

[Act No. 2347, February 28, 1914]

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE REORGANIZATION OF THE COURTS OF BY FIRST INSTANCE AND OF THE COURT OF LAND REGISTRATION.

By authority of the United States, be it enacted by the Philippine Legislature, that:

CHAPTER I.

SECTION 1. *Of the division of the territory into judicial districts and the number of judges of Courts of First Instance.*—The territory of the Philippine Islands shall, for the purposes of this Act, be divided into twenty-six judicial districts, which shall have the number of judges of Courts of First Instance assigned to them by this Act, to wit:

The First Judicial District shall consist of the Province of Cagayan and the Province of Batanes.

The Second Judicial District, of the Province of Isabela and the Province of Nueva Vizcaya.

The Third Judicial District, of the Province of Ilocos Sur, including the subprovince of Abra, and the Province of Ilocos Norte.

The Fourth Judicial District, of the Province of Union and the Mountain Province.

The Fifth Judicial District, of the Province of Pangasinan.

The Sixth Judicial District, of the Province of Tarlac and the Province of Nueva Ecija.

The Seventh Judicial District, of the Province of Pam-panga and the Province of Bulacan.

The Eighth Judicial District, of the Province of Bataan and the Province of Zambales.

The Ninth Judicial District, of the city of Manila, which shall be considered as a province for the purposes of this Act.

The Tenth Judicial District, of the Province of Cavite and the Province of Palawan.

The Eleventh Judicial District, of the Province of Rizal.

The Twelfth Judicial District, of the Province of Laguna.

The Thirteenth Judicial District, of the Province of Batangas and the Province of Mindoro.

The Fourteenth Judicial District, of the Province of Tayabas, including the subprovince of Marinduque.

The Fifteenth Judicial District, of the Province of Ambos Camarines and the Province of Albay, including the subprovince of Catanduanes.

The Sixteenth Judicial District, of the Province of Sorsogon, including the subprovince of Masbate.

The Seventeenth Judicial District, of the Province of Capiz and the Province of Antique and the subprovince of Romblon.

The Eighteenth Judicial District, of the Province of Samar.

The Nineteenth Judicial District, of the Province of Leyte.

The Twentieth Judicial District, of the Province of Cebu.

The Twenty-first Judicial District, of the province of Oriental Negros,

including the subprovince of Siquijor and the Province of Bohol.
The Twenty-second Judicial District, of the Province of Occidental Negros.
The Twenty-third Judicial District, of the Province of Iloilo.
The Twenty-fourth Judicial District, of the Province of Surigao and the subprovince of Butuan, Province of Agusan.
The Twenty-fifth Judicial District, of the Province of Misamis, the subprovince of Bukidnon, Province of Agusan, and the district of Lanao and subdistrict of Dapitan, Department of Mindanao and Sulu.
The Twenty-sixth Judicial District, of the Department of Mindanao and Sulu, with the exception of the district of Lanao and subdistrict of Dapitan.

In each of the judicial districts enumerated there shall be a district judge of the Court of First Instance who shall preside over all the Courts of First Instance of the provinces comprised in his judicial district except in the Ninth District, to wit, the city of Manila, where there shall be four judges, who shall be known as judge of the first, second, third, and fourth branch, respectively. Said judges shall have the same jurisdiction and competency as conferred by existing law upon the Courts of First Instance, in addition to that conferred upon them by section ten of this Act.

SEC. 2. Of the classification of the judicial districts and the salaries of the judges.— The judicial districts are hereby classified into districts of the first, second, third, and fourth class.

Of the first class are the Fifth, Seventh, Ninth, Fifteenth, Twentieth, and Twenty-third districts.

Of the second class are the Third, Sixth, Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Nineteenth, Twenty-second, and Twenty-sixth districts.

Of the third class are the Fourth, Seventeenth, Twenty-first and Twenty-fifth districts.

Of the fourth class are the First, Second, Eighth, Tenth, Sixteenth, Eighteenth, and Twenty-fourth districts.

Judges of districts of the first class shall receive a salary of ten thousand pesos per annum each; those of the second class, nine thousand pesos per annum each; those of the third class, eight thousand pesos per annum each, and those of the fourth class, seven thousand pesos per annum each, these salaries to be paid monthly: *Provided*, That if any of the present judges of the Court of First Instance, judges at large, or judges of the Court of Land Registration are appointed to the Court of First Instance under the provisions of this Act they shall not receive, during the first year after their appointment, a salary less than they are now receiving; and upon the lapse of said period of one year they shall only receive the salaries fixed by this Act for the respective districts to which they have been appointed in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

*SEC. 3. Of the residences of the judges.—*In the districts of one province only, the judges shall reside in the capitals thereof, and in the districts of two or more provinces the residences of the judges shall be as follows:

In the First District, the municipality of Tuguegarao, Province of Cagayan, with temporary seat in the municipality of Santo Domingo de Basco, Province of Batanes.

In the Second District, the municipality of Ilagan, Province of Isabela, with temporary seat in the municipality of Bayombong, Province of Nueva Vizcaya.

In the Third District, the municipality of Vigan, Province of Ilocos Sur, with temporary seat in the municipality of Laoag, Province of Ilocos Norte, and in the municipality of Bangued, subprovince of Abra.

In the Fourth District, the municipality of San Fernando, Province of Union, with temporary seat in the city of Ba-guio, and in the municipality of Bontoc, Mountain Province.

In the Sixth District, the municipality of Cabanatuan, Province of Nueva Ecija, with temporary seat in the municipality of Tarlac, Province of Tarlac.

In the Seventh District, in the municipality of San Fernando, Province of Pampanga, with temporary seat in the municipality of Malolos, Province of Bulacan.

In the Eighth District, the municipality of Iba, Province of Zambales, with temporary seat in the municipality of Balanga, Province of Bataan.

In the Tenth District, the municipality of Cavite, Province of Cavite, with temporary seat in the municipalities of Cuyo and Puerto Princesa, Province of Palawan.

In the Thirteenth District, the municipality of Batangas, Province of Batangas, with temporary seat in the municipality of Calapan, Province of Mindoro.

In the Fourteenth District, the municipality of Lucena, Province of Tayabas, with temporary seat in the municipality of Boac, subprovince of Marinduque.

In the Fifteenth District, the municipality of Albay, Province of Albay, with temporary seat in the municipalities of Nueva Caceres and Tigaon, Province of Ambos Camarines, and the municipality of Virac, subprovince of Catanduanes.

In the Sixteenth District, the municipality of Sorsogon, Province of Sorsogon, with temporary seat in the municipality of Masbate, subprovince of Masbate.

In the Seventeenth District, the municipality of Capiz, Province of Capiz, with temporary seat in the municipality of San Jose, Province of Antique, and in the municipality of Romblon, subprovince of Romblon.

In the Twenty-first District, the municipality of Dumaguete, Province of Oriental Negros, with temporary seat in the municipality of Tagbilaran, Province of Bohol and the municipality of Larena, subprovince of Siquijor.

In the Twenty-fourth District, the municipality of Suri-gao, Province of Surigao, with temporary seat in the municipality of Butuan, subprovince of Butuan, Province of Agusan.

In the Twenty-fifth District, the municipality of Cagayan, Province of Misamis, with temporary seat in the township of Malaybalay, subprovince of Bukidnon, Province of Agusan, in the municipality of Uigan, district of Lanao, and in the municipality of Dapitan, Department of Mindanao and Sulu.

In the Twenty-sixth District, the municipality of Zambo-anga, with temporary seat in the municipalities of Jolo, Cotabato, and Davao:

Provided, however, That judges of Courts of First Instance of districts composed of one province only shall have a temporary seat of their courts in the municipalities where they shall hold court under the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 4. *Of the auxiliary judges, their duties, residences and salaries.*—There are hereby created, in addition to the positions of district judges, seven positions of auxiliary judges of Courts of First Instance who shall receive compensation at the rate of seven thousand pesos per annum each, payable monthly, and whose duty it shall be to assist the district judges in the dispatch of all cases of the competency of the judges of Courts of First Instance under existing law, as well as in the dispatch of land registration cases, as provided for in this Act, and to substitute the district judges in cases of absence, illness, or incapacity of the same. All acts, proceedings, and sentences executed or pronounced by the auxiliary judges in the performance of their duties shall be as valid as if they had been executed by the judge of the district in whose place they are acting: *Provided,* That each of the said auxiliary judges shall be appointed for one of the groups of judicial districts hereinafter established, and shall not act in any district not included within the group designated in his commission, except in cases of substitution hereinafter provided in this section: *Provided, further,* That the auxiliary judges shall hold Courts of First Instance, like the district judges, in their respective places of residence for the dispatch of cases assigned to them by the proper district judges, so long as their services are not required outside of their respective residences: *Provided, further,* That no special designation by the Secretary of Finance and Justice shall be required in order that an auxiliary judge may act in any district in the proper group, but a request by any of the district judges requiring his services, or notification in cases of absence, illness, or incapacity of the same, shall be sufficient, a report to be made of it in each case to the Secretary of Finance and Justice: *And provided, lastly,* That in cases of absence or illness of an auxiliary judge, his duties may be performed by any of the other auxiliary judges upon the written order of the Secretary of Finance and Justice, only so long as the cause resulting in such substitution shall last.

For the purposes of the distribution of the auxiliary of Courts of First Instance, seven groups shall be formed of the judicial districts created by virtue of this Act: The first group shall be composed of the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Judicial Districts; the second group, of the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth districts; the

third group, of the Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth Districts; the fourth group of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Sixteenth Districts; the fifth group of the Eighteenth, Nineteenth, Twentieth, and Twenty-first Districts; the sixth group of the Seventeenth, Twenty-second, and Twenty-third Districts; and the seventh group of the Twenty-fourth, Twenty-fifth, and Twenty-sixth Districts.

The auxiliary judge of the Courts of First Instance of the first group shall have his legal residence in the capital of the Province of Ilocos Sur; the auxiliary judge of the Courts of First Instance of the second group shall have his legal residence in the capital of the Province of Pangasinan; the one of the third group, in the city of Manila; the one of the fourth, in the capital of the Province of Albay; the one of the fifth, in the city of Cebu; the one of the sixth, in the city of Iloilo; and the one of the seventh, in the municipality of Zamboanga, Department of Mindanao and Sulu.

SEC. 5. *Of the terms of court.*—In districts of one province only, including the district of the city of Manila, the judges shall hold court on all working days while there are cases ready for trial in their judicial districts unless otherwise provided in this Act. In the other districts where the judges have to hold court outside of their residences, the terms of court shall be as follows:

First District: At Tuguegarao, Province of Cagayan, on the first Tuesday of July and December of each year. At Santo Domingo de Basco, Province of Batanes, on the first Tuesday of March of each year.

Second District: At Ilagan, Province of Isabela, on the -second district, first Tuesday of March and September of each year. At Bayombong, Province of Nueva Vizcaya, on the first Tuesday of July and December of each year.

Third District: At Vigan, Province of Ilocos Sur, on the first Tuesday of January and July of each year. At Laoag, Province of Ilocos Norte, on the first Tuesday of March and September of each year. At Bangued, subprovince of Abra, on the first Tuesday of November of each year.

Fourth District: At San Fernando, Province of Union, -fourth district. Amended on the first Tuesday of January and July of each year. At Baguio, Mountain Province, on the first Tuesday of April and September of each year. At Bontoc, Mountain Province, on the first Tuesday of March and November of each year.

Sixth District: At Cabanatuan, Province of Nueva Ecija, on the first Tuesday of April and October of each year. At Tarlac, Province of Tarlac, on the first Tuesday of February and August of each year.

Seventh District: At San Fernando, Province of Pam- -seventh district, panga, on the first Tuesday of April and October of each year. At Malolos, Province of Bulacan, on the first Tuesday of February and August of each year.

Eighth District: At Iba, Province of Zambales, on the first Tuesday of January, July and October of each year. At Balanga, Province of Bataan, on the first Tuesday of April and December of each year.