 14-27.21. First-degree forcible rape.

(a) A person is guilty of first-degree forcible rape if the person engages in vaginal intercourse with another person by force and against the will of the other person, and does any of the following:

- (1) Uses, threatens to use, or displays a dangerous or deadly weapon or an article which the other person reasonably believes to be a dangerous or deadly weapon.

- (2) Inflicts serious personal injury upon the victim or another person.
- (3) The person commits the offense aided and abetted by one or more other persons.
- (b) Any person who commits an offense defined in this section is guilty of a Class B1 felony.
- (c) Upon conviction, a person convicted under this section has no rights to custody of or rights of inheritance from any child born as a result of the commission of the rape, nor shall the person have any rights related to the child under Chapter 48 or Subchapter 1 of Chapter 7B of the General Statutes. (1979, c. 682, s. 1; 1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1316, s. 4; 1981, c. 63; c. 106, ss. 1, 2; c. 179, s. 14; 1983, c. 175, ss. 4, 10; c. 720, s. 4; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 22, s. 2; 2004-128, s. 7; 2015-181, ss. 3(a), (b); 2017-30, s. 1.)

§ 14-27.22. Second-degree forcible rape.

- (a) A person is guilty of second-degree forcible rape if the person engages in vaginal intercourse with another person:
 - (1) By force and against the will of the other person; or
 - (2) Who has a mental disability or who is mentally incapacitated or physically helpless, and the person performing the act knows or should reasonably know the other person has a mental disability or is mentally incapacitated or physically helpless.
- (b) Any person who commits the offense defined in this section is guilty of a Class C felony.
- (c) Upon conviction, a person convicted under this section has no rights to custody of or rights of inheritance from any child conceived during the commission of the rape, nor does the person have any rights related to the child under Chapter 48 of the General Statutes or Subchapter I of Chapter 7B of the General Statutes. (1979, c. 682, s. 1; 1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1316, s. 5; 1981, cc. 63, 179; 1993, c. 539, s. 1130; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 2002-159, s. 2(b); 2004-128, s. 8; 2015-181, ss. 4(a), (b); 2018-47, s. 4(b).)

§ 14-27.23. Statutory rape of a child by an adult.

- (a) A person is guilty of statutory rape of a child by an adult if the person is at least 18 years of age and engages in vaginal intercourse with a victim who is a child under the age of 13 years.
- (b) A person convicted of violating this section is guilty of a Class B1 felony and shall be sentenced pursuant to Article 81B of Chapter 15A of the General Statutes, except that in no case shall the person receive an active punishment of less than 300 months, and except as provided in subsection (c) of this section. Following the termination of active punishment, the person shall be subject to enrollment in satellite-based monitoring as provided in Part 5 of Article 27A of Chapter 14 of the General Statutes.
- (c) Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 81B of Chapter 15A of the General Statutes, the court may sentence the defendant to active punishment for a term of months greater than that authorized pursuant to G.S. 15A-1340.17, up to and including life imprisonment without parole, if the court finds that the nature of the offense and the harm inflicted are of such brutality, duration, severity, degree, or scope beyond that normally committed in such crimes, or considered in basic aggravation of these crimes, so as to require a sentence to active punishment in excess of that authorized pursuant to G.S. 15A-1340.17. If the court sentences the defendant pursuant to this subsection, it shall make findings of fact supporting its decision, to include matters it considered as egregious aggravation. Egregious aggravation can include further consideration of existing

aggravating factors where the conduct of the defendant falls outside the heartland of cases even the aggravating factors were designed to cover. Egregious aggravation may also be considered based on the extraordinarily young age of the victim, or the depraved torture or mutilation of the victim, or extraordinary physical pain inflicted on the victim.

(d) Upon conviction, a person convicted under this section has no rights to custody of or rights of inheritance from any child born as a result of the commission of the rape, nor shall the person have any rights related to the child under Chapter 48 or Subchapter 1 of Chapter 7B of the General Statutes.

(e) The offense under G.S. 14-27.24 is a lesser included offense of the offense in this section. (2008-117, s. 1; 2015-181, s. 5(a), 5(b); 2021-182, s. 2(k).)

§ 14-27.24. First-degree statutory rape.

(a) A person is guilty of first-degree statutory rape if the person engages in vaginal intercourse with a victim who is a child under the age of 13 years and the defendant is at least 12 years old and is at least four years older than the victim.

(b) Any person who commits an offense defined in this section is guilty of a Class B1 felony.

(c) Upon conviction, a person convicted under this section has no rights to custody of or rights of inheritance from any child born as a result of the commission of the rape, nor shall the person have any rights related to the child under Chapter 48 or Subchapter 1 of Chapter 7B of the General Statutes. (1979, c. 682, s. 1; 1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1316, s. 4; 1981, c. 63; c. 106, ss. 1, 2; c. 179, s. 14; 1983, c. 175, ss. 4, 10; c. 720, s. 4; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 22, s. 2; 2004-128, s. 7; 2015-181, s. 6.)

§ 14-27.25. Statutory rape of person who is 15 years of age or younger.

(a) A defendant is guilty of a Class B1 felony if the defendant engages in vaginal intercourse with another person who is 15 years of age or younger and the defendant is at least 12 years old and at least six years older than the person, except when the defendant is lawfully married to the person.

(b) Unless the conduct is covered under some other provision of law providing greater punishment, a defendant is guilty of a Class C felony if the defendant engages in vaginal intercourse with another person who is 15 years of age or younger and the defendant is at least 12 years old and more than four but less than six years older than the person, except when the defendant is lawfully married to the person. (1995, c. 281, s. 1; 2015-62, s. 1(a); 2015-181, s. 7(a), (b).)

§ 14-27.26. First-degree forcible sexual offense.

(a) A person is guilty of a first degree forcible sexual offense if the person engages in a sexual act with another person by force and against the will of the other person, and does any of the following:

- (1) Uses, threatens to use, or displays a dangerous or deadly weapon or an article which the other person reasonably believes to be a dangerous or deadly weapon.
- (2) Inflicts serious personal injury upon the victim or another person.
- (3) The person commits the offense aided and abetted by one or more other persons.

(b) Any person who commits an offense defined in this section is guilty of a Class B1 felony. (1979, c. 682, s. 1; 1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1316, s. 6; 1981, c. 63; c. 106, ss. 3, 4; c. 179, s. 14; 1983, c. 175, ss. 5, 10; c. 720, s. 4; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 22, s. 3; 2015-181, ss. 8(a), (b); 2017-30, s. 2.)

§ 14-27.27. Second-degree forcible sexual offense.

(a) A person is guilty of second degree forcible sexual offense if the person engages in a sexual act with another person:

- (1) By force and against the will of the other person; or
- (2) Who has a mental disability or who is mentally incapacitated or physically helpless, and the person performing the act knows or should reasonably know that the other person has a mental disability or is mentally incapacitated or physically helpless.

(b) Any person who commits the offense defined in this section is guilty of a Class C felony. (1979, c. 682, s. 1; 1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1316, s. 7; 1981, c. 63; c. 179, s. 14; 1993, c. 539, s. 1131; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 2002-159, s. 2(c); 2015-181, ss. 9(a), (b); 2018-47, s. 4(c).)

§ 14-27.28. Statutory sexual offense with a child by an adult.

(a) A person is guilty of statutory sexual offense with a child by an adult if the person is at least 18 years of age and engages in a sexual act with a victim who is a child under the age of 13 years.

(b) A person convicted of violating this section is guilty of a Class B1 felony and shall be sentenced pursuant to Article 81B of Chapter 15A of the General Statutes, except that in no case shall the person receive an active punishment of less than 300 months, and except as provided in subsection (c) of this section. Following the termination of active punishment, the person shall be subject to enrollment in satellite-based monitoring as provided in Part 5 of Article 27A of Chapter 14 of the General Statutes.

(c) Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 81B of Chapter 15A of the General Statutes, the court may sentence the defendant to active punishment for a term of months greater than that authorized pursuant to G.S. 15A-1340.17, up to and including life imprisonment without parole, if the court finds that the nature of the offense and the harm inflicted are of such brutality, duration, severity, degree, or scope beyond that normally committed in such crimes, or considered in basic aggravation of these crimes, so as to require a sentence to active punishment in excess of that authorized pursuant to G.S. 15A-1340.17. If the court sentences the defendant pursuant to this subsection, it shall make findings of fact supporting its decision, to include matters it considered as egregious aggravation. Egregious aggravation can include further consideration of existing aggravating factors where the conduct of the defendant falls outside the heartland of cases even the aggravating factors were designed to cover. Egregious aggravation may also be considered based on the extraordinarily young age of the victim, or the depraved torture or mutilation of the victim, or extraordinary physical pain inflicted on the victim.

(d) The offense under G.S. 14-27.29 is a lesser included offense of the offense in this section. (2008-117, s. 2; 2015-181, s. 10(a), (b); 2021-182, s. 2(l).)

§ 14-27.29. First-degree statutory sexual offense.

(a) A person is guilty of first-degree statutory sexual offense if the person engages in a sexual act with a victim who is a child under the age of 13 years and the defendant is at least 12 years old and is at least four years older than the victim.

(b) Any person who commits an offense defined in this section is guilty of a Class B1 felony. (1979, c. 682, s. 1; 1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1316, s. 6; 1981, c. 63; c. 106, ss. 3, 4; c. 179, s. 14; 1983, c. 175, ss. 5, 10; c. 720, s. 4; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 22, s. 3; 2015-181, s. 11.)

§ 14-27.30. Statutory sexual offense with a person who is 15 years of age or younger.

(a) A defendant is guilty of a Class B1 felony if the defendant engages in a sexual act with another person who is 15 years of age or younger and the defendant is at least 12 years old and at least six years older than the person, except when the defendant is lawfully married to the person.

(b) Unless the conduct is covered under some other provision of law providing greater punishment, a defendant is guilty of a Class C felony if the defendant engages in a sexual act with another person who is 15 years of age or younger and the defendant is at least 12 years old and more than four but less than six years older than the person, except when the defendant is lawfully married to the person. (1995, c. 281, s. 1; 2015-181, s. 12.)

§ 14-27.31. Sexual activity by a substitute parent or custodian.

(a) If a defendant who has assumed the position of a parent in the home of a minor victim engages in vaginal intercourse or a sexual act with a victim who is a minor residing in the home, the defendant is guilty of a Class E felony.

(b) If a person having custody of a victim of any age or a person who is an agent or employee of any person, or institution, including a religious organization or institution, whether such institution is private, charitable, or governmental, having custody of a victim of any age engages in vaginal intercourse or a sexual act with such victim, the defendant is guilty of a Class E felony.

(c) Consent is not a defense to a charge under this section.

(d) As used in this section, "custody" means the care, control, or supervision of a minor by any adult who, by virtue of their position, role, employment, volunteer status, or relationship to a minor, exercises supervisory authority or control over a minor, or is responsible for the minor's welfare, safety, or supervision, regardless of whether such responsibility arises from express appointment, organizational duty, professional obligation, or circumstantial necessity. (1979, c. 682, s. 1; 1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1316, s. 9; 1981, c. 63; c. 179, s. 14; 1993, c. 539, s. 1132; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 1999-300, s. 2; 2003-98, s. 1; 2015-181, s. 13(a), (b); 2025-70, s. 9(a).)

§ 14-27.32. Sexual activity with a student.

(a) If a defendant, who is a teacher, school administrator, student teacher, school safety officer, or coach, at any age, or who is other school personnel, and who is at least four years older than the victim engages in vaginal intercourse or a sexual act with a victim who is a student, at any time during or after the time the defendant and victim were present together in the same school, but before the victim ceases to be a student, the defendant is guilty of a Class G felony, except when the defendant is lawfully married to the student. The term "same school" means a school at which the student is enrolled and the defendant is employed, assigned, or volunteers.

(b) A defendant who is school personnel, other than a teacher, school administrator, student teacher, school safety officer, or coach, and is less than four years older than the victim and engages in vaginal intercourse or a sexual act with a victim who is a student, is guilty of a Class G felony.

(c) This section shall apply unless the conduct is covered under some other provision of law providing for greater punishment.

(d) Consent is not a defense to a charge under this section.

- (e) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:
- (1) School. – As defined in G.S. 14-202.4(d)(2).
 - (2) School personnel. – As defined in G.S. 14-202.4(d)(3).
 - (3) School safety officer. – A school resource officer or any other person who is regularly present in a school for the purpose of promoting and maintaining safe and orderly schools.
 - (4) Student. – A person enrolled in kindergarten, or in grade one through grade 12 in any school within six months of any violation of this section. (1979, c. 682, s. 1; 1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1316, s. 9; 1981, c. 63; c. 179, s. 14; 1993, c. 539, s. 1132; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 1999-300, s. 2; 2003-98, s. 1; 2015-44, s. 2; 2015-181, s. 14(a), (b); 2023-128, s. 1(a).)

§ 14-27.33. Sexual battery.

- (a) A person is guilty of sexual battery if the person, for the purpose of sexual arousal, sexual gratification, or sexual abuse, engages in sexual contact with another person:
- (1) By force and against the will of the other person; or
 - (2) Who has a mental disability or who is mentally incapacitated or physically helpless, and the person performing the act knows or should reasonably know that the other person has a mental disability or is mentally incapacitated or physically helpless.
- (b) Any person who commits the offense defined in this section is guilty of a Class A1 misdemeanor. (2003-252, s. 2; 2015-181, s. 15; 2018-47, s. 4(d).)

§ 14-27.33A. Sexual contact or penetration under pretext of medical treatment.

- (a) Definitions. – The following definitions apply in this section:
- (1) Incapacitated. – A patient's incapability of appraising the nature of a medical treatment, either because the patient is unconscious or under the influence of an impairing substance, including, but not limited to, alcohol, anesthetics, controlled substances listed under Chapter 90 of the General Statutes, or any other drug or psychoactive substance capable of impairing a person's physical or mental faculties.
 - (2) Medical treatment. – Includes an examination or a procedure.
 - (3) Patient. – A person who has undergone or is seeking to undergo medical treatment.
 - (4) Sexual contact. – The intentional touching of a person's intimate parts or the intentional touching of the clothing covering the immediate area of the person's intimate parts, if that intentional touching can reasonably be construed as being for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification, done for a sexual purpose, or done in a sexual manner.
 - (5) Sexual penetration. – Sexual intercourse, cunnilingus, fellatio, anal intercourse, or any other intrusion, however slight, of any part of a person's body or of any object into the genital or anal openings of another person's body, regardless of whether semen is emitted, if that intrusion can reasonably be construed as being for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification, done for a sexual purpose, or done in a sexual manner.

(b) Offense; Penalty. – Unless the conduct is covered under some other provision of law providing greater punishment, a person who undertakes medical treatment of a patient is guilty of a Class C felony if the person does any of the following in the course of that medical treatment:

- (1) Represents to the patient that sexual contact between the person and the patient is necessary or will be beneficial to the patient's health and induces the patient to engage in sexual contact with the person by means of the representation.
- (2) Represents to the patient that sexual penetration between the person and the patient is necessary or will be beneficial to the patient's health and induces the patient to engage in sexual penetration with the person by means of the representation.
- (3) Engages in sexual contact with the patient while the patient is incapacitated.
- (4) Engages in sexual penetration with the patient while the patient is incapacitated.

(c) This section does not prohibit a person from being charged with, convicted of, or punished for any other violation of law that is committed by that person while violating this section.

(d) The court may order a term of imprisonment imposed for a violation of this section to be served consecutively to a term of imprisonment imposed for any other crime, including any other violation of law arising out of the same transaction as the violation of this section. (2019-191, s. 43(a).)

§ 14-27.34. No defense that victim is spouse of person committing act.

A person may be prosecuted under this Article whether or not the victim is the person's legal spouse at the time of the commission of the alleged rape or sexual offense. (1979, c. 682, s. 1; 1987, c. 742; 1993, c. 274, s. 1; 2015-181, s. 15.)

§ 14-27.35. No presumption as to incapacity.

In prosecutions under this Article, there shall be no presumption that any person under the age of 14 years is physically incapable of committing a sex offense of any degree or physically incapable of committing rape, or that a male child under the age of 14 years is incapable of engaging in sexual intercourse. (1979, c. 682, s. 1; 2015-181, s. 15.)

§ 14-27.36. Evidence required in prosecutions under this Article.

It shall not be necessary upon the trial of any indictment for an offense under this Article where the sex act alleged is vaginal intercourse or anal intercourse to prove the actual emission of semen in order to constitute the offense; but the offense shall be completed upon proof of penetration only. Penetration, however slight, is vaginal intercourse or anal intercourse. (1979, c. 682, s. 1; 2015-181, s. 15.)