

Sec. 24-5. - Regulating Picketing.

(a) Definitions. The following definitions shall apply to this section unless the context clearly indicates or requires a different meaning.

(1) Picket or Picketing. The activity or circumstance whereby one or more persons gather for any common purpose including but not limited to a vigil, protest, observation, demonstration, or other action which primarily promotes or objects to a person, policy, political candidate, issue, or action.

(2) Playground. A confined outdoor area set aside for recreation and play at a public facility containing equipment such as seesaws and swings.

(3) School Property. Real property operated, controlled, or maintained by a public school system for the purpose of providing primary or secondary education to students including adjacent school controlled parking facilities and lots, recreation areas, open spaces, and sports facilities and fields.

(b) Prohibition.

(1) School Property. Picketing is prohibited on School Property, or on public sidewalks or public ways, or on private property by persons other than the property owner or the property owner's immediate family, within 1000 feet of School Property. This prohibition applies only during school hours or school activities during which students are present on School Property for educational, athletic, or school sponsored extra-curricular purposes.

(2) Playgrounds. Picketing is prohibited on, or within 1000 feet of, Playgrounds when children under age 18 are present on and utilizing the Playground.

(c) Exceptions.

(1) State and Federal Property. Picketing on state owned or federally owned property is not subject to the terms and prohibitions of this section.

(2) Government meetings. Nothing in this section is intended to regulate attendance or conduct at public meetings of governmental bodies.

(3) Enrolled Students. The prohibition in subsection (b)(1) does not apply to enrolled students of a school where such activity occurs.

(d) Penalty. Penalties for violations as authorized by North Carolina General Statute 153A-123.

(1) Fine. All violations of this section shall subject the violator to a civil penalty of \$100, recoverable in the nature of debt.

(2) Equitable Relief. The County may seek an injunction, order of abatement, or other equitable relief against Picketers or private property owners hosting Pickets conducted by the public.

(3) Trespass. Violators of this section who are present on School Property or Playgrounds shall be immediately deemed to be without authorization to remain on such property and thus are deemed to be trespassing on the property on which they are Picketing or attempting to Picket.