

SUPERIOR COURT OF POLK COUNTY
TALLAPOOSA JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
STATE OF GEORGIA

IN RE: Declaration of Judicial Emergency

Date: March 13, 2020

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FILED IN OFFICE
MAR 14 2020

CLERK OF SUPREME COURT OF GEORGIA

ORDER DECLARING JUDICIAL EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, IT HAS BEEN DETERMINED that a Judicial Emergency exists in Polk County, Georgia affecting all courts such that there is a serious health emergency pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-60(2)(D).

WHEREAS, IT HAS BEEN DETERMINED that the Judicial Emergency substantially endangers or infringes upon the normal functioning of the judicial system as it relates to jury service, including grand jury service, and any non-essential matters, unless they can be conducted via video or teleconferencing.

Therefore, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-61, the Honorable Chief Judge Meng Lim of the Superior Court of Polk County, Tallapoosa Judicial Circuit DOES HEREBY ORDER AND DECLARE the existence of a Judicial Emergency in the Tallapoosa Judicial Circuit. The nature of this emergency is the continued transmission of Coronavirus/COVID-19 throughout Polk County and the potential infection of those who are required to appear in our courts and interact with large groups due to jury service, including grand jury service, or other large, non-essential calendars.

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POLK COUNTY, GA.
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STACIE M. BAINES, CLERK

Thus, the undersigned hereby makes this declaration of a judicial emergency affecting all courts and clerk's offices in Polk County as it relates to jury service, including grand jury service, and any non-essential matters, unless they can be conducted via video or teleconferencing.

Accordingly, IT IS THE ORDER of the Court that no jurors or grand jurors shall report and no jury trials shall be held for a period of **thirty (30) days** from the date of the entry of this Order. Furthermore, no civil or non-essential matters shall be heard by the courts during this 30-day time period, unless they can be conducted via video or teleconferencing. Parties or attorneys in any non-essential matters should contact the chambers of the judge assigned to their case if they have any questions and/or need to ensure their compliance with this Order.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-62, during the period of this Order, the Court hereby suspends, tolls, extends, and otherwise grants relief from: (1) a statute of limitation; (2) the time within which to try a case for which a demand for speedy trial has been filed; (3) the time within which to hold a commitment hearing; (4) the time within which to return a bill of indictment or an accusation or to bring a matter before a grand jury; (5) the time within which to take fingerprints by the Probate Court for weapon licenses; (6) the time limitation for hearing an emergency guardianship or conservatorship by the Probate Court; (7) the time within which to conduct an emergency removal hearing within 48 hours or a detention hearing within 72 hours for the Juvenile Court; and/or (8) such other legal proceedings as determined to be necessary, including calendars involving large numbers of litigants, lawyers, or other persons.

Should the state of emergency extend beyond the period indicated above or should the nature of the emergency otherwise require modification by the Court, the Court will make a determination of available alternative remedies for the conduct of court business, as necessary, and a corresponding Order will be entered and distributed in accordance with Georgia law.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-63:

IT IS ORDERED that the Sheriff of Polk County shall post this Order on his public notification site and in the courthouses;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the undersigned shall immediately notify and serve Chief Justice Harold D. Melton of the Supreme Court with a copy of this Order, such service to be accomplished via email to Tee Barnes, the Clerk of the Supreme Court of Georgia, at barnest@gasupreme.us;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the undersigned shall immediately notify and serve a copy of the order on the judges and clerks of all courts sitting within the jurisdictions affected and on the clerks of the Georgia Court of Appeals and the Georgia Supreme Court, such service to be accomplished through reasonable means to assure expeditious receipt; and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the undersigned shall give notice of the issuance of this Order to the affected parties, counsel for the affected parties, and the public.

IT IS SO ORDERED this 13th day of March, 2020 at 3:15 p.m.



Meng Lim, Chief Judge
Polk County Superior Court
Tallapoosa Judicial Circuit

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DISTRIBUTION LIST

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Judge Laura Wheale
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Ms. Stacie Baines
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Sheriff Johnny Moats
Polk County Sheriff's Office
jmoats@polkga.org

Ms. Tee Barnes
GA Supreme Court Clerk
barnest@gasupreme.us

Mr. Steve Castlen
GA Court of Appeals Clerk
330 Capitol Avenue S.E.
Suite 1601
Atlanta, GA 30334

This 13th day of March, 2020.

*Sent by what
3-13-2020*



Chief Judge Meng Lim
Polk County Superior Court
Tallapoosa Judicial Circuit