

# JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF GEORGIA

**General Session**

**Friday, April 24, 2020**

10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.



**By Remote Conferencing**

**Judicial Council of Georgia  
General Session**

**By Conference Call**

**Friday, April 24, 2020**  
10 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

- 1. Preliminary Remarks**  
(Chief Justice Harold D. Melton, Est. Time – 5 Min.)
- 2. Roll Call of Judicial Council Members**  
(Cynthia Clanton, Est. Time – 2 Min.)
- 3. Approval of Consent Agenda (*Action Item*)** **TAB 1**  
(Chief Justice Harold D. Melton, Est. time – 2 Min.)
  - Minutes from Emergency Session on April 13, 2020
  - Budget Committee Report
  - Legislation Committee Report
  - Grants Committee Report
  - Strategic Plan Committee Report
- 4. Update on COVID–19 and Statewide Judicial Emergency**  
(Chief Justice Harold D. Melton, Est. Time – 10 Min.)
- 5. Judicial Council Committee Reports**
  - A. Technology Committee (*Action Item*)** **TAB 2**  
(Chief Justice Harold D. Melton, Est Time – 10 Min.)
  - B. Court Reporting Matters Committee (*Action Item*)** **TAB 3**  
(Vice Chief Judge Brian Rickman, Est. Time – 10 Min.)
  - C. Judicial Workload Assessment Committee (*Action Item*)** **TAB 4**  
(Chief Judge David Emerson, Est. Time 10 Min.)
  - D. Cybersecurity Insurance Committee (*Action Item*)** **TAB 5**  
(Judge Wade Padgett, Est. Time – 10 Min.)
- 6. Report from Judicial Council/AOC** **TAB 6**  
(Ms. Cynthia H. Clanton, Est. Time – 5 Min.)
- 7. Reports from the Courts, Councils, & State Bar** **TAB 7**  
(Est. Time – 10 Min.)

- A. Supreme Court**
- B. Court of Appeals**
- C. Business Court**
- D. Council of Superior Court Judges**
- E. Council of State Court Judges**
- F. Council of Juvenile Court Judges**
- G. Council of Probate Court Judges**
- H. Council of Magistrate Court Judges**
- I. Council of Municipal Court Judges**
- J. State Bar of Georgia**

**8. Report from Additional Judicial Branch Agencies (Est. Time – 5 Min.)**

**TAB 8**

- A. Council of Accountability Court Judges**
- B. Georgia Commission on Dispute Resolution**
- C. Council of Superior Court Clerks**
- D. Chief Justice’s Commission on Professionalism**
- E. Georgia Council of Court Administrators**
- F. Institution of Continuing Judicial Education**
- G. Judicial Qualifications Commission**

**9. Old/New Business**

(Chief Justice Harold D. Melton, Est. Time – 5 Min.)

**10. Recognition of Outgoing Members**

(Chief Justice Harold D. Melton, Est. Time – 5 Min.)

**11. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment**

(Chief Justice Harold D. Melton, Est. Time – 5 Min.)

**Next Judicial Council Meeting**

Friday, August 14, 2020 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Columbus Convention & Trade Center Columbus, GA

**Judicial Council Meeting Calendar - 2020**

Friday, December 11, 2020 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. The Carter Center/ Atlanta, GA

**Proposed Judicial Council Meeting Calendar - 2021**

Friday, February 12, 2021 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. “Sloppy” Floyd Building/ Atlanta, GA

Friday, April 23, 2021 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. The Classic Center/ Athens, GA

Friday, August 13, 2021 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Location TBD

Friday, December 10, 2021 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. The Carter Center/ Atlanta, GA

## Judicial Council Members

As of April 2020

### **Supreme Court**

Chief Justice Harold D. Melton  
Chair, Judicial Council  
507 State Judicial Building  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
404-657-3477/F 651-8642  
[meltonh@gasupreme.us](mailto:meltonh@gasupreme.us)

Presiding Justice David E. Nahmias  
Vice-Chair, Judicial Council  
501 State Judicial Building  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
404-656-3474/F 657-6997  
[nahmiasd@gasupreme.us](mailto:nahmiasd@gasupreme.us)

### **Court of Appeals**

Chief Judge Christopher J. McFadden  
47 Trinity Avenue, Suite 501  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
404-656-3450/ F 651-6187  
[mcfaddenc@gaappeals.us](mailto:mcfaddenc@gaappeals.us)

Vice Chief Judge Brian M. Rickman  
47 Trinity Avenue, Suite 501  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
404-656-3450/ F 651-6187  
[rickmanb@gaappeals.us](mailto:rickmanb@gaappeals.us)

### **Georgia State-wide Business Court**

Judge Walter W. Davis  
[davisw@gsbc.us](mailto:davisw@gsbc.us)

### **Superior Court**

Judge Shawn E. LaGrua  
President, CSCJ  
Atlanta Judicial Circuit  
185 Central Avenue SW, STE T8855  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
404-612-8460/F 612-2625  
[shawn.lagrua@fultoncountyga.gov](mailto:shawn.lagrua@fultoncountyga.gov)

Chief Judge Brian Amero  
President-Elect, CSCJ  
Flint Judicial Circuit  
One Courthouse Square  
McDonough, GA 30253  
770-288-7901  
[bamero@co.henry.ga.us](mailto:bamero@co.henry.ga.us)

Judge Jeffrey H. Kight  
Waycross Judicial Circuit, 1<sup>st</sup> JAD  
Ware County Courthouse  
800 Church Street, STE B202  
Waycross, GA 31501  
912-287-4330/F 544-9857  
[jhkight@gmail.com](mailto:jhkight@gmail.com)

Judge James G. Tunison, Jr.  
Southern Judicial Circuit, 2<sup>nd</sup> JAD  
PO Box 1349  
Valdosta, GA 31601  
229-333-5130/F 245-5223  
[jgtunison@gmail.com](mailto:jgtunison@gmail.com)

Judge Arthur Lee Smith  
Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit, 3<sup>rd</sup> JAD  
PO Box 1340  
Columbus, GA 31902  
706-653-4273/F 653-4569  
[arthursmith@columbusga.org](mailto:arthursmith@columbusga.org)

Chief Judge Asha Jackson  
Stone Mountain Judicial Circuit, 4<sup>th</sup> JAD  
DeKalb County Courthouse, STE 6230  
556 N. McDonough Street  
Decatur, GA 30030  
404-371-2344/F 371-2002  
[afjackson@dekalbcountyga.gov](mailto:afjackson@dekalbcountyga.gov)

Chief Judge Christopher S. Brasher  
Atlanta Judicial Circuit, 5<sup>th</sup> JAD  
T8905 Justice Center Tower  
185 Central Avenue SW STE T-8905  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
404-612-4335/F 612-2569  
[chris.brasher@fultoncountyga.gov](mailto:chris.brasher@fultoncountyga.gov)

Chief Judge Geronda V. Carter  
Clayton Judicial Circuit, 6<sup>th</sup> JAD  
Harold R. Banke Justice Center  
9151 Tara Boulevard, Suite 4JC101  
Jonesboro, GA 30236  
770-477-3432/F 473-5827  
[geronda.carter@claytoncountyga.gov](mailto:geronda.carter@claytoncountyga.gov)

Judge Ralph Van Pelt, Jr.  
Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit, 7<sup>th</sup> JAD  
875 LaFayette Street, Room 206  
Ringgold, GA 30736  
706-965-4047/F 965-6246  
[rvp787@gmail.com](mailto:rvp787@gmail.com)

Chief Judge Donald W. Gillis  
Dublin Judicial Circuit, 8<sup>th</sup> JAD  
PO Box 2015  
Dublin, GA 31040  
478-275-7715/F 275-2984  
[gillisd@eighthdistrict.org](mailto:gillisd@eighthdistrict.org)

Chief Judge Jeffrey S. Bagley  
Bell-Forsyth Judicial Circuit, 9<sup>th</sup> JAD  
101 E. Courthouse Square, Suite 5016  
Cumming, GA 30040  
770-205-4660/F 770-250-4661  
[jsbagley@forsythco.com](mailto:jsbagley@forsythco.com)

Chief Judge Carl C. Brown, Jr.  
Augusta Judicial Circuit, 10<sup>th</sup> JAD  
735 James Brown Blvd., Suite 4203  
Augusta, GA 30901  
706-821-2347/F 721-4476  
[kcampbell@augustaga.gov](mailto:kcampbell@augustaga.gov)

#### **State Court**

Chief Judge T. Russell McClelland  
President, CStCJ  
Forsyth County  
101 East Courthouse Square, STE 4016  
Cumming, GA 30040  
770-781-2130/F 886-2821  
[rmcclelland@forsythco.com](mailto:rmcclelland@forsythco.com)

Judge Wesley B. Tailor  
President-Elect, CStCJ  
Fulton County  
T3755 Justice Center Tower  
185 Central Avenue SW  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
404-613-4497  
[wes.tailor@fultoncountyga.gov](mailto:wes.tailor@fultoncountyga.gov)

#### **Juvenile Court**

Chief Judge Juliette Scales  
President, CJCJ  
Atlanta Judicial Circuit  
Romae T. Powell Juvenile Justice Center  
395 Pryor Street SW, STE 3056  
Atlanta, GA 30312  
404-613-4823/F 893-0750  
[juliette.scales@fultoncountyga.gov](mailto:juliette.scales@fultoncountyga.gov)

Judge Lisa C. Jones  
President-Elect, CJCJ  
Southwestern Judicial Circuit  
Sumter County Courthouse  
PO Box 607  
Americus, GA 31709  
229-928-4569  
[judgelisacjones@outlook.com](mailto:judgelisacjones@outlook.com)

#### **Probate Court**

Chief Judge Torri M. "T.J." Hudson  
President, CPCJ  
Treutlen County  
650 2<sup>nd</sup> Street S., STE 101  
Soperton, GA 30457  
912-529-3342/F 529-6838  
[tj4treutlen@yahoo.com](mailto:tj4treutlen@yahoo.com)

Chief Judge Kelli M. Wolk  
President-Elect, CPCJ  
Cobb County  
32 Waddell Street  
Marietta, GA 30090  
770-528-1900/ F 770-528-1996  
[probatecourt@cobbcounty.org](mailto:probatecourt@cobbcounty.org)

#### **Magistrate Court**

Judge Michael Barker  
President, CMCJ  
Chatham County  
133 Montgomery Street, Room 300  
Savannah, GA 31401  
912-652-7193/ F 912-652-7195  
[mbarker@chathamcounty.org](mailto:mbarker@chathamcounty.org)

Chief Judge Berryl Anderson\*  
President-Elect, CMCJ  
DeKalb County  
556 N. McDonough St., STE 1200  
Decatur, GA 30030  
404-371-4767/F 528-8947  
[baanderson@dekalbcountyga.gov](mailto:baanderson@dekalbcountyga.gov)

#### **Municipal Courts**

Judge Dale R. "Bubba" Samuels  
President, CMuCJ  
Municipal Court of Monroe  
PO Box 1926  
Buford, GA 30515  
678-482-0208/F 770-267-8386  
[bubba@bubbasamuels.com](mailto:bubba@bubbasamuels.com)

Judge Willie C. Weaver, Sr.  
President-Elect, CMuCJ  
Municipal Court of Albany  
P.O. Box 646  
Albany, GA 31702  
229-438-9455  
[wweaverlaw@aol.com](mailto:wweaverlaw@aol.com)

#### **State Bar of Georgia**

Mr. Darrell Sutton  
President, State Bar of Georgia  
351 Washington Ave., Suite 300  
Marietta, GA 30060  
678-385-0385/F 678-529-6199  
[dls@sutton-law-group.com](mailto:dls@sutton-law-group.com)

\*Designee of CMCJ President-Elect, Judge Torri M. "T.J." Hudson.

# Administrative Office of the Courts

244 Washington St. SW, Suite 300 Atlanta, GA 30334

*Cynthia H. Clanton, Director*  
404-656-5171

*As of March 2020*

## **Director's Office**

### ***Administration***

Tiffanie Robinson  
404-463-3820

*Front Desk*  
404-656-5171

### ***Budget***

Maleia Wilson  
404-656-6404

### ***Governmental and Trial Court Liaison***

Tracy Mason  
404-463-0559

Robert Aycock  
404-463-1023

Darron Enns  
404-656-5453

LaShawn Murphy  
404-651-6325

Cheryl Karounos  
404-651-7616

### ***Human Resources***

Stephanie Hines  
404-657-7469

Jacqueline Booker  
404-463-0638

### ***General Counsel***

Jessica Farah  
404-463-3805

Meisa Pace  
404-463-3821

Alison Lerner  
404-657-4219

LaShica Briscoe  
404-463-5127

## **Judicial Services**

Christopher Hansard  
Division Director  
404-463-1871

Tynesha Manuel  
404-232-1857

## ***Research and Data Analysis***

Matthew Bishop  
404-656-0371

Shimike Dodson  
404-656-2614

Jeffrey Thorpe  
404-656-6413

## ***Court Professionals***

John Botero  
404-463-3785

Bianca Bennett  
404-651-8707

Angela Choyce  
404-463-6478

Herbert Gordon  
404-653-3789

Amber Richardson  
404-232-1409

## **Communications, Children, Families & the Courts**

Michelle Barclay  
Division Director  
404-657-9219

Noelle Lagueux-Alvarez  
404-463-0044

Peter Faile  
404-656-0371

Elaine Johnson  
404-463-6383

Latoinna Lawrence  
404-463-6106

Paula Myrick  
404-463-6480

Bruce Shaw  
404-656-6783

## **Financial Administration**

Drew Townsend  
CFO/Division Director  
404-651-7613

Kim Burley  
404-463-3816

Janice Harkins  
404-463-2982

Monte Harris  
404-656-6691

Latricia Harris  
404-463-1907

Cassandra Niblack  
404-463-0237

Imani Roberson  
404-463-9016

## ***Tax Intercept***

Andrew Theus  
404-463-5177

## **Information Technology**

Jorge Basto  
Division Director  
404-657-9673

Willie Alcantara  
404-519-9989

Jesse Medina  
404-227-2395

John Counts  
404-550-1254

Angela He  
404-651-8169

Kristy King  
404-651-8180

Christina Liu  
404-651-8180

Michael Neuren  
404-657-4218

Jennifer Palmer  
470-990-6616

Sterling Perry  
470-446-3930

Kriste Pope  
404-731-1358

Juliana Tyler  
404-852-6899

Jill Zhang  
404-463-6343

***Georgia Judicial Exchange***

Tajsha Dekine  
404-656-3479

Eureka Frierson  
470-733-9404



Judicial Council  
of Georgia

# STRATEGIC PLAN

FY 2020 -2022

## VISION

To improve justice in all Georgia courts through collaboration, innovation, and information.

## MISSION

The Judicial Council and AOC lead collaboration on policy across Georgia's courts to improve the administration of justice in Georgia.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Uphold the independence and integrity of the judiciary.

Promote efficient and effective administration of justice.

Use data to lead to data-driven services and programs for the Judicial Branch.

Collaborate and communicate with key stakeholders in judicial, executive, and legislative branches.



1

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

## IMPROVE CITIZEN EXPERIENCE WITH GEORGIA COURTS

### KEY INITIATIVES

- 1.1 **Modernize the regulations of Court professionals.**  
Measurable action: Monitor and assist with the update of rules and regulations regarding Court Reporters and Court Interpreters (MT)  
Measurable action: Report back to the Judicial Council (LT)
- 1.2 **Increase resources for public accessibility**  
Measurable action: Flesh out what public accessibility means (ST)  
Measurable action: Frame what it would look like to help citizens with public accessibility as defined (MT)
- 1.3 **Educate citizens on the use of case-related filing technology**  
Measurable action: Create a toolkit of existing resources citizens can access from one portal which will provide information on Court-related questions (LT)

2

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

## IMPROVE COLLABORATION AND PLANNING

### KEY INITIATIVES

- 2.1 **Foster ongoing executive and legislative branch communications and initiatives of mutual interest.**  
Measurable action: Monitor the communication and advocacy done on behalf of the Judiciary (ongoing)
- 2.2 **Improve the process for data collection and data integrity**  
Measurable action: Create a basic plan for the process of data collection to share with the various councils (MT)  
Measurable action: Share with the councils and stakeholders to obtain buy-in (LT)
- 2.3 **Pursue flexibility and efficiency in judicial education.**  
Measurable action: Study the possibilities for flexibility and efficiency in judicial education across different classes of court (MT)  
Measurable action: Collaborate with ICJE to offer classes on topics requested by the Judicial Council such as sexual harassment prevention and ethics (MT)  
Measurable action: Compile and maintain a listing of all trainings sponsored or provided by the JC/AOC (ST)

3

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

## PROMOTE THE WELLBEING, HEALTH, AND INTEGRITY OF THE JUDICIARY

### KEY INITIATIVES

- 3.1 **Develop a toolkit of wellness resources.**  
Measurable action: Create a definition for “wellness” to be used when deciding which items belong in the toolkit (ST)  
Measurable action: Create the toolkit, which will be a compilation of resources to support “wellness”, possibly including State Bar resources among others (LT)
- 3.2 **Communicate and promote the toolkit**  
Measurable action: Leverage relationships with ICJE and each Council to offer training on the toolkit to each Council for one year (LT)  
Measurable action: Develop feedback survey for the trainings (LT)  
Measurable action: Encourage a “wellness” event at each Judicial Council and court council meeting (LT)

4

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

## ENHANCE THE PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL IMAGE OF THE JUDICIARY

### KEY INITIATIVES

- 4.1 **Support Judges in Community Engagement.**  
Measurable action: Continue to create and gather positive stories about the judiciary (ongoing)  
Measurable action: Develop practical rules for social media engagement (ST)
- 4.2 **Develop a clearinghouse of resources for community engagement**  
Measurable action: Create the clearinghouse, which will be a compilation of existing resources members of the Judiciary can access when participating in community-facing programs (MT)
- 4.3 **Communicate and promote the clearinghouse.**  
Measurable action: Set a schedule for communicating the clearinghouse; set a calendar with events to support community engagement (i.e. Constitution Day; book month) (LT)

# TAB 1

**Judicial Council of Georgia**  
**Emergency Session**  
**Conference Call**  
**April 13, 2020 • 2 p.m.**

**Members Present**

Chief Justice Harold D. Melton, Chair  
Presiding Justice David E. Nahmias  
Chief Judge Brian Amero  
Chief Judge Berryll Anderson  
Chief Judge Jeffrey Bagley  
Judge Michael Barker  
Chief Judge Christopher S. Brasher  
Chief Judge Carl C. Brown  
Chief Judge Geronda Carter  
Judge Walter Davis  
Chief Judge Donald W. Gillis  
Judge Sarah Harris (for Chief Judge Kelli Wolk)  
Chief Judge T.J. Hudson  
Chief Judge Asha Jackson  
Judge Lisa C. Jones  
Judge Jeffrey Kight  
Chief Judge T. Russell McClelland  
Chief Judge Christopher T. McFadden  
Judge Arthur Lee Smith  
Vice Chief Judge Brian K. Rickman  
Judge Bubba Samuels  
Chief Judge Juliette Scales  
Mr. Darrell Sutton  
Judge James G. Tunison, Jr.  
Judge Ralph Van Pelt, Jr.  
Chief Judge Willie C. Weaver

**Members Absent**

Judge Shawn LaGrua  
Judge Wes Taylor  
Judge Kelli Wolk

**Staff Present**

Ms. Cynthia Clanton, Director  
Ms. Jessica Farah  
Mr. Christopher Hansard  
Ms. Stephanie Hines  
Ms. Cheryl Karounos  
Ms. Noelle Lagueux- Alvarez  
Ms. Tynesha Manuel  
Ms. Tracy Mason  
Ms. Lashawn Murphy  
Ms. Tiffanie Robinson  
Ms. Maleia Wilson

**(Guests Appended)**

**Call to Order and Welcome**

The meeting of the Judicial Council of Georgia (Council) was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Chief Justice Harold Melton. Judge Leisa Green Johnson was recognized for her appointment to the Probate Court in Dougherty County to fill the vacancy left by the passing off Judge Nancy Stephenson. Chief Justice Melton shared condolences to the family of State Senator Jack Hill. Chief Justice Melton also congratulated new Justice Carla McMillian who joined the Supreme Court on April 10, 2020. Ms. Clanton called roll for Council members.

## **COVID-19 Update and Discussion of Statewide Judicial Emergency Order by Judicial Council Members**

Chief Justice Melton recognized the unity of the judiciary working collectively to identify solutions during the Emergency declaration period. He further noted that an Emergency Judicial Council meeting will not occur April 20, 2020, as the regularly scheduled Judicial Council meeting is April 24, 2020. Chief Justice Melton requested that the Council consider the recommendations of judges throughout the state to hold town hall meetings; if there is a desire to have a town hall meeting, he will make himself available to participate at the request of the respective classes of courts.

Chief Justice Melton noted issues regarding weapons carry licenses were still being addressed throughout the state, noting two lawsuits have been filed.

Chief Justice Melton reported the judiciary is also focused on grand jury issues and terms of court, and protocols for the release of qualified inmates.

### **Reports from Courts, Councils & State Bar**

Court of Appeals. Chief Judge McFadden congratulated new members Judge Verda Colvin and Judge John Trea Pipkin, III to the Court of Appeals and Justice Carla McMillan on her recent appointment to the Supreme Court.

Business Court. No report was provided.

Council of Superior Court Judges. No report was provided.

Council of State Court Judges. Judge McClelland requested guidance regarding the certification of transcripts when court reporting is performed remotely. Chief Justice Melton advised Judge McClelland to contact Mr. Hansard regarding the matter.

Council of Probate Court Judges. Judge Hudson provided an update on two judges previously fallen ill, noting one tested negative for COVID-19 and the other's health is improving.

Council of Magistrate Court Judges. Judge Barker reported the completion of the documents to aid in reestablishing court operations once the declaration period ends.

Council of Municipal Court Judges. No report was provided.

State Bar of Georgia. Mr. Sutton reported the Annual Meeting will be conducted virtually. Mr. Sutton also provided an overview of the Executive Order Temporarily Allowing Remote Notarization and Attestation of documents during the COVID-19 Public Health State of

Emergency issued April 9, 2020, to permit remote notarization. The Fiduciary Law section of the State Bar will publish best practices for use.

Administrative Office of the Courts. Director Clanton reported the AOC continues to be fully operational, with updates made to the COVID-19 website daily. This week, the AOC will staff a Magistrate Courts Training Council meeting, an All Staff Meeting, and a JDEX meeting. The April 24 Judicial Council meeting will be held remotely.

### **Reports from additional Judicial Branch Agencies**

Council of Accountability Court Judges. Ms. Taylor Jones reported the Council will release emergency grant funding to twenty-four courts for needs related to COVID-19.

Georgia Commission on Dispute Resolution. Ms. Tracy Johnson reported the Office of Dispute Resolution (ODR) has published a guide for parties participating in mediation. The Commission is also creating best practices for court programs and offering two webinars to train neutrals. Ms. Johnson recognized Mr. Jorge Basto for help identifying options for document execution.

Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism. Ms. Karlise Grier reported the Suicide Awareness Prevention Program is being rescheduled. The Commission has scheduled another professionalism continuing legal education (CLE) seminar on April 28, 2020.

Institute of Continuing Judicial Education. Mr. Doug Ashworth reported this week is the start of the first weeklong online program, which is being participated in by five classes of courts.

### **Old/New Business**

Chief Justice Melton thanked the judiciary for focusing on critical and essential functions at the start of the declaration and encouraged courts to expand functions as appropriate.

### **Adoption of Minutes – April 6, 2020**

Chief Justice Melton directed the Council's attention to the minutes of the Emergency Session on April 6, 2020. A motion to approve the minutes was offered by Judge Asha Jackson, followed by a second from Presiding Justice Nahmias. No discussion was offered, and the motion was approved without opposition.

### **Adjournment**

Hearing no further business, Chief Justice Melton adjourned the meeting at 2:22 p.m.

*Signatures on the next page*

Respectfully submitted:

Tynesha Manuel  
Assistant Director, Judicial Council/AOC  
For Cynthia H. Clanton, Director and Secretary

The above and foregoing minutes  
were approved on the \_\_\_\_ day of  
\_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Harold D. Melton  
Chief Justice

DRAFT

**Judicial Council of Georgia  
Emergency Session  
Conference Call  
April 13, 2020 • 2 p.m.**

**Guest Present**

Mr. Douglas Ashworth, Institute of Continuing Judicial Education  
Mr. Joseph Baden, Third Judicial Administrative District  
Ms. Therese Barnes, Supreme Court of Georgia  
Mr. Chuck Boring, Judicial Qualifications Commission  
Mr. Bob Bray, Council of State Court Judges  
Judge James F. Council, Juvenile Courts for Southern Circuit  
Mr. Steve Ferrell, Ninth Judicial Administrative District  
Judge Kathlene Gosselin, Northeastern Judicial Circuit  
Ms. Karlise Grier, Chief Justice's Commission on Professional  
Ms. Jane Hansen, Supreme Court of Georgia  
Mr. Kevin Holder, Council of Probate Court Judges  
Mr. Eric John, Council of Juvenile Court Judges  
Ms. Tracy Johnson, Georgia Dispute of Resolution  
Ms. Taylor Jones, Council of Accountability Courts Judges  
Ms. Anne Kirkhope, Council of Juvenile Court Judges  
Ms. Cathy McCumber, Fourth Judicial Administrative District  
Justice Carla McMillian, Supreme Court of Georgia  
Ms. Tia Milton, Supreme Court of Georgia  
Mr. David Mixon, Second District Court Administrator  
Ms. Jody Overcash, Seventh Judicial Administrative District  
Judge W. Wade Padgett, Council of Superior Court Judges  
Chief Judge Kathy Palmer, Middle Judicial Circuit  
Judge James L. Prine, Southern Circuit  
Ms. Sharon Reiss, Council of Magistrate Court Judges  
Ms. Jimmonique Rodgers, Georgia Public Defender Council  
Ms. Courtney Veal, Judicial Qualifications Commission  
Judge Sarah F. Wall, Eighth Judicial Circuit  
Ms. Kristen Wallace, Council of Juvenile Court Judges  
Mr. Shannon Weathers, Council of Superior Court Judges



# Judicial Council of Georgia

## Administrative Office of the Courts

Chief Justice Harold D. Melton  
*Chair*

Cynthia H. Clanton  
*Director*

To: Judicial Council Members

From: Standing Committee on Budget  
Justice Michael P. Boggs, Chair *MPB*

Re: Judicial Council Budget and Financial Report

Date: April 14, 2020

This report will provide an update on Fiscal Year 2020, Amended Fiscal Year 2020, the Fiscal Year 2021 budget requests, and an overview of the next steps for Amended Fiscal Year 2021 and Fiscal Year 2022 budget cycles.

### **Fiscal Year 2020**

The Judicial Council received \$16,571,037 in State Appropriations for FY 2020 (HB 31). The attached Financial Report highlights the Judicial Council's expenditures and remaining balances as of March 31, 2020.

### **Amended Fiscal Year 2020**

The Judicial Council: Section 6 of the Appropriations Bill (HB 792) was amended as follows:

18.1	Institute of Continuing Education <i>Reduction to State Funds</i>	(12,199)
19.1	Judicial Council <i>Adjustment to agency premiums for Department of Administrative Services</i>	939
	<i>Civil Legal Services for Kinship Care Families</i>	100,000
	<i>Reduction to State Funds</i>	(25,856)
20.1	Judicial Qualifications Commission <i>Increase for Investigations</i>	40,000

The changes represent a \$102,884 increase to the AFY 2020 budget. The Amended Judicial Council State Appropriated budget is \$16,673,921.

## **Fiscal Year 2021**

The FY 2021 Appropriations Bill (HB 793) was passed out of the House. The bill is on hold until the legislature reconvenes.

The Judicial Council's two FY 2021 enhancement requests were as follows:

1. The Justice for Children Committee **Legal Services for Kinship Care Families**: \$375,000
  - The House agreed to fund \$125,000. The legislative session temporarily recessed before the Senate Appropriations Committee could vote.
2. The Standing Committee on Judicial Workload Assessment: **Business Support Analyst**: \$87,145
  - The request was withdrawn. The Administrative Office of the Courts repurposed a vacant position to fill the Business Support Analyst position.

## **Amended Fiscal Year 2021 and Fiscal Year 2022**

The Standing Committee on Budget will accept White Papers for these budget cycles from May 1 to June 15, 2020. A meeting notification will be sent to the Standing Committee on Budget members by May 10, 2020. In this meeting, all enhancement requests will be reviewed for funding. Those approved by the Council will be submitted to the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget prior to the September 1 deadline.

### Attachments:

Fiscal Year 2020 Budget and Financial Report as of March 31, 2020

Amended Fiscal Year 2020 and Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Comparison Report

## Judicial Council Operations FY 2020

Budget as of March 31, 2020

Department	Project	FY 2019 Budget	YTD Expenditures	Remaining	Budget Spent
<b>Administrative Office of The Courts</b>		<b>7,273,552</b>	<b>\$ 5,386,979</b>	<b>\$ 1,886,573</b>	<b>74%</b>
Legal Services for Domestic Violence	103	\$ 2,500,000	2,500,000	\$ -	100%
Legal Services for Kinship Care Families	1103	\$ 475,000	375,000	\$ 100,000	79%
Georgia Council of Court Administrators	141	\$ 19,057	19,057	\$ -	100%
Council of Municipal Court Judges	142	\$ 16,185	7,859	\$ 8,326	49%
Child Support Collaborative	174	\$ 119,000	85,592	\$ 33,408	72%
Council of Magistrate Court Judges	204	\$ 193,021	153,060	\$ 39,961	79%
Council of Probate Court Judges	205	\$ 185,454	148,998	\$ 36,456	80%
Council of State Court Judges	206	\$ 262,081	194,869	\$ 67,212	74%
Council of State Court Judges Ret.	207	\$ 2,623,814	604,110	\$ 2,019,704	23%
<b>Other Judicial Council Subprograms</b>		<b>\$ 6,393,612</b>	<b>\$ 4,088,544</b>	<b>\$ 2,305,068</b>	<b>64%</b>
Accountability Courts	195	\$ 700,070	520,796	\$ 179,274	74%
CACJ-Peer Review Porcess	199	\$ 42,000	22,325	\$ 19,675	53%
Inst of Continuing Jud Ed Operations	300	\$ 64,000	28,492	\$ 35,508	45%
Inst of Continuing Jud Ed Administration	301	\$ 533,744	120,232	\$ 413,512	23%
Judicial Qualifications Commission	400	\$ 866,943	601,706	\$ 265,237	69%
Resource Center	500	\$ 800,000	600,000	\$ 200,000	75%
<b>Separate Judicial Council Programs</b>		<b>\$ 3,006,757</b>	<b>\$ 1,893,551</b>	<b>\$ 1,113,206</b>	<b>56%</b>
<b>TOTAL JUDICIAL COUNCIL</b>		<b>\$ 16,673,921.00</b>	<b>11,369,075</b>	<b>\$ 5,304,846</b>	<b>68%</b>

## AFY2020 and FY 2021 - Budget Comparison

### Judicial Council Standing Committee on Budget Report

	Amended FY2020 Enhancement Requests	AFY 2020 Request	AFY 2020 % Change	FY 2021 Enhancement Requests	FY 2021 Request	FY 2021 % Change
<b>Judicial Council Program &amp; Subprograms</b>						
Administrative Office of the Courts		\$ 7,273,552			\$ 7,273,552	
<i>Adjustment to agency premiums for Dept of Adminstrative Services</i>	\$ 939					
<i>Reduction to State Funds</i>	\$ (25,856)					
<i>JC Standing Committee on Judicial Workload Accessment/Business Analyst</i>				0.00		
Child Support Collaborative		\$ 119,000			\$ 119,000	
Georgia Council of Court Administrators		\$ 19,057			\$ 19,057	
Council of Magistrate Court Judges		\$ 193,021			\$ 193,021	
Council of Probate Court Judges		\$ 185,454			\$ 185,454	
Council of State Court Judges		\$ 2,885,895			\$ 2,885,895	
Council of Municipal Court Judges		\$ 16,185			\$ 16,185	
Civil Legal Services for Kinship Care Families	\$ 100,000	\$ 475,000		\$ 375,000	\$ 750,000	
Civil Legal Services to Victims of Domestic Violence		\$ 2,500,000			\$ 2,500,000	
Judicial Council Programs and Subprograms Total	\$ 75,083	\$ 13,667,164	0.55%	\$ 375,000	\$ 13,942,164	2.74%
<b>Other Programs</b>						
Council of Accountability Court Judges		\$ 742,070			\$ 742,070	
Appellate Resource Center		\$ 800,000			\$ 800,000	
Judicial Qualifications Commission	\$ 40,000	\$ 866,943			\$ 866,943	
Institute of Continuing Judicial Education	\$ (12,199)	\$ 597,744			\$ 597,744	
<b>Other Programs Total</b>	\$ 27,801	\$ 3,006,757	1%	\$ -	\$ 3,006,757	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 102,884</b>	<b>\$ 16,673,921</b>	<b>0.62%</b>	<b>\$ 375,000</b>	<b>\$ 16,948,921</b>	<b>2.25%</b>



## Judicial Council of Georgia Administrative Office of the Courts

Chief Justice Harold D. Melton  
*Chair*

Cynthia H. Clanton  
*Director*

### Memorandum

TO: Judicial Council Members

FROM: Presiding Justice David E. Nahmias  
Chair, Standing Committee on Legislation

RE: Committee Report

DATE: April 8, 2020

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In response to COVID-19, the General Assembly suspended the 2020 regular legislative session indefinitely after Friday, March 13, 2020 (Legislative Day 29). The House and Senate will reconvene for the 30th Legislative Day at a future date to be set by the Lt. Governor and Speaker of the House.

The General Assembly convened on Monday, March 16, 2020, for a special session to concur with (by the adoption of [HR 4EX](#)) the Governor's Executive Order No. 03.14.20.01, which declared a public health state of emergency. In addition to its adoption of HR 4EX, the House of Representatives also petitioned for a special session to convene on April 15, 2020, to consider any extension of the state of emergency. On Wednesday, April 8, 2020, the Governor announced an extension through May 13, 2020. Lieutenant Governor Duncan and Speaker Ralston agreed that an extension was necessary and said that a special session on the matter would not be requested.

The following information provides the status of each item that the Judicial Council has taken a position of support on for the 2020 regular legislative session, as of April 8, 2020.

**I. Update and Modernize the Court Reporting Act and related statutes  
Judicial Council**

OCGA Titles 5; 9; 15; 17  
Status: No legislation filed

**II. Bond in misdemeanor family violence cases  
Council of Magistrate Court Judges**

OCGA § 17-6-1  
Status: No legislation filed

- III. [SB 464](#) - **Uniform Mediation Act**  
**Georgia Commission on Dispute Resolution**  
OCGA § 17-6-1  
Sponsor: Sen. John F. Kennedy (R – Macon)  
Committee: Senate Judiciary; House Judiciary  
Status: Senate Passed/Adopted, 3/12/20; House First Readers, 3/13/20
- IV. [HB 1108](#) - **Gross settlement and net settlement defined**  
**Council of State Court Judges/Judicial Council**  
OCGA § 29-3-3  
Sponsor: Rep. James Burchett (R – Waycross)  
Committee: House Special Committee on Access to the Civil Justice System  
Status: House Committee Favorably Reported by Substitute, 3/12/20



# Judicial Council of Georgia

## Administrative Office of the Courts

**Chief Justice Harold D. Melton**  
*Chair*

**Cynthia H. Clanton**  
*Director*

### Memorandum

TO: Judicial Council of Georgia

FROM: Meisa Pace, Staff to Committee

RE: Judicial Council Standing Committee on Grants Report

DATE: April 8, 2020

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At its June 12, 2019, meeting, the Standing Committee on Grants reviewed an application for a pilot grant, the Civil Legal Services for Kinship Care Families grant (Kinship Care Grant), and awarded the grant funds to Atlanta Legal Aid and Georgia Legal Service under a joint application. Molded after the Civil Legal Services for Victims of Domestic Violence Grant (Domestic Violence Grant), the Kinship Care Grant provides civil legal services to kinship care families. These legal services help support kinship caregivers in providing and maintaining stable homes and care for children and keep at risk children out of the foster care system.

The Kinship Care Grant was initially partially funded by the Georgia Legislature at \$375,000, out of an original request of \$750,000. In the Amended Fiscal Year 2020 Appropriations Bill (HB 792), an additional \$100,000 was provided for the Kinship Care Grant.

The Standing Committee on Grants voted via email on March 24, 2020, to award the additional Fiscal Year 2020 funding to Atlanta Legal Aid and Georgia Legal Services, as joint recipients. The AOC will continue its request to fully fund the Kinship Care Grant in the Fiscal Year 2021 budget.

The Committee is scheduled to meet on June 23, 2020, at the State Bar of Georgia to award the Domestic Violence Grant and Kinship Care Grant funds for 2021. The application cycle for both grants is currently open.



# Judicial Council of Georgia

## Administrative Office of the Courts

**Chief Justice Harold D. Melton**  
*Chair*

**Cynthia H. Clanton**  
*Director*

### Memorandum

TO: Judicial Council of Georgia

FROM: Judge Sara L. Doyle, Chair

RE: Strategic Plan Standing Committee Report

DATE: April 16, 2020

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### Committee Update

The Strategic Plan Standing Committee was scheduled to meet on March 10, 2020. In lieu of the in-person meeting, a written update was provided to the Committee.

Work under several initiatives has begun and will continue throughout 2020. Under Initiative 4.2, *Develop a Clearinghouse of Resources for Community Engagement*, the AOC has begun developing a clearinghouse for resources for judges for community engagement and civics. The clearinghouse can be found at: <https://georgiacourtsjournal.org/community-engagement-civics-resource-clearinghouse/>. Additional items will be added as they become available.

Under Initiative 3.1, *Develop a Toolkit of Wellness Resources*, initial steps have been taken to identify wellness resources. Resources are being collected and are currently stored at <https://georgiacourtsjournal.org/wellness/>.

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for July 14, 2020, at the State Bar of Georgia.

### Sub-Committee Creation

In an effort to assist courts with recent challenges related to COVID-19, a Strategic Plan Revision Sub-Committee was created on April 13, 2020. The Sub-Committee will review the strategic plan for revisions that will help support and prepare courts for operating remotely. The Sub-Committee will hold its first meeting in April and will submit a report to the Committee by July 14, 2020, on recommended revisions to the Strategic Plan.

The Sub-Committee is chaired by Judge Sarah S. Harris, Bibb County Probate Court. Sub-Committee members are as follows:

- Judge Shawn E. LaGrua, Fulton County Superior Court;
- Judge Rizza P. O'Connor, State Bar of Georgia Representative, Toombs County Magistrate Court; and
- Judge Matthew M. McCord, Stockbridge Municipal Court.

# TAB 2



**Judicial Council of Georgia  
Administrative Office of the Courts**

**Chief Justice Harold D. Melton**  
*Chair*

**Cynthia H. Clanton**  
*Director*

**Memorandum**

TO: Judicial Council Members

FROM: Chief Justice Harold D. Melton, Chair

RE: Committee Report - Judicial Council Standing Committee on Technology

DATE: April 3, 2020

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On Thursday, March 26, 2020, the Judicial Council Standing Committee on Technology met to discuss the Statewide Minimum Standards and Rules for Electronic Filing. The Committee approved the following changes to the Statewide Minimum Standards and Rules for Electronic Filing- the amendment to Rule 11, the amendment to include Rule 2(b)(6) and correction to Rule 2(a)(1).

The Committee makes the following recommendation to the Judicial Council:

11. Procedure for Handling Misfiled or Otherwise Deficient or Defective E-Filings. Upon physical ~~acceptance receipt~~ and review of an e-filing and discovery that it was misfiled or is otherwise deficient or defective, a clerk shall as soon as practicable provide the e-filer notice of the defect or deficiency and an opportunity to cure or, if appropriate, reject the filing altogether. In any case, the clerk shall retain a record of the action taken by the court in response, including its date, time, and reason. Such records shall be maintained until a case is finally concluded including the exhaustion of all appeals. Absent a court order to the contrary, such records shall be accessible to the parties and public upon request without the necessity for a subpoena.

*(b) Minimum Standards for Electronic Filing Service Providers*

(6) Required EFSP Participation in the Georgia Judicial Gateway Single Sign-On. The Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts has developed the Georgia Judicial Gateway ([www.georgiacourts.gov](http://www.georgiacourts.gov)) to, inter alia, facilitate access to court e-filing systems. Consistent with paragraphs (1), (3), and (4) of subsection (b) of this rule, all EFSPs shall enable single sign-on access via user identities managed by the Gateway. Neither these rules generally nor this specific requirement shall be interpreted to prohibit an EFSP from affording direct

access to their services or to restrict a clerk of court's authority to manage the systems and processes that govern the maintenance of the court record. The requirements of this paragraph shall be incorporated into the existing EFSP applications at the next available opportunity but not later than six months from the effective date of this rule.

(a) *Minimum Standards for Courts Making E-filing Available.* A court may make electronic filing available only if:

(1) *Rules.* The court's class of court has adopted uniform rules for e-filing or the court has itself promulgated such rules by standing order in the form set forth in Proposed Uniform Superior Court Rules ~~48 & 49~~ 36.16 and 36.17, Exhibit A to the Resolution of the Statewide Judiciary Civil E-Filing Steering Committee;

The Statewide Minimum Standards and Rules for Electronic Filing, adopted by the Judicial Council on December 7, 2018, and approved by the Supreme Court on December 14, 2018, including the proposed amendments, are attached to this memo for review.

**Judicial Council of Georgia**  
**Administrative Office of the Courts**  
**Statewide Minimum Standards and Rules for Electronic Filing**  
**Effective December 7, 2018**

**RULE 1. DEFINITIONS**

For purposes of these standards and rules:

- (1) *Court*. The term “court” means any trial court of the State.
- (2) *Electronic Filing or E-filing*. The term “electronic filing” (e-filing) means the electronic transmission of documents to and from the court for the purposes of creating a court record in a format authorized by these standards and rules.
- (3) *Electronic Filing Service Provider*. The term “e-filing service provider” (EFSP) means an entity or system authorized to transmit and retrieve court filings electronically.
- (4) *Electronic Service or E-service*. The term “electronic service” (e-service) means the electronic notice that registered filers in a case receive of a document’s filing and their ability to access the document electronically.
- (5) *Public Access Terminal*. The term “public access terminal” means a computer terminal provided for free electronic filing or the viewing of documents.
- (6) *Registered User*. The term “registered user” means a party, attorney, or member of the public or other authorized user, including judges, clerks, and other court personnel, registered with an authorized EFSP to file, receive service of, or retrieve documents electronically.

**RULE 2. MINIMUM TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR E-FILING**

(a) *Minimum Standards for Courts Making E-filing Available*. A court may make electronic filing available only if:

- (1) *Rules*. The court’s class of court has adopted uniform rules for e-filing or the court has itself promulgated such rules by standing order in the form set forth in Proposed Uniform Superior Court Rules ~~48 & 49~~ [36.16 and 36.17](#), Exhibit A to the Resolution of the Statewide Judiciary Civil E-Filing Steering Committee;
- (2) *EFSP*. An EFSP authorized to conduct e-filing maintains compliance with the standards set forth in paragraph (4) of this subsection;
- (3) *E-filing Alternative*. The clerk provides a no cost alternative to remote electronic filing by making available at no charge at the courthouse during regular business hours a public access terminal for free e-filing via the EFSP, by continuing to accept paper filings, or both free e-filing and the acceptance of paper filings; and
- (4) *Public Access*. The clerk ensures that electronic documents are publicly accessible upon filing for viewing at no charge on a public access terminal available at the courthouse during regular business hours.

Last revised and adopted by the Judicial Council on December 6, 2019.

(b) *Minimum Standards for Electronic Filing Service Providers*. An electronic filing service provider may be authorized to conduct e-filing only if:

(1) *Technical Standards and Approval by Judicial Council.* The EFSP complies with all Judicial Council e-filing standards, including use of the latest version of OASIS LegalXML Electronic Court Filing for legal data exchange and such technical and other standards as the Judicial Council may adopt in the future to facilitate the establishment of a reliable and effective statewide electronic filing and retrieval system for judicial records (including provision for electronic judicial signatures, uniform document index fields, interchangeable registered user names and passwords, etc.);

(2) *Disclaimer of Ownership.* The EFSP disclaims any ownership right in any electronic case or document or portion thereof, including any commercial right to resell, recombine, reconfigure, or retain any database, document, or portion thereof transmitted to or from the court;

(3) *Minimum Standards for Courts.* The EFSP agrees to commit its best efforts to ensure that the court and its electronic filing system and procedures are in compliance at all times with the rules and requirements referenced in the minimum standards set forth in paragraph (3) of subsection (a) of this rule;

(4) *Other Requirements.* The EFSP likewise agrees to comply with other reasonable requirements imposed or agreed upon with respect to such issues as registration procedures, fees, hours of operation, system maintenance, document storage, system and user filing errors, etc.;

(5) *Terms of Use.* The EFSP develops, maintains, and makes available, to registered users and the public, terms of use consistent with the foregoing; and

(6) *Required EFSP Participation in the Georgia Judicial Gateway Single Sign-On.* The Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts has developed the Georgia Judicial Gateway ([www.georgiacourts.gov](http://www.georgiacourts.gov)) to, inter alia, facilitate access to court e-filing systems. Consistent with paragraphs (1), (3), and (4) of subsection (b) of this rule, all EFSPs shall enable single sign-on access via user identities managed by the Gateway. Neither these rules generally nor this specific requirement shall be interpreted to prohibit an EFSP from affording direct access to their services or to restrict a clerk of court's authority to manage the systems and processes that govern the maintenance of the court record. The requirements of this paragraph shall be incorporated into the existing EFSP applications at the next available opportunity but not later than six months from the effective date of this rule.

### **RULE 3. ACCOMMODATION OF PRO SE FILERS**

To protect and promote access to the courts, courts shall reasonably accommodate pro se parties by accepting, converting to electronic form, and maintaining in electronic form paper pleadings or other documents received from pro se filers.

### **RULE 4. CONSENT TO E-SERVICE**

(a) *Automatic Consent.* When an attorney or pro se party files a pleading in a case via an authorized electronic filing service provider, such person shall be deemed to have consented to be served electronically with future pleadings for such case and shall include his or her e-mail address to be used for this purpose in or below the signature block of all e-filed pleadings.

(b) This rule applies to cases filed on or after January 1, 2019, unless the local court has opted into mandatory electronic filing prior to that date, in which case the earlier date applies.

## **RULE 5. “ORIGINAL” AND “OFFICIAL” ELECTRONIC COURT RECORDS**

(a) *Original and Official Files.* Except as provided in subsection (c) of this rule, the original version of all filed documents is the electronic copy maintained by the court. The official record of the court shall be this electronic file and such paper files as are permitted by Judicial Council standards and rules.

(b) *Maintenance of Underlying Documents.* A document that requires original signatures or is believed by a party to maintain legal significance not held by a copied version shall be e-filed, and the electronic copy maintained by the court shall be considered the original, except that the filing party shall maintain the underlying document for a period of two years following the expiration of the time for filing an appeal and make such document available upon reasonable notice for inspection by another party or the court.

(c) *Non-Conforming Documents.* Exhibits or other materials that may not be readily converted to an electronic format and e-filed may be filed manually. The filing party shall e-file a notice of manual filing to denote that a manual filing has been made. The original version of such manually filed materials shall be the version maintained by the court.

## **RULE 6. TRANSFER OF CASE FILES**

(a) *Method of Transfer.* When transferring a case record to another trial court, a transferor court that maintains its records in electronic form shall transmit such official record to the transferee court in electronic form via CD, DVD, Electronic Filing Service Provider or, if the transferee court so requests, by means of a File Transfer Protocol (FTP) or email application approved for such use by the Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts.

(b) *Form of Documents.* Whenever possible, a transferor court that maintains its records in electronic form shall transmit such records in a searchable, PDF/A format as prescribed by the Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts.

## **RULE 7. E-FILING SIGNATURE AND AUTHORIZATION ISSUES**

(a) *Electronic Signatures.* Any pleading or document filed electronically shall include the electronic signature of the person whose account is used to file the document or on whose behalf the filing is made. Consistent with Georgia law and for purposes of these standards and rules, the term “electronic signature” means an electronic sound, symbol, or process attached to or logically associated with a record and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the record.

(b) *Multiple Signatures.* An e-filed document may include the electronic signature of additional attorneys or unrepresented parties. In affixing additional signatures to the document, the filer certifies that any such signature is authorized.

(c) *Responsibility for Filings.* No registered user shall knowingly permit his or her login sequence to be used by someone other than an authorized agent or employee. Each registered user is responsible for all documents filed using his or her login and password.

## **RULE 8. MAINTAINING CERTAIN SEALED DOCUMENTS IN ELECTRONIC FORM**

Georgia uniform rules prohibit the filing of records under seal via a court's e-filing provider or providers. Nevertheless, where sealing is authorized by law or by court order, a court may itself maintain documents in electronic form under seal in the court's case management system.

## **RULE 9. ELECTRONIC TREATMENT OF DEPOSITION TRANSCRIPTS**

- (a) *E-filing*. Depositions placed in a sealed envelope pursuant to OCGA § 9-11-30 (f) are not sealed within the meaning of Uniform Superior Court Rule 36.16 (B) and may be electronically filed.
- (b) *Part of Record*. Absent a contrary court order, deposition transcripts on file in a case, whether opened or unopened, and whether sealed by the court reporter or not, shall be included in the case's electronic record.

## **RULE 10. REDACTION OBLIGATIONS OF E-FILERS**

All EFSPs shall require e-filers prior to each filing to acknowledge, by way of a checkbox, their obligation to redact personal or confidential information prior to e-filing as required by OCGA § 9-11-7.1, as follows:

**“IMPORTANT NOTICE OF REDACTION RESPONSIBILITY:** All filers must redact personal or confidential information, including Social Security numbers, as required by OCGA § 9-11-7.1. This requirement applies to all documents, including attachments.

    I understand that, if I file, I must comply with the redaction rules. I have read this notice.”

## **RULE 11. MISFILED OR OTHERWISE DEFICIENT OR DEFECTIVE E-FILINGS**

Upon physical [acceptance receipt](#) and review of an e-filing and discovery that it was misfiled or is otherwise deficient or defective, a clerk shall as soon as practicable provide the e-filer notice of the defect or deficiency and an opportunity to cure or, if appropriate, reject the filing altogether. In any case, the clerk shall retain a record of the action taken by the court in response, including its date, time, and reason. Such records shall be maintained until a case is finally concluded including the exhaustion of all appeals. Absent a court order to the contrary, such records shall be accessible to the parties and public upon request without the necessity for a subpoena.

# TAB 3



## Judicial Council of Georgia

### Administrative Office of the Courts

**Chief Justice Harold D. Melton**  
*Chair*

**Cynthia H. Clanton**  
*Director*

#### Memorandum

TO: Judicial Council

FROM: Standing Committee on Court Reporting Matters  
Vice-Chief Judge Carla Wong McMillian, Chair

RE: Nominations to the Board of Court Reporting

DATE: April 3, 2020

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#### Nominations to the Board of Court Reporting

Pursuant to OCGA §15-14-24, please find a synopsis of prospective candidates for the Board of Court Reporting seeking to fill the open seats for the two-year term of office, effective July 1, 2020. The vacancies are comprised of two certified court reporters, a member of the judiciary, and a member of the bar. Prospective applicants must possess at least five years of experience in the prescribed disciplines to qualify for a seat. The Standing Committee on Court Reporting Matters recommends all candidates be appointed to the Board.

#### CERTIFIED COURT REPORTERS

**Pavon Bohanan, CCR:** Ms. Bohanan holds state and national certifications as a certified court reporter, obtaining her license in 1995. She is a managing partner of North Georgia Court Reporting, as well as an official court reporter to the Honorable John G. Breakfield, Hall County State Court. Ms. Bohanan is a voice-writer in good standing. She resides in Hall County. REAPPOINTMENT.

**Kevin King, CCR:** Mr. King has more than 30 years of experience in the court reporting profession. He began court reporting in 1984 with Atlanta Reporting Service. Since 1988, Mr. King has worked for American Court Reporting in Atlanta as a freelance reporter. For five years, he served as Southeast trainer for Gigatron Corporation's StenoCat software. He is currently the manager of American Court Reporting, and he also works as a court reporter several times a year. He holds an A.S. degree in court reporting from Orlando College. He is a Machine Shorthand reporter in good standing. REAPPOINTMENT

## **REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE STATE BAR**

**Hal Daniels, Esq.:** Harold T. Daniel, Jr. has practiced law in Atlanta, Georgia, for more than 40 years. He has represented plaintiffs and defendants in civil business litigation in federal and state courts and has tried approximately one hundred cases to juries in Georgia, Florida, and Texas. His cases have routinely involved complex factual and legal issues, including antitrust, securities, RICO, business torts, and commercial law. He has also served as an arbitrator, mediator, special master, and expert witness on the subject of attorney's fees and other matters related to the legal profession. Mr. Daniels received his political science and law degrees from Emory University and served a president of the State Bar of Georgia in 1995. NEW APPOINTMENT

## **MEMBER OF THE JUDICIARY**

**Judge Brenda Trammell:** Judge Trammell is a judge in the Ocmulgee Judicial Circuit. She Trammell oversees the Baldwin County Adult Treatment Court Collaborative, serving Baldwin, Greene, Hancock, Jasper, Jones, Morgan, Putnam, and Wilkinson counties. Before her appointment to the bench by Governor Nathan Deal in 2014, she served as a sole practitioner in Atlanta and Madison, litigating both civil and criminal cases in all eight counties of the circuit where she is now a judge. Judge Trammell also had a busy appellate practice. She received her bachelor's degree from Tift College and her law degree from the University of Georgia School of Law. REAPPOINTMENT.

# TAB 4



# Judicial Council of Georgia

## Administrative Office of the Courts

**Chief Justice Harold D. Melton**  
*Chair*

**Cynthia H. Clanton**  
*Director*

### Memorandum

TO: Judicial Council

FROM: Standing Committee on Judicial Workload Assessment  
Chief Judge David Emerson, Chair

RE: Judicial Workload Assessment Committee Report

DATE: April 3, 2020

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At its last meeting, the Committee approved the following items for Judicial Council consideration.

- Updates to the Judicial Council Policy on the Study of Superior Court Judgeships and Circuit Boundaries
- Updates to the Caseload Reporting Forms and the Georgia Court Guide to Statistical Reporting



# Judicial Council of Georgia

## Administrative Office of the Courts

**Chief Justice Harold D. Melton**  
*Chair*

**Cynthia H. Clanton**  
*Director*

### Memorandum

TO: Judicial Council

FROM: Standing Committee on Judicial Workload Assessment  
Chief Judge David Emerson, Chair

RE: Updates to the Policy on the Study of Superior Court Judgeships and Circuit Boundaries

DATE: April 3, 2020

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### Introduction

Based on the 2019 workload study process, several judges made recommendations to staff on potential procedure clarifications. Staff has incorporated those suggestions into the Policy on the Study of Superior Court Judgeships and Circuit Boundaries. A summary of the significant changes is below, and a redline version of the Policy is attached.

### Summary of Changes

Section 2.2 (2) – Staff updated this paragraph to clarify that circuits must achieve a workload value of not less than exactly 1.2 to be considered qualified for an additional judgeship. Workload values would neither be rounded up nor reported further than to the tenth of the decimal.

Further changes to this paragraph include a procedure for use when a circuit requests multiple judgeships. The new language requires that to qualify for more than one judgeship, a circuit is first analyzed to see if it qualifies for one judgeship. If so, the circuit is treated as if it had been given that judgeship, and another analysis would be done to determine if it qualifies for another judgeship.

Section 2.2 (3) – Staff updated this paragraph to clarify that if a circuit qualifies for more than one new judgeship, the Committee will vote on each new judgeship independently.

Section 3 (3) and (4) – Staff updated this paragraph to clarify that the Judicial Council will vote to approve and rank multiple judgeship requests from the same circuit independently as did the Committee.

**Judicial Council Policy on the Study of  
Superior Court Judgeships and Circuit  
Boundaries**

# **Policy on the Study of Superior Court Judgeships and Circuit Boundaries**

## **Section 1 – Policy**

### **1.1 – Introduction**

This policy governs the processes, procedures, and methodology used by the Judicial Council when considering requests for additional judgeships and circuit boundary alterations. The Judicial Council recognizes that the addition of a judgeship or circuit boundary alteration is a matter of great gravity and substantial expense to the state’s citizens. Therefore, careful inquiry and deliberate study according to a rigorous methodology will lay the foundation for any recommended changes to circuit judgeships or boundaries.

The Judicial Council acknowledges the National Center for State Courts’ (NCSC) subject matter expertise in case processing and workload methodology and its documented best practices for assistance in this policy (see Appendix B).

### **1.2 – Policy Statements**

1. The Judicial Council will recommend additional judgeships based only upon need demonstrated through the methodology contained herein.
2. The Judicial Council will recommend circuit boundary alterations based only upon need demonstrated through the methodology contained herein.
3. The Judicial Council will not recommend part-time judgeships or single-judge circuits.

## **Section 2 – Judgeship and Circuit Boundary Study**

### **2.1 – Initiation**

1. The Governor, members of the General Assembly, and superior court judges have standing to initiate judgeship and circuit boundary studies.
2. The AOC will notify the Governor, General Assembly, superior court judges, and district court administrators no later than May 1 that they may request studies in writing by June 1, or the next business day thereafter, prior to the session of the General Assembly during which the judgeship or change in circuit boundaries is sought. Any request received after June 1 will not be considered until the following year except upon approval by the Chair of the Judicial Council in consultation with the Chair of the Standing Committee on Judicial Workload Assessment for good cause shown. Under no circumstances will a request received more than five business days after June 1 be considered during the current year.

3. Requests for studies will be sent to the Director of the AOC. If anyone, other than a chief judge, requests a judgeship or circuit boundary study, the AOC will inform the chief judge of the same circuit, and any adjacent circuits in the case of boundary studies, that a request has been made. Any request by any party may be withdrawn by the same party at any time for any reason, and staff will notify all parties impacted by such a withdrawal.
4. The AOC will send the caseload and workload status of their respective circuits to all superior court judges and district court administrators no later than May 1 of each year.

## 2.2 – Judgeship Study Methodology

The Judicial Council approves the NCSC reported adopted by the Council on December 7, 2018 (see Appendix A). See Appendix B for the summary of all values.

1. The most recent three-year average of civil case filings and criminal case defendants, for each case type listed in Appendix A, will serve as the *total circuit caseload* for each case type. Each case type's caseload will be multiplied by its respective *case weight*. The resulting figure represents the *total circuit workload*.
2. The *total circuit workload* will be divided by the *judge year value* assigned to the circuit based on its *classification*. The resulting figure represents the *judge workload value*. If the *judge workload value* divided by the total number of authorized judgeships in the circuit is not less than exactly meets or exceeds 1.20, then the circuit is qualified for an additional judgeship. If the *judge workload value* divided by the total number of authorized judgeships in the circuit is less than does not meet 1.20, then the circuit is not qualified for an additional judgeship. For purpose of analysis and reporting under this policy, workload values shall be rounded to the nearest tenth. When analyzing a circuit for multiple judgeships, the circuit shall first be analyzed to determine a need for one judgeship. If qualified, then the circuit shall be analyzed for one additional judgeship, giving the circuit credit for the additional judgeship need already qualified for. This process shall repeat itself until the circuit is not qualified or the request is exhausted.
3. A circuit that requests and qualifies for an additional judgeship will have its judgeship study prepared and presented at the next Standing Committee on Judicial Workload Assessment Committee meeting. Requestors will be notified of their status and the Committee process no later than June 15. The Standing Committee may forward the recommendation to the Judicial Council for consideration at the first meeting of the fiscal year as described in Section 3. If a majority of the judges in a circuit vote to disagree with a request for a judgeship, the Standing Committee may consider that disagreement in their decisions to recommend new judgeships to the Council. The Committee shall vote on requests for multiple judgeships

independently.

4. A circuit that requests and is not qualified for an additional judgeship has the right to appeal its status to the Standing Committee on Judicial Workload Assessment. Requestors will be notified of their status and the Committee process no later than June 15. If the appeal is approved, then the appealing circuit will have a judgeship study prepared and presented at the next Judicial Council meeting as described in Section 3. Appeals may not be based upon a circuit's caseload.
5. The AOC will present annually to the Committee a list of all circuits whose *judge workload value* divided by the total number of authorized judgeships in the circuit is less than 0.90 and whose per judge workload value would not equal or exceed 1.2 upon reduction of a judgeship. The Committee Chair shall invite all judges from such circuits to appear at the next Committee meeting to discuss their caseload and workload data. The Committee shall provide technical assistance, with the assistance of the AOC and others so designated, to the affected circuits that may include, but is not limited to: a manual hand count of cases for a specified period of time, additional training for clerks and staff on proper case documentation, and a review of caseload reports and other case information. The AOC shall provide the Committee prior to the next year's annual reporting, a report of the technical assistance provided and any recommendations for further assistance. If a circuit is presented for the first time between 2020 and 2021 and is presented for five consecutive years, the Committee may consider and recommend any options it deems appropriate to the Council. If a circuit is presented for the first time on or after 2022 and is presented for three consecutive years, the Committee may take the same action.

### **2.3 – Circuit Boundary Study Methodology**

A proposed circuit boundary alteration will cause study of the requesting circuit and all adjacent circuits. A circuit is qualified for a boundary alteration if, after the proposed alteration, the following conditions are met.

1. Caseload and Workload
  - a. Caseload is more evenly distributed across all circuits impacted by the alteration.
  - b. Workload in altered circuits does not vary significantly from the statewide average workload.
  - c. Caseload trend analysis of altered circuits does not project an imbalance in growth rates that would necessitate a reallocation of resources or alteration of circuit boundaries again in the near future.

## 2. Population

- a. Per judge population is more evenly distributed among circuits impacted by altered boundaries.
- b. Per judge population does not vary significantly from the statewide average in altered circuits.
- c. Population trend analysis of altered circuits does not show an imbalance in growth rates that would necessitate a reallocation of resources or alteration of circuit boundaries again within ten years.
- d. The population of altered circuits is more evenly distributed than the original circuits.

## 3. Judges

- a. The number of additional judges needed to serve altered circuits is not significantly greater than the original number.
- b. Judges' travel time and/or distance between courthouses decreases in altered circuits.

## 4. Administrative

- a. The one-time and recurring costs to altered circuits are not overly burdensome to the state or local governments. Changes in cost for personnel services and operations will be considered. These costs include, but are not limited, to the following:
  - i. Salaries and compensation for staff;
  - ii. Cost for items such as furniture, signage, and general startup expenses;
  - iii. Rent or the purchase of new office space;
  - iv. Purchase or lease of a vehicle; and
  - v. Conference and continued education costs.
- b. The operational and case assignment policies are not negatively impacted in altered circuits.
  - i. Any current standing orders regarding case assignment should be submitted to the

AOC; and

- ii. Any item affecting the case assignment not specifically expressed in the Uniform Rules for Superior Courts should be submitted to the AOC.
  - c. The Circuit Court Administrator and/or District Court Administrator is required to submit the detailed Comprehensive Annual Financial Report to the AOC to be included within the analysis.
5. The preceding conditions (1-4) will be considered for all potential circuit boundary alterations before qualification status is determined.
6. If a circuit meets a significant number of the preceding conditions, then the circuit is qualified for a boundary alteration. If a circuit does not meet a significant number of the preceding conditions, then the circuit is not qualified for a boundary alteration.
7. The AOC will notify the requestor and the circuit's chief judge of the circuit's qualification status no later than July 1.
8. A circuit that qualifies for a boundary alteration will have its study prepared and presented at the next Standing Committee on Judicial Workload Assessment Committee meeting. The Standing Committee may forward the recommendation to the Judicial Council for consideration at its next meeting as described in Section 3. If a majority of the judges in a circuit vote to disagree with a request for a circuit boundary alteration, the Standing Committee may consider that disagreement in their decisions to recommend circuit boundary alterations to the Council.
9. A circuit not qualified for a boundary alteration has the right to appeal its status to the Standing Committee on Judicial Workload Assessment. If the appeal is approved, then the appealing circuit will have a boundary study prepared and presented at the next Judicial Council meeting as described in Section 3. Appeals may not be based upon a circuit's caseload.

### **Section 3 - Judicial Council Procedure**

The Judicial Council will make recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly for judicial personnel allocations and circuit boundary alterations annually prior to the beginning of the regular session of the General Assembly.

1. The AOC will prepare and present all Committee recommendations on additional judgeships, circuit boundary adjustments, and reduction of judgeships to the Council. Requestors will be

notified of the Council process no later than August 1. The report will include the results of the judgeship and/or boundary studies, any letters of support from requesting circuits, any available *CourTools* data, and other information the AOC may deem beneficial to Judicial Council deliberations.

2. After reviewing the recommendations, the Judicial Council, in open session, may discuss the merits of each recommendation. Any Judicial Council member in a circuit or county affected by a recommendation will be eligible to vote on motions affecting that circuit but will not be present or participate in deliberations regarding the circuit. Non-Judicial Council members offering support or opposition may be recognized to speak by the Chief Justice.
3. After deliberations, the Judicial Council will, in open session, approve or disapprove the recommendations. The Council shall vote on requests for multiple judgeships independently. Votes on such motions will be by secret, written ballot. Non-qualified circuits with successful appeals must have a two-thirds (2/3) majority to receive approval. Each ballot must be complete to be counted. The Vice Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals will oversee ballot counting.
4. After determining the circuits recommended for an additional judgeship, the Judicial Council will rank the circuits based on need. The Council shall vote on requests for multiple judgeships independently. Votes on such motions will be by secret, written ballot. Each ballot must be complete to be counted. The Vice Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals will oversee ballot counting.
  - a. The ballots will be counted using the Borda count method. The Borda count determines the outcome of balloting by giving each circuit a number of points corresponding to the number of candidates ranked lower. Where there are  $n$  circuits, a circuit will receive  $n$  points for a first preference ballot,  $n - 1$  points for a second preference ballot,  $n - 2$  for a third preference ballot, and so on until  $n$  equals 1. Once all ballots have been counted, the circuits are then ranked in order of most to fewest points.
5. Upon Judicial Council recommendation of an additional judgeship or circuit boundary alteration, the recommendation will remain for a period of three years unless (1) the total caseload of that circuit decreases 10 percent or more or (2) the circuit withdraws the request. In either case, the circuit must requalify before being considered again by the Judicial Council.
6. The AOC will prepare and distribute letters notifying requestors and chief judges of the Judicial Council's actions and distribute a press release summarizing the Judicial Council's recommendations.



# Judicial Council of Georgia

## Administrative Office of the Courts

**Chief Justice Harold D. Melton**  
*Chair*

**Cynthia H. Clanton**  
*Director*

### Memorandum

TO: Judicial Council

FROM: Standing Committee on Judicial Workload Assessment  
Chief Judge David Emerson, Chair

RE: Caseload Reporting Form and Georgia Court Guide to Statistical Reporting  
Updates

DATE: April 3, 2020

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### Introduction

To account for changes in the Superior and State Court Filing and Disposition Forms, changes to Uniform Juvenile Court Rules, recommendations of the Council of Probate Court Judges, recommendations from the Council of Magistrate Court Judges, and decisions of the Committee, the caseload reporting forms and Georgia Court Guide to Statistical Reporting for 2020 and 2021 require updates. A summary of the significant changes is below, and a redline copy of the forms and Guide is attached. Yellow highlights indicate substantial changes.

### Summary of Calendar Year 2020 Changes

Superior Court – Staff updated the caseload reporting forms and Guide to reflect changes in the Superior and State Court Filing and Disposition Forms approved by the Georgia Supreme Court for use in calendar year 2020. These changes include adjustments to domestic contempt and modification categories. Staff also removed the case type “Unknown” from the General Civil and Domestic Relations sections.

State Court – Staff updated the forms and Guide for State Courts in the same way as Superior Court, save where there are jurisdictional differences. Staff also removed the case type “Unknown.”

### Summary of Calendar Year 2021 Changes

Superior Court – Staff added the case type “RICO” to serious felonies definition. Staff also added the case type “Serious traffic” to the list of criminal cases. Serious traffic includes DUI, reckless

driving, homicide by vehicle, aggressive driving and fleeing, and attempting to elude a police officer.

Magistrate Court – Staff expanded the manner of disposition categories to include “Transfers” and “ADR.”

Juvenile Court – Staff updated the manner of disposition categories to reflect the new Juvenile Court Uniform Rules approved by the Supreme Court.

Probate Court – Staff added “Set for review” as a category to the “General Probate” section. Staff also added the number of certified copies of birth and death certificates to the “Administration Actions” section.



Georgia Court  
**Guide**  
to Statistical  
Reporting

# Georgia Court Guide to Statistical Reporting

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A publication of the Judicial Council of Georgia's Administrative Office of the Courts



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Updated April 2020

For use in reporting calendar year 2020 caseload data in early 2021.

## Acknowledgments

The *Georgia Court Guide to Statistical Reporting* has existed under various names since the inception of the Judicial Council of Georgia's (JC) Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). While the JC/AOC oversees the collection of data, the efforts of countless state and local officials contribute to the success of annual caseload data collection. These officials include judges, clerks, court administrators, prosecutors, and many others. The Office of Research and Data Analysis is grateful to all who have helped, and we acknowledge their dedication to improving Georgia's judicial data collection.

The annual caseload collection project would not be possible without the leadership of all past and present Judicial Council and Judicial Workload Assessment Committee members. Their commitment to the project is crucial to improving Georgia's judiciary through careful research and analysis of court data.

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## Overview [To the top](#)

The *Georgia Court Guide to Statistical Reporting* (Guide) is a standardized reporting framework for Georgia trial court statistics. The statistics reported through this framework are compiled, analyzed, and published by the Administrative Office of the Courts' Office of Research and Data Analysis (Research).

Since 1976, the JC/AOC has worked with local officials to measure activity in Georgia courts. The ongoing efforts produce statistics for Supreme, Appeals, State-wide Business, Superior, State, Juvenile, Probate, Magistrate, Civil, Recorder's, and Municipal courts. Georgia law requires the AOC to "compile statistical and financial data and other information on the judicial work of the courts and on the work of other offices related to and serving the courts, which data and information shall be provided by the courts" (O.C.G.A. §15-5-24 (3)). The AOC serves as the state archive of court statistical information.

The collected data is used to support state and county resource decisions and to assist in policy development. In addition, statewide caseload activity is reported to the National Center for State Courts and other national organizations that inform justice system stakeholders about Georgia's courts. The caseload data serves as a historical description of the courts. The published data is used by judicial branch agencies, state and local executive agencies, project and program managers and grant applicants to support ongoing process and operational improvements.

Superior court data is also used in the assessment of judicial workload that can lead to Judicial Council recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly for additional judgeships.

Due to Georgia's non-centralized court system, each class of court and their respective circuits, counties, and cities vary in their administrative structure. Regardless of their organization, the JC/AOC has set for itself the same task: to map caseload data to the reporting framework in this guide. Without common definitions and a standard format for classification, JC/AOC's goal could not be achieved.

The Guide is divided into sections for each class of court in Georgia. Within each section, the Guide contains definitions for how cases should be defined, classified, and counted. Court case management systems should be capable of generating reports that meet the requirements of the Guide. Individual vendors can provide guidance on their specific product capabilities. Research personnel are available to discuss the Guide and assist courts, clerks, and vendors with reporting. Submission instructions can be found in Section 9.

Note that all case categories, case types, case status categories, manners of disposition, and case characteristics are defined as they apply to the Guide. Categories may vary somewhat from other definitions or common usage in any given circuit, county, or municipality.

## **Guide Goals** [To the top](#)

The Guide is a standardized framework for accurately reporting caseload data. Though individual practices vary across courts, this guide seeks to establish uniform language for statistical reporting with the goal of ensuring that Georgia provides the highest data quality possible.

1. To provide caseload elements with unique, mutually exclusive definitions.
2. To write all definitions clearly and concisely, reducing the possibility of confusion among stakeholders.
3. To have a consistent, high-quality aesthetic.
4. To make minimal changes from year to year, adjusting only when necessary to maintain other goals.

## Section 1 - Common Definitions [To the top](#)

Criminal, civil, and traffic caseloads each have their own units of count which remain standard across all classes of court. In addition, caseload data is reported in three ways: Status Categories, Case Characteristics, and Manner of Disposition. Each caseload section and the elements that comprise each section are outlined below.

### Unit of Count

**Criminal:** The unit of count for criminal cases is determined by defendants. This is defined as a count of the number of individuals that have been charged with a criminal offense. Each defendant is categorized based on the most serious offense regardless of the number of charges on the docket.

**Civil:** A petition or civil complaint begins a civil case. A civil case with multiple parties or multiple causes of action is counted as one case. The unit of count for civil cases is each complaint/petition that is filed with the clerk of court.

**Traffic:** The unit of count for traffic cases is by tickets/citations. Each ticket/citation is one case. If a ticket/citation has more than one charge it is still counted as one case and categorized under the most serious offense. For example, a driver charged with both a DUI and speeding charges under the same citation will only count as one serious traffic filing.

### Status Categories

Caseload reporting captures information about case status during the calendar year reporting period. These case status categories are consistent for each trial court.

**Cases Open:** A count of cases that were filed in any previous year and at the start of the current reporting year, and are awaiting disposition.

**Cases Filed:** A count of cases that have been filed with the court for the first time within the current reporting year.

**Cases Disposed:** A count of cases for which an original entry of judgment has been entered during the current reporting year. For cases involving multiple parties/issues, the disposition should not be reported until all parties/issues have been resolved.

### Case Characteristics

#### Introduction

The data on case characteristics captures information related to key policy interests on disposed cases. This data provides additional details about cases that have already been counted in the court's disposed caseload. Data are collected on the number of cases with self-represented litigants and cases with interpreters.

#### Unit of Count

A count of the number of disposed cases that included self-represented litigants and interpreters at any time during the life of the case. The unit of count is the case, not the litigant(s).

- A case should be counted at the point of disposition
- A case with self-represented litigant(s) should be counted as a single case, whether that case has one or more self-represented litigants.
- A case with interpreter(s) should be counted as a single case, whether that case has one or more interpreters.

### **Cases with Self-Represented Litigants**

A self-represented litigant is a person who advocates on his or her own behalf before a court rather than being represented by an attorney. These litigants are also known as “pro se” or “pro per” litigants if, during the life of the case, one or more parties was self-represented.

For plaintiffs/petitioners, the life of the case is from filing to disposition. For defendants/respondents, the life of the case is from arraignment/answer to disposition. While arraignment procedures may vary, the assumption is that the arraignment is the first opportunity that defendants have to provide the court with their representation status (i.e., to tell the court that an attorney has been retained, to request that the court appoint an attorney, or to inform the court of the defendant’s wish to be self-represented). Therefore, in criminal cases the arraignment (or an equivalent hearing) is considered to be the start of the case for the defendant.

Cases in which the defendant appears at arraignment without defense counsel but requests a court-appointed attorney during the arraignment proceedings should only be included in the self-represented tally if the self-representation continues after arraignment.

Self-represented litigants can take advantage of limited scope legal assistance (also known as limited assistance representation or unbundled legal services) to assist with the preparation of specific documents or to argue certain legal issues in a hearing before a judicial officer. While these self-represented litigants have representation for a specific and limited purpose, they remain fundamentally self-represented. Thus, cases in which self-represented litigants have obtained limited scope legal assistance are still counted as cases with self-represented litigants.

If a case is disposed by default, do not assume that the non-responding defendant or respondent was self-represented. If the plaintiff/petitioner was self-represented, the case can be correctly counted as one with a self-represented litigant. However, if the plaintiff/petitioner was represented and the defendant/respondent was at default due to a failure to respond at any point during the life of the case, the case is not to be counted as one with self-represented litigants.

### **Cases with Interpreters**

A case with an interpreter is a case in which an interpreter is appointed by the court to provide interpretation services in any or all three modes of interpretation (consecutive interpretation, simultaneous interpretation, and sight translation) for a Limited English Proficient (LEP) party from that person’s native language to English and vice versa. Sign Language interpretation is included. Interpreter services can be provided in person, via telephone, or through other audio/visual technologies. The distinction here is between interpretation as ordered by the court and interpretation that may be provided on an ad hoc basis by a family

member or friend. Interpretation ordered by the court may be provided by anyone the court deems qualified (e.g. certified interpreter, registered interpreter); the underlying assumption is that the court has formally taken note of the need for interpreter services and provided them. Any interpreter *ordered by the court*, regardless if for a party, witness, etc., would be counted for a case with an interpreter.

## **Manner of Disposition**

### **Introduction**

Manner of Disposition classifies disposed cases as trial and non-trial. Understanding trial rates and how they vary by case type is of policy interest to court management and the legal profession.

### **Unit of Count**

For each case type, count the number of disposed cases that were disposed by the disposition type. For cases involving multiple parties/issues, the manner of disposition should not be reported until all parties/issues have been resolved. When there is more than one type of dispositive action in a case, count as the disposition the action requiring the most judicial involvement. Prioritize actions as follows: jury trials, bench/non-jury trials, non-trial dispositions.

### **Notes Specific to Manner of Disposition**

Cases that are deferred to diversion or accountability court dockets (e.g. Drug Court) are not counted as dispositions until they return for final adjudication (e.g. imposition of sentence or dismissal).

## **Definitions for Manner of Disposition**

**Jury Trial:** Cases in which a jury is impaneled to determine the issues of fact in the case. A jury trial should be counted when the jury has been sworn, regardless of whether a verdict is reached.

**Bench/Non-Jury Trial:** Cases in which a judge or judicial officer is assigned to determine both the issues of fact and law in the case. A bench/non-jury trial should be counted when the first evidence is introduced, regardless of whether a judgment is reached.

**Non-Trial:** Cases in which the disposition does not involve either a jury trial or bench trial. This includes but is not limited to:

- Summary judgment
- Settlement
- Alternative Dispute Resolution: If a case was disposed of via a non-trial disposition, and the method of disposition was alternative dispute resolution. Only check if the whole case was resolved via alternative dispute resolution
- Default judgment
- Dismissal
- Transfer to another court
- Bind Over: Transfers (of a case or defendant) to a trial court after a finding of probable cause at a preliminary hearing. Note: include all bindovers, even if the offense is not a felony.
- Guilty plea/stipulation
- Nolle Prosequi
- All delinquency and dependency non-trial hearings

## Section 2 - Superior Court [To the top](#)

### Introduction

Georgia's 159 superior courts are general jurisdiction trial courts exercising both civil and criminal jurisdiction. Superior court judges hear all felony cases, domestic relations cases, equity cases, and other civil matters. Superior courts have jurisdiction to hear appeals from lower courts as provided by the Georgia Constitution, including appeals of judgments from the probate and magistrate courts that are handled as de novo appeals. The superior courts are organized into 49 judicial circuits made up of one or more counties. Superior court judges are constitutional officers who are elected to four-year terms in circuit-wide nonpartisan elections.

For reporting in the Georgia framework, superior court caseload is divided into three major categories: criminal, domestic relations, and general civil. The superior court reporting framework described in the Guide is used for reporting superior court caseload data.

### Superior Court Definitions

#### Criminal

**Death Penalty:** A count of cases in which the prosecuting attorney intends to seek the death penalty and has filed with the clerk of court the necessary written notice. These cases are only to be counted for the year in which they are filed.

**Serious Felony:** Any serious violent felony as defined in O.C.G.A § 17-10-6.1.

Specifically:

- Murder or felony murder, as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-5-1;
- Armed robbery, as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-8-41;
- Kidnapping, as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-5-40;
- Rape, as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-6-1;
- Aggravated child molestation, as defined in subsection (c) of O.C.G.A § 16-6-4, unless subject to the provisions

of paragraph (2) of subsection (d) of O.C.G.A. § 16-6-4;

- Aggravated sodomy, as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16.6.2; or
- Aggravated sexual battery, as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16.6.22.2.

**Felony:** A count of cases where the offense is punishable by incarceration for one year or more, excluding cases counted as serious felonies.

**Misdemeanor:** Any non-Serious Traffic offense punishable by incarceration for less than one year, and/or community service, and/or maximum fine of \$1,000.

**Probation Revocations:** Number of probation revocation petitions filed by either private or public probation officers, including waivers signed by defendants and first offender adjudications.

## **Domestic Relations**

**Adoption:** Cases involving a request for the establishment of a new, permanent parent-child relationship between persons not so biologically related.

**Contempt:** Any case alleging failure to comply with a previously existing court order.

## **Dissolution/Divorce/Separate**

**Maintenance/Alimony:** Any case involving the dissolution of a marriage or the establishing of alimony or separate maintenance.

**Family Violence Petition:** Any case in which a protective order from a family member or domestic partner is requested.

**Modification:** Any case seeking to change the terms of previously existing court order.

**Paternity/Legitimation:** Any case involving the establishment of the identity and/or responsibilities of the father of a minor child or a determination of biological offspring.

**Support- IV-D:** Cases filed by the Georgia Department of Human Services to request maintenance of a minor child by a person who is required, under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act of 1973, to provide such maintenance.

**Support- Private (non-IV-D):** Cases filed to request maintenance of a parent/guardian or a minor child by a person who is required by law, but who is not under the auspices of Title IV-D of the Social Security Act of 1973, to provide such maintenance.

**Other Domestic Relations:** Domestic relations cases that do not adequately fit into any of the other case types.

## **General Civil**

**Automobile Tort:** Any tort case involving personal injury, property damage, or wrongful death resulting from alleged negligent operation of a motor vehicle.

**Civil Appeal:** Any case disrupting the finding of a limited jurisdiction trial court, department, or administrative agency.

**Contempt/Modification/Other Post-Judgment:** Any case alleging failure to comply with a previously existing court order, seeking to change the terms of a previously existing court order, or any other post-judgment activity in a general civil case.

**Contract:** Any case involving a dispute over an agreement between two or more parties.

**Garnishment:** Any case where, after a monetary judgment, a third party who has money or other property belonging to the defendant is required to turn over such money or property to the court.

**General Tort:** Any tort case that is not defined or is not attributable to one of the other torts.

**Habeas Corpus:** Any case designed to test the legality of the detention or imprisonment of an individual, not the question of guilt or innocence.

**Injunction/Mandamus/Other Writ:** Cases involving a written court order directed to a specific party, requiring that

party to perform or refrain from performing a specific act.

**Landlord/Tenant:** Any case involving landlord/tenant disputes wherein the landlord removes a tenant and his/her property from the premises or places a lien on tenant property to repay debt.

**Medical Malpractice Tort:** Any tort case that alleges misconduct or negligence by a person in the medical profession acting in a professional capacity, such as doctors, nurses, physician's assistants, dentists, etc.

**Product Liability Tort:** Cases alleging that injury is caused by the manufacturer or seller of an article due to a defect in, or the condition of, the article sold or an alleged breach of duty to provide suitable instructions to prevent injury.

**Real Property:** Any case involving disputes over the ownership, use, boundaries, or value of land.

**Restraining Petition:** Any petition for a restraining order that does not result from a domestic altercation or is not between parties considered to be in a domestic relationship.

**Other General Civil:** Any case in which a plaintiff requests the enforcement or protection of a right or the redress or prevention of a wrong but does not fit into one of the previously defined case categories.

## Section 3 - State Court [To the top](#)

### Introduction

Georgia's 71 State Courts are county-based courts that exercise limited jurisdiction. State court judges have criminal jurisdiction over misdemeanor offenses, felony preliminary hearings, traffic violations, and application and issuance of search and arrest warrants. Civil matters not reserved exclusively to the superior courts can be adjudicated in state courts. Appeals of judgments from the magistrate courts may be sent to the state court and handled as a *de novo* appeal. The General Assembly creates state courts by local legislation establishing the number of judges and their status as full-time or part-time. State court judges are elected to four-year terms in countywide, non-partisan elections.

For reporting in the Georgia framework, state court caseload is divided into two major categories: civil and criminal. The state court reporting framework described in the Guide is used for reporting state court caseload data.

### State Court Definitions

#### Civil

**Automobile Tort:** Any tort case involving personal injury, property damage, or wrongful death resulting from alleged negligent operation of a motor vehicle.

**Civil Appeal:** Any case disrupting the finding of a limited jurisdiction trial court, department, or administrative agency.

**Contempt/Modification/Other Post-Judgment:** Any case alleging failure to comply with a previously existing court order, seeking to change the terms of a previously existing court order, or any other post-judgment activity in a general civil case.

**Contract:** Any case involving a dispute over an agreement between two or more parties.

**Garnishment:** Any case where, after a monetary judgment, a third party who has money or other property belonging to the

defendant is required to turn over such money or property to the court.

**General Tort:** Any tort case that is not defined or is not attributable to one of the other torts.

**Landlord/Tenant:** Any case involving landlord/tenant disputes wherein the landlord removes a tenant and his/her property from the premises or places a lien on tenant property to repay debt.

**Medical Malpractice Tort:** Any tort case that alleges misconduct or negligence by a person in the medical profession acting in a professional capacity, such as doctors, nurses, physician's assistants, dentists, etc.

**Product Liability Tort:** Cases alleging that injury is caused by the manufacturer or seller of an article due to a defect in, or the condition of, the article sold or an alleged breach of duty to provide suitable instructions to prevent injury.

**Other General Civil:** Any case in which a plaintiff requests the enforcement or protection of a right or the redress or prevention of a wrong but does not fit into one of the previously defined case categories.

## **Criminal**

**Serious Traffic:** Cases including misdemeanor DUI, reckless driving, homicide by vehicle, aggressive driving and fleeing, or attempting to elude a police officer.

**Non-Traffic Misdemeanor:** Cases involving an offense punishable by incarceration for less than a year and/or fines. Use this case type for misdemeanor cases that are not attributable to one of the other previously defined misdemeanor case types, or when all misdemeanor cases are reported as a single case type.

**Other Traffic:** Criminal cases involving a violation of statutes and local ordinances governing traffic, parking, and violations involving operation of a motor vehicle. Use this case type for cases of unknown specificity when motor vehicle cases are not attributable to one of the other previously defined motor vehicle case types.

**Probation Revocation:** Number of probation revocation petitions filed by either private or public probation officers, including waivers signed by defendants.

## Section 4 – Juvenile Court [To the top](#)

### Introduction

Jurisdiction of the juvenile courts extends to individuals under the age of 18 alleged to be dependent, alleged to be a child in need of services (CHINS), or alleged to have committed a juvenile traffic offense. Jurisdiction also extends to individuals alleged to have committed a delinquent act who is under the age of 17. Individuals up to the age of 23 may also be subject to juvenile court jurisdiction under certain circumstances. OCGA § 15-11-2(10).

In addition to matters alleging delinquency, dependency, CHINS, and the commission of a juvenile traffic offense, juvenile courts also have exclusive original jurisdiction over so-called special proceedings including proceedings for obtaining judicial consent to the marriage, employment, or enlistment in the armed services of any child if such consent is required by law; for permanent guardianship brought pursuant to provisions of the juvenile code; for the termination of parental rights when brought pursuant to provisions of the juvenile code; for emancipation; and for obtaining a waiver of the requirement of parental notice of abortion. OCGA § 15-11-10.

Juvenile courts have concurrent jurisdiction with superior courts in certain matters involving legitimation; child custody and support; temporary guardianship when properly transferred from probate court; and any criminal case properly transferred from superior court for the purpose of facilitating a parent's participation in a family treatment court division program. OCGA § 15-11-11 and § 15-11-15(d).

Certain specified violent offenses when committed by an individual under the age of 17 are within the exclusive jurisdiction of the superior court. Other specified offenses or combination of offenses otherwise under the exclusive jurisdiction of the juvenile court may be transferred under certain circumstances for prosecution in the superior court.

As required by Georgia law, detailed information regarding minor abortion petitions is also collected. The juvenile court reporting framework described in the Guide is used for reporting juvenile court caseload data.

## Juvenile Court Definitions

### Unit of Count

- For delinquency, CHINS, emancipation, traffic, and special proceeding cases count the juvenile and all allegations involved in a single incident as a single case. If the filing document contains multiple juveniles involved in a single incident, count each juvenile as a single and separate case.
- For dependency cases and termination of parental rights, count the petition as a single case. A dependency case that contains multiple parties (e.g. children/siblings) or multiple causes of action is counted as one case.

### Children in Need of Services (CHINS):

- (A) A child adjudicated to be in need of care, guidance, counseling, structure, supervision, treatment, or rehabilitation and who is adjudicated to be:
- (i) Truant;
  - (ii) Habitually disobedient, or a child who places himself or herself or others in unsafe circumstances;
  - (iii) A runaway;
  - (iv) A child who has committed a status offense;
  - (v) A child who wanders or loiters about the streets of any city or in or about any highway or any public place between the hours of 12:00 Midnight and 5:00 A.M.;
  - (vi) A child who disobeys the terms of supervision after adjudication as a child in need of services; or
  - (vii) A child who patronizes any bar where alcoholic beverages are being

sold, unaccompanied by his or her parent, guardian, or legal custodian, or who possesses alcoholic beverages; or

(B) A child who has committed a delinquent act and is adjudicated to be in need of supervision but not in need of treatment or rehabilitation.

OCGA § 15-11-2(11).

### Delinquency - Class A Designated Felony:

A delinquent act committed by a child 13 years of age or older, which if committed by an adult, would be one or more of the following crimes:

- Aggravated Battery- certain offenses
- Aggravated Assault - certain offenses
- Armed Robbery (without a firearm)
- Arson in the first degree
- Attempted Murder
- Escape – certain circumstances
- Hijacking a motor vehicle in the first degree
- Kidnapping
- Home invasion in the first degree
- Gang activity – certain circumstances such as violent felonies
- Drug trafficking - certain substances
- Specified offenses in combination with a prior record of felony offenses

OCGA § 15-11-2(12).

### Delinquency – Class B Designated Felony:

A delinquent act committed by a child 13 years of age or older, which if committed by an adult, would be one or more of the following crimes:

- Aggravated Assault – certain offenses
- Arson in the second degree
- Attempted Kidnapping
- Battery of a teacher or other school

- personnel
- Racketeering
- Robbery
- Home invasion in the second degree
- Gang activity – certain offenses such as graffiti or tagging
- Smash & Grab Burglary
- Certain offenses involving destructive devices or hoax destructive devices
- Obstruction of a law enforcement officer.
- Possession of a handgun by an individual under the age of 18
- Possession of a weapon on school property or at school sponsored event

OCGA § 15-11-2(13).

**Delinquency Not Designated:** A count of cases not designated as either Class A or Class B felonies.

**Dependency:** Dependency cases are a subcategory of juvenile cases in which it is alleged that a child has been abused or neglected or is otherwise without proper parental care and/or supervision.

**Emancipation:** The release of a minor from his or her parents, which entails a complete relinquishment of the right to the care, control, custody, services, and earnings of such child and a repudiation of parental obligations.

**Special Proceedings:** A child who is the subject of a filing or disposition that does not fall within any of the above case types, e.g. request for permission to marry or join the armed services, notification of abortion, proceedings relating to mental illness, legitimation, guardianship, transfer from probate court, transfers from superior court, and superior court referrals for custody investigations.

**Traffic:** An individual under 17 years of age who violates any motor vehicle law or local ordinance governing the operation of motor vehicles on the streets or highways or upon the waterways of the state of Georgia, excluding specified offenses deemed to be delinquent offenses as described by O.C.G.A. §15-11-630.

**Termination of Parental Rights:** An action on behalf of a child to end the rights and obligations of a parent on the grounds listed in O.C.G.A. §15-11-310.

**Parental Notification of Abortion Total Petitions Filed:** A count of petitions filed requesting the waiver of the requirement for parental notification of abortion.

**Appointed Guardian Ad Litem:** A count of cases involving a petition for waiver of parental notification of abortion in which the juvenile court appointed a guardian ad litem for the minor.

**Court Appointed Counsel:** A count of cases involving a petition for the waiver of parental notification of abortion in which the juvenile court appointed an attorney for the minor.

**Without Notification:** Cases in which the petitioner was granted a waiver of the parental notification requirement after notification was attempted but the parent or legal guardian of the minor could not be located.

**Denied:** A count of cases in which the court denied the petition to waive parental notification of abortion.

**Appealed:** A count of cases in which the petitioner appealed the juvenile court's denial of the petitioner's request for waiver of parental notification of abortion.

**Affirmed:** A count of cases appealed in which the juvenile court's denial of a petition for waiver of parental notification of abortion was affirmed.

**Reversed:** A count of cases appealed in which the juvenile court's denial of a petition for waiver of parental notification of abortion was reversed.

## Section 5 – Probate Court [To the top](#)

### Introduction

Probate courts exercise exclusive, original jurisdiction in the probate of wills, administration of estates, appointment of guardians, and involuntary hospitalization of incapacitated adults and other individuals. Probate court judges are constitutional officers who are elected to four-year terms. All probate court judges administer oaths of office and issue marriage licenses. In some counties probate judges may hold habeas corpus hearings or preside over criminal preliminary hearings. Unless a jury trial is requested, a probate court judge may also hear certain misdemeanors, traffic cases, and violation of state game and fish law in counties where there is no state court. In counties with a population of 90,000 or greater, the probate judges must be an attorney meeting the qualifications of a superior court judge. In those counties, jurisdiction is expanded or enhanced to include the right to a jury trial, with appeals directly to the Court of Appeals or Supreme Courts. When authorized by local statute, probate judges serve as election supervisors and make appointments to certain local public offices.

For reporting in the Georgia framework, probate court caseload is divided into four major categories: general probate, mental health, criminal, and administrative actions. The probate court reporting framework described in the Guide is to be used for reporting probate court caseload data.

### Unit of Count

The unit of count for general probate cases is by petitions. General probate petitions are categorized by case type and filing categories.

### General Probate Case Categories

**Estates:** Cases that deal with managing the assets, liabilities, and property of decedents.

**Guardianship Minor:** Cases that involve establishing a temporary or permanent legal guardian for a child.

**Conservatorship Minor:** Cases that appoint a person to manage a minor's property.

### Guardianship/Conservatorship Adult:

Cases that involve either the establishment of a guardian for an adult ward or for a manager/conservator of an adult ward's property.

**Trusts:** Cases that create a legal entity that allows one person to hold legal title to property for the benefit of another person.

**Other Filings:** Any case that does not fall within the previous categories.

### General Probate Filing Categories

**Initial Petition:** The petition or other document that creates an entirely new case. All initial petitions must be disposed before other petitions can be filed.

**Secondary Petition:** Any subsequent petition that is filed in the same case created by an initial petition.

**Motion:** A written application for an order.

**Objection/Caveat:** Pleading to the court and petitioners opposing the performance of certain acts requested in a petition (may be in response to an initial or secondary petition).

**Discharge (Uncontested):** A petition that seeks final closure of a case and is not contested by any relevant party.

**Discharge (Contested):** Any discharge that is contested by a relevant party and requires adjudication.

### **Other General Probate Actions**

**Inventory and Asset Management Plan:** A description of all assets and liabilities of the decedent, including a list of all personal and real property owned by the decedent at the time of death that is subject to administration of an estate's personal representative or in the event of a conservatorship of a minor or adult, a list of personal and real property owned by the ward and subject to management by a conservator, which includes a plan to manage the property and income for the following year.

**Personal Status:** A report pertaining to the status of an adult ward or a minor child.

**Annual/Final Return:** Accounting, under oath, of the receipts and expenditures on behalf of a decedent's estate or adult or minor conservatorship during the year preceding the anniversary date of appointment, together with a statement of all other assets or transfers of assets which are necessary to show the true condition of the Estate. The final return is due with a petition for discharge or petition for dismissal.

**Bond:** A count of the number of surety

bonds issued.

**Guardian ad Litem (GAL):** A count of the number of times a court has to appoint someone to investigate and represent the best interest of a minor child, alleged incapacitated adult, or missing or unknown heirs at law with regard to a particular matter pending before the court.

**Indigent Affidavit:** A count of the number of times an affidavit of indigence is filled in which a court waives filing fees for citizens unable to afford the fees.

### **Mental Health**

**Involuntary Treatment:** Petitions that order a person, or drug addiction to be committed into a treatment facility. This category includes both inpatient and outpatient treatment orders.

**Order to Apprehend:** A legal order allowing law enforcement officers to apprehend a person who is suffering from mental illness or drug addiction.

**Other Mental Health:** Any mental health petitions or orders that are not included in the previous two categories.

### **Criminal**

**Unit of Count:** The unit of count for criminal cases heard by the probate court is by defendant.

**Serious Traffic:** The following cases are considered misdemeanor serious traffic offenses: DUI, reckless driving, aggressive driving, and evading a police officer.

**Non-Serious Traffic:** All traffic cases other than the ones included in the serious traffic category.

**Other Criminal Citations:** All non-traffic misdemeanor cases handled by the probate courts.

### **Manner of Disposition**

**Transfer:** A case disposed by sending it to a higher court.

**Bench Trial:** A trial held in front of a judge without a jury.

**Non-Trial:** Any form of disposition that does not involve a formal trial.

### **Administrative Actions**

**Firearms:** A count of all the weapons carry permits filled in a probate court along with a count of all the permit denials and revocations.

**Vital Records:** Certificates or reports of birth, death, and data related thereto.

- Birth Certificates- A count of all the birth certificates issued by a probate court.
- Death Certificate- A count of all the death certificates issued by a probate court.

**Marriage:** A count of all marriage licenses issues by a probate court.

- License Issued- A count of all original marriage licenses issued by the probate court.
- Certified Copies-All certified copies of marriage licenses issued by the probate court.

**Passports:** A count of all passport applications processed by a probate court.

**Elections:** First, indicate whether or not the court oversees elections by selected “yes”

or “no”. If a court does handle elections, it will then show the number of voting precincts found within the county along with the number of election cycles handled in that calendar year. An election cycle refers to the number of election rounds not the number of candidates or offices being voted upon. For example, a county that experiences a primary, general, and runoff election in a single calendar year would be considered to have three election cycles regardless of the number of candidates or offices involved.

**Miscellaneous Administrative:** All other administrative actions that do not fall within one of the previous categories.

## Section 6 – Magistrate Court [To the top](#)

### Introduction

Magistrate court jurisdiction includes: civil claims of \$15,000 or less, certain minor criminal offenses, distress warrants and dispossessory writs, county ordinance violations, deposit account fraud, preliminary hearings, summonses, arrest, and search warrants. A chief magistrate, who may be assisted by one or more magistrates, presides over each of Georgia's 159 magistrate courts. Chief magistrates are elected in partisan and non-partisan, countywide elections to four- year terms. Terms for other magistrate judges run concurrently with that of the chief magistrate.

For reporting in the Georgia framework, magistrate court caseload is divided into four major categories: criminal, civil, warrants, and hearings. The Magistrate court reporting framework described in the Guide is to be used for reporting magistrate court caseload data.

### Magistrate Court Definitions

#### Criminal

**Ordinance Violations:** Cases alleging violations of local regulations passed by county, city, or other local governing bodies.

**Misdemeanors:** A count of violations of state laws that include: Possession of less than one ounce of marijuana (O.C.G.A. §16-13-2), Theft by shoplifting (O.C.G.A. §16-8-14), Furnishing alcoholic beverages to and purchase and possession of alcoholic beverages by a person under 21 years of age (O.C.G.A. §3-3-23.1), Criminal trespass (O.C.G.A. §16-7-21), Refund fraud (O.C.G.A. §16-8-14.1), Deposit account fraud/issuance of bad checks (O.C.G.A. §16-9-20).

#### Civil

**Claims:** Any cases where the amount demanded or the value of the property claimed does not exceed \$15,000.

#### Dispossessory and Distress Warrants:

Proceedings involving landlords and tenants either for removal of the tenant from the property or for seizure of the property for non-payment of rent.

**Garnishments:** A proceeding in which the property or money in possession or control of another person are applied to pay a debt or judgment to a third person. This is most commonly an action in which a creditor garnishes a person's wages from the employer.

**Foreclosures and Attachments:** A means of enforcing payment of a debt by selling the property upon which the debt is owed. Attachment is a process in which the court is asked to have property seized in order to satisfy a debt (to satisfy the court judgment in post-judgment actions).

#### Warrants

**Felony Arrest:** A type of arrest warrant that authorizes the arrest of a person suspected of committing a felony crime.

**Misdemeanor Arrest:** A type of arrest warrant that authorizes the arrest of a person suspected of committing a misdemeanor crime.

**Good Behavior:** A type of warrant against a person whose conduct indicates that the safety of another person may be at risk.

**Search:** A type of warrant that authorizes law enforcement officers to conduct a search of a person, location, or vehicle for evidence of a crime and to confiscate evidence if it is found.

### **Hearings**

**Warrant Application:** This is a hearing to determine if there is probable cause for issuance of an arrest warrant when application has been made by a person other than a peace officer or law enforcement officer and for commission of an offense against the penal laws.

**First Appearance:** The purpose of this hearing is to inform the defendant of the charges, the defendant's rights, and to set a bond to guarantee the defendant's appearance at court for the next proceeding.

**Commitment:** This is a pre-trial or preliminary hearing to determine if there is sufficient evidence (probable cause) for the case to proceed to trial.

**Good Behavior:** The purpose of this proceeding is to determine if there is sufficient cause to require the defendant to post a good behavior bond and to set the amount of the bond.

## Section 7 – Municipal Court [To the top](#)

### Introduction

Georgia’s municipal courts hear traffic and ordinance violation cases in towns and cities. Municipal court judges hear municipal ordinance violations, issue criminal warrants, conduct preliminary hearings, and sometimes have concurrent jurisdiction over shoplifting cases and cases involving possession of one ounce or less of marijuana.

For reporting in the Georgia framework, municipal court caseload is divided into eight major criminal categories: traffic, ordinances, serious traffic, drugs/marijuana, misdemeanors, and bindovers. The municipal court reporting framework described in the Guide is used for reporting municipal court caseload data.

### Municipal Court Definitions

#### Criminal

**Serious Traffic (DUI):** Cases alleging driving a motor vehicle while intoxicated, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or driving while impaired.

**Serious Traffic (Other):** All fingerprintable criminal traffic offenses except driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs (e.g. reckless driving, and operating a commercial vehicle without a CDL).

**Misdemeanor Traffic:** Criminal traffic violations involving the operation of a motor vehicle. Use this case type for motor vehicle cases that are not attributable to one of the other previously defined case types (e.g. speeding, failure to obey stop sign, failure to use turn signal, and seat belt violations).

**Misdemeanor Drugs:** Any drug-related misdemeanor criminal charges (e.g. possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia).

**Misdemeanor (Other):** Any criminal violations punishable by a maximum fine of \$1,000 or 12 months confinement. Also includes any violations that do not fit within aforementioned categories (e.g. vandalism and shoplifting valued less than \$300).

**Parking Violation:** Cases alleging parking a motor vehicle in violation of a state statute or local ordinance.

**Ordinance:** Cases alleging violations of local regulations passed by county, city, state, or other local governing bodies (e.g. animal control violations, solid waste violations, solicitation without a permit, and zoning violations).

#### Civil

**Non-Criminal Traffic Violations:** Non-criminal cases involving operation of a motor vehicle (e.g. Red light camera violations and School bus camera violations).

## Section 8 – Civil Court and Recorder’s Court [To the top](#)

### Introduction

For reporting in the Georgia framework, civil court and recorder’s court caseloads are divided into criminal and civil categories. The civil court and recorder’s court reporting framework described in the Guide is used for reporting civil court and recorder’s court caseload data.

### Civil Court and Recorder’s Court Definitions

**Serious Traffic (DUI):** Cases alleging driving a motor vehicle while intoxicated, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or driving while impaired.

**Serious Traffic (Other):** All fingerprintable criminal traffic offenses except driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs (e.g. reckless driving, and operating a commercial vehicle without a CDL).

**Misdemeanor Traffic:** Criminal traffic violations involving the operation of a motor vehicle. Use this case type for motor vehicle cases that are not attributable to one of the other previously defined case types (e.g. speeding, failure to obey stop sign, failure to use turn signal, and seat belt violations).

**Misdemeanor Drugs:** Any drug-related misdemeanor criminal charges (e.g. possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia).

**Misdemeanor (Other):** Any criminal violations punishable by a maximum fine of \$1,000 or 12 months confinement. Also includes any violations that do not fit within aforementioned categories (e.g. vandalism and shoplifting valued less than \$300).

**Parking Violation:** Cases alleging parking a motor vehicle in violation of a state statute or local ordinance.

**Ordinance:** Cases alleging violations of local regulations passed by county, city, state, or other local governing bodies (e.g. animal control violations, solid waste violations, solicitation without a permit, and zoning violations).

#### Civil

**Claims:** Any cases where the amount demanded or the value of the property claimed does not exceed the limit set by local legislation.

**Dispossessory and Distress Warrants:** Proceedings involving landlords and tenants either for removal of the tenant from the property or for seizure of the property for non-payment of rent.

**Garnishments:** A proceeding in which the property or money in possession or control of another person are applied to pay a debt or judgment to a third person. This is most commonly an action in which a creditor garnishes a person’s wages from the employer.

**Foreclosures and Attachments:** A means of enforcing payment of a debt by selling the property upon which the debt is owed. Attachment is a process in which the court is asked to have property seized in order to satisfy a debt (to satisfy the court judgment in post-judgment actions).

**Non-Criminal Traffic Violations:** Non-criminal cases involving operation of a motor vehicle (e.g. red light and school bus camera violations).

## Section 9 – Data Submission and Verification [To the top](#)

### Data Submissions

Efforts to simplify the reporting of caseload data led to the development of the online forms available at [casecount.georgiacourts.gov/aocportal](http://casecount.georgiacourts.gov/aocportal). Clerks of all courts may access the forms by registering at the website and logging in to submit or edit their data.

Once you have registered or if you have previously registered, navigate to the Caseload Reporting Site [casecount.georgiacourts.gov/aocportal](http://casecount.georgiacourts.gov/aocportal), and login using the user name and password you created. Once inside Caseload Reporting site, you may now select the appropriate court and enter your caseload data.

If you do not know the email address you previously registered with the JC/AOC or if you experience any technical issues with the portal, please contact the Office of Research and Data Analysis at 404-656-5171 or email [casecount@georgiacourts.gov](mailto:casecount@georgiacourts.gov).

**Please note: Mailed, emailed, and faxed forms are not accepted.**

### Data Verification

The Research staff will reviews all data submitted through the caseload reporting site for completeness and compare it with data from prior years to identify potential questions and issues addressing data reliability. Clerks are notified of any questions or concerns to allow editing or additional verifications before data are certified as final. Data should be submitted during the collection period to ensure the integrity of the data published.

## Section 10 – Reporting Timeline [To the top](#)

Below are dates of various events in the caseload reporting process. Please be mindful of these dates in order to allow ample time for verification and subsequent analysis.

All dates are in 2021.

**January 4<sup>th</sup>** – Caseload reporting initiated.

**March 1<sup>st</sup>** – 15-day reminder sent to courts that have not submitted.

**March 4<sup>th</sup>** – 10-day reminder sent to courts that have not submitted.

**March 8<sup>th</sup>** – Final reports sent to council presidents, judges, court administrators, and clerks.

5-day reminder sent to courts that have not submitted.

**March 11<sup>th</sup>** – 2-day reminder sent to courts that have not submitted.

**March 15<sup>th</sup>** – Portal closes.

**March 17<sup>th</sup>** – Caseload data is past due. First late notice is sent to courts that have not submitted.

**March 18<sup>th</sup>** – Second late notice sent to unresponsive courts.

**April 15<sup>th</sup>** – All submitted data are final.

## Section 11 – Contact Information [To the top](#)

If you have comments, questions, or concerns, please contact at the Research Office.

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**CY 2020 Superior Court Caseload Report**  
(January 1- December 31, 2020)

Instructions for completion of the form, and message from the Office of Research and Data Analysis

Edit Box, Submitted By, Time Stamp

**General Civil**

	Cases			Manner of Disposition				Case Characteristics	
	Open	Filed	Disposed	Jury Trial	Bench/ Non- Jury	Non-Trial	ADR	Self- Represented Litigants	Limited English Proficiency
Automobile Tort									
Civil Appeal									
Contempt/ Modification/ Other Post-Judgement									
Contract									
Garnishment									
General Tort									
Habeas Corpus									
Injunction/ Mandamus/Other Writ									
Landlord/Tenant									
Medical Malpractice Tort									
Product Liability Tort									
Real Property									
Restraining Petition									
Other General Civil									

**Domestic**

	Cases			Manner of Disposition				Case Characteristics	
	Open	Filed	Disposed	Jury Trial	Bench/ Non- Jury	Non-Trial	ADR	Self- Represented Litigants	Limited English Proficiency
Adoption									
Contempt									
Dissolution/Divorce/Separate Maintenance/Alimony									
Family Violence Petition									
Modification									
Paternity/ Legitimation									
Support- IV-D									
Support- Private (non-IV-D)									
Other Domestic Relations									

**Criminal**

	Cases			Manner of Disposition				Case Characteristics	
	Open	Filed	Disposed	Jury Trial	Bench/ Non- Jury	Non-Trial	ADR	Self- Represented Litigants	Limited English Proficiency
Death Penalty									
Serious Felony									
Felony									
Misdemeanor									
Probation Revocation									

Submit	Save and Finish Later	Cancel
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**CY 2020 State Court Caseload Report**  
 (January 1- December 31, 2020)  
**State Court of Glynn County**

Instructions for completion of the form, and message from the Office of Research and Data Analysis

Edit Box, Submitted By, Time Stamp

**General Civil**

	Cases			Manner of Disposition				Case Characteristics	
	Open	Filed	Disposed	Jury Trial	Bench/ Non- Jury	Non-Trial	ADR	Self- Represented Litigants	Limited English Proficiency
Automobile Tort									
Civil Appeal									
Contempt/ Modification/ Other Post-Judgement									
Contract									
Garnishment									
General Tort									
Landlord/Tenant									
Medical Malpractice Tort									
Product Liability Tort									
Other General Civil									

**Criminal**

	Cases			Manner of Disposition				Case Characteristics	
	Open	Filed	Disposed	Jury Trial	Bench/ Non- Jury	Non-Trial	ADR	Self- Represented Litigants	Limited English Proficiency
Serious Traffic									
Non-Traffic Misdemeanor									
Other Traffic									
Probation Revocation									

Submit	Save and Finish Later	Cancel
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Georgia  
Court

**Guide**

to

Statistical  
Reporting



# Georgia Court Guide to Statistical Reporting

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A publication of the Judicial Council of Georgia's Administrative Office of the Courts



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For use in reporting calendar year 2021 caseload data in early 2022.

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The *Georgia Court Guide to Statistical Reporting* has existed under various names since the inception of the Judicial Council of Georgia's (JC) Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). While the JC/AOC oversees the collection of data, the efforts of countless state and local officials contribute to the success of annual caseload data collection. These officials include judges, clerks, court administrators, prosecutors, and many others. The Office of Research and Data Analysis is grateful to all who have helped, and we acknowledge their dedication to improving Georgia's judicial data collection.

The annual caseload collection project would not be possible without the leadership of all past and present Judicial Council and Judicial Workload Assessment Committee members. Their commitment to the project is crucial to improving Georgia's judiciary through careful research and analysis of court data.

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## Overview [To the top](#)

The *Georgia Court Guide to Statistical Reporting* (Guide) is a standardized reporting framework for Georgia trial court statistics. The statistics reported through this framework are compiled, analyzed, and published by the Administrative Office of the Courts' Office of Research and Data Analysis (Research).

Since 1976, the JC/AOC has worked with local officials to measure activity in Georgia courts. The ongoing efforts produce statistics for Supreme, Appeals, State-wide Business, Superior, State, Juvenile, Probate, Magistrate, Civil, Recorder's, and Municipal courts. Georgia law requires the AOC to "compile statistical and financial data and other information on the judicial work of the courts and on the work of other offices related to and serving the courts, which data and information shall be provided by the courts" (O.C.G.A. §15-5-24 (3)). The AOC serves as the state archive of court statistical information.

The collected data is used to support state and county resource decisions and to assist in policy development. In addition, statewide caseload activity is reported to the National Center for State Courts and other national organizations that inform justice system stakeholders about Georgia's courts. The caseload data serves as a historical description of the courts. The published data is used by judicial branch agencies, state and local executive agencies, project and program managers and grant applicants to support ongoing process and operational improvements. Superior court data is also used in the assessment of judicial workload that can lead to Judicial Council recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly for additional judgeships.

Due to Georgia's non-centralized court system, each class of court and their respective circuits, counties, and cities vary in their administrative structure. Regardless of their organization, the JC/AOC has set for itself the same task: to map caseload data to the reporting framework in this guide. Without common definitions and a standard format for classification, JC/AOC's goal could not be achieved.

The Guide is divided into sections for each class of court in Georgia. Within each section, the Guide contains definitions for how cases should be defined, classified, and counted. Court case management systems should be capable of generating reports that meet the requirements of the Guide. Individual vendors can provide guidance on their specific product capabilities. Research personnel are available to discuss the Guide and assist courts, clerks, and vendors with reporting. Submission instructions can be found in Section 9.

Note that all case categories, case types, case status categories, manners of disposition, and case characteristics are defined as they apply to the Guide. Categories may vary somewhat from other definitions or common usage in any given circuit, county, or municipality.

## **Guide Goals** [To the top](#)

The Guide is a standardized framework for accurately reporting caseload data. Though individual practices vary across courts, this guide seeks to establish uniform language for statistical reporting with the goal of ensuring that Georgia provides the highest data quality possible.

1. To provide caseload elements with unique, mutually exclusive definitions.
2. To write all definitions clearly and concisely, reducing the possibility of confusion among stakeholders.
3. To have a consistent, high-quality aesthetic.
4. To make minimal changes from year to year, adjusting only when necessary to maintain other goals.

## Section 1 - Common Definitions [To the top](#)

Criminal, civil, and traffic caseloads each have their own units of count which remain standard across all classes of court. In addition, caseload data is reported in three ways: Status Categories, Case Characteristics, and Manner of Disposition. Each caseload section and the elements that comprise each section are outlined below.

### Unit of Count

**Criminal:** The unit of count for criminal cases is determined by defendants. This is defined as a count of the number of individuals that have been charged with a criminal offense. Each defendant is categorized based on the most serious offense regardless of the number of charges on the docket.

**Civil:** A petition or civil complaint begins a civil case. A civil case with multiple parties or multiple causes of action is counted as one case. The unit of count for civil cases is each complaint/petition that is filed with the clerk of court.

**Traffic:** The unit of count for traffic cases is by tickets/citations. Each ticket/citation is one case. If a ticket/citation has more than one charge it is still counted as one case and categorized under the most serious offense. For example, a driver charged with both a DUI and speeding charges under the same citation will only count as one serious traffic filing.

### Status Categories

Caseload reporting captures information about case status during the calendar year reporting period. These case status categories are consistent for each trial court.

**Cases Open:** A count of cases that were filed in any previous year and at the start of the current reporting year, and are awaiting disposition.

**Cases Filed:** A count of cases that have been filed with the court for the first time within the current reporting year.

**Cases Disposed:** A count of cases for which an original entry of judgment has been entered during the current reporting year. For cases involving multiple parties/issues, the disposition should not be reported until all parties/issues have been resolved.

### Case Characteristics

#### Introduction

The data on case characteristics captures information related to key policy interests on disposed cases. This data provides additional details about cases that have already been counted in the court's disposed caseload. Data are collected on the number of cases with self-represented litigants and cases with interpreters.

#### Unit of Count

A count of the number of disposed cases that included self-represented litigants and interpreters at any time during the life of the case. The unit of count is the case, not the litigant(s).

- A case should be counted at the point of disposition
- A case with self-represented litigant(s) should be counted as a single case, whether that case has one or more self-represented litigants.
- A case with interpreter(s) should be counted as a single case, whether that case has one or more interpreters.

### **Cases with Self-Represented Litigants**

A self-represented litigant is a person who advocates on his or her own behalf before a court rather than being represented by an attorney. These litigants are also known as “pro se” or “pro per” litigants if, during the life of the case, one or more parties was self-represented.

For plaintiffs/petitioners, the life of the case is from filing to disposition. For defendants/respondents, the life of the case is from arraignment/answer to disposition. While arraignment procedures may vary, the assumption is that the arraignment is the first opportunity that defendants have to provide the court with their representation status (i.e., to tell the court that an attorney has been retained, to request that the court appoint an attorney, or to inform the court of the defendant’s wish to be self-represented). Therefore, in criminal cases the arraignment (or an equivalent hearing) is considered to be the start of the case for the defendant.

Cases in which the defendant appears at arraignment without defense counsel but requests a court-appointed attorney during the arraignment proceedings should only be included in the self-represented tally if the self-representation continues after arraignment.

Self-represented litigants can take advantage of limited scope legal assistance (also known as limited assistance representation or unbundled legal services) to assist with the preparation of specific documents or to argue certain legal issues in a hearing before a judicial officer. While these self-represented litigants have representation for a specific and limited purpose, they remain fundamentally self-represented. Thus, cases in which self-represented litigants have obtained limited scope legal assistance are still counted as cases with self-represented litigants.

If a case is disposed by default, do not assume that the non-responding defendant or respondent was self-represented. If the plaintiff/petitioner was self-represented, the case can be correctly counted as one with a self-represented litigant. However, if the plaintiff/petitioner was represented and the defendant/respondent was at default due to a failure to respond at any point during the life of the case, the case is not to be counted as one with self-represented litigants.

### **Cases with Interpreters**

A case with an interpreter is a case in which an interpreter is appointed by the court to provide interpretation services in any or all three modes of interpretation (consecutive interpretation, simultaneous interpretation, and sight translation) for a Limited English Proficient (LEP) party from that person’s native language to English and vice versa. Sign Language interpretation is included. Interpreter services can be provided in person, via telephone, or through other audio/visual technologies. The distinction here is between interpretation as ordered by the court and interpretation that may be provided on an ad hoc basis by a family

member or friend. Interpretation ordered by the court may be provided by anyone the court deems qualified (e.g. certified interpreter, registered interpreter); the underlying assumption is that the court has formally taken note of the need for interpreter services and provided them. Any interpreter *ordered by the court*, regardless if for a party, witness, etc., would be counted for a case with an interpreter.

## **Manner of Disposition**

### **Introduction**

Manner of Disposition classifies disposed cases as trial and non-trial. Understanding trial rates and how they vary by case type is of policy interest to court management and the legal profession.

### **Unit of Count**

For each case type, count the number of disposed cases that were disposed by the disposition type. For cases involving multiple parties/issues, the manner of disposition should not be reported until all parties/issues have been resolved. When there is more than one type of dispositive action in a case, count as the disposition the action requiring the most judicial involvement. Prioritize actions as follows: jury trials, bench/non-jury trials, non-trial dispositions.

### **Notes Specific to Manner of Disposition**

Cases that are deferred to diversion or accountability court dockets (e.g. Drug Court) are not counted as dispositions until they return for final adjudication (e.g. imposition of sentence or dismissal).

## **Definitions for Manner of Disposition**

**Jury Trial:** Cases in which a jury is impaneled to determine the issues of fact in the case. A jury trial should be counted when the jury has been sworn, regardless of whether a verdict is reached.

**Bench/Non-Jury Trial:** Cases in which a judge or judicial officer is assigned to determine both the issues of fact and law in the case. A bench/non-jury trial should be counted when the first evidence is introduced, regardless of whether a judgment is reached.

**Non-Trial:** Cases in which the disposition does not involve either a jury trial or bench trial. This includes but is not limited to:

- Summary judgment
- Settlement
- Alternative Dispute Resolution: If a case was disposed of via a non-trial disposition, and the method of disposition was alternative dispute resolution. Only check if the whole case was resolved via alternative dispute resolution
- Default judgment
- Dismissal
- Transfer to another court
- Bind Over: Transfers (of a case or defendant) to a trial court after a finding of probable cause at a preliminary hearing. Note: include all bindovers, even if the offense is not a felony.
- Guilty plea/stipulation
- Nolle Prosequi
- All delinquency and dependency non-trial hearings

## Section 2 - Superior Court [To the top](#)

### Introduction

Georgia's 159 superior courts are general jurisdiction trial courts exercising both civil and criminal jurisdiction. Superior court judges hear all felony cases, domestic relations cases, equity cases, and other civil matters. Superior courts have jurisdiction to hear appeals from lower courts as provided by the Georgia Constitution, including appeals of judgments from the probate and magistrate courts that are handled as de novo appeals. The superior courts are organized into 49 judicial circuits made up of one or more counties. Superior court judges are constitutional officers who are elected to four-year terms in circuit-wide nonpartisan elections.

For reporting in the Georgia framework, superior court caseload is divided into three major categories: criminal, domestic relations, and general civil. The superior court reporting framework described in the Guide is used for reporting superior court caseload data.

### Superior Court Definitions

#### Criminal

**Death Penalty:** A count of cases in which the prosecuting attorney intends to seek the death penalty and has filed with the clerk of court the necessary written notice. These cases are only to be counted for the year in which they are filed.

**Serious Felony:** Any serious violent felony as defined in O.C.G.A § 17-10-6.1.

Specifically:

- Murder or felony murder, as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-5-1;
- Armed robbery, as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-8-41;
- Kidnapping, as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-5-40;
- Rape, as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-6-1;
- Aggravated child molestation, as defined in subsection (c) of O.C.G.A § 16-6-4, unless subject to the provisions

of paragraph (2) of subsection (d) of O.C.G.A. § 16-6-4;

- Aggravated sodomy, as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16.6.2;
- Aggravated sexual battery, as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16.6.22.2; or
- Any Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization cases as defined by O.C.G.A. § 16-14-3.

**Felony:** A count of cases where the offense is punishable by incarceration for one year or more, excluding cases counted as serious felonies.

**Serious Traffic:** Cases including misdemeanor DUI, reckless driving, homicide by vehicle, aggressive driving and fleeing, or attempting to elude a police officer.

**Misdemeanor:** Any non-Serious Traffic offense punishable by incarceration for less

than one year, and/or community service, and/or maximum fine of \$1,000.

**Probation Revocations:** Number of probation revocation petitions filed by either private or public probation officers, including waivers signed by defendants and first offender adjudications.

### **Domestic Relations**

**Adoption:** Cases involving a request for the establishment of a new, permanent parent-child relationship between persons not so biologically related.

**Contempt:** Any case alleging failure to comply with a previously existing court order.

### **Dissolution/Divorce/Separate**

**Maintenance/Alimony:** Any case involving the dissolution of a marriage or the establishing of alimony or separate maintenance.

**Family Violence Petition:** Any case in which a protective order from a family member or domestic partner is requested.

**Modification:** Any case seeking to change the terms of previously existing court order.

**Paternity/Legitimation:** Any case involving the establishment of the identity and/or responsibilities of the father of a minor child or a determination of biological offspring.

**Support- IV-D:** Cases filed by the Georgia Department of Human Services to request maintenance of a minor child by a person who is required, under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act of 1973, to provide such maintenance.

**Support- Private (non-IV-D):** Cases filed too request maintenance of a parent/guardian or a minor child by a person who is required by law, but who is not under the auspices of Title IV-D of the Social Security Act of 1973, to provide such maintenance.

**Other Domestic Relations:** Domestic relations cases that do not adequately fit into any of the other case types.

### **General Civil**

**Automobile Tort:** Any tort case involving personal injury, property damage, or wrongful death resulting from alleged negligent operation of a motor vehicle.

**Civil Appeal:** Any case disrupting the finding of a limited jurisdiction trial court, department, or administrative agency.

**Contempt/Modification/Other Post-Judgment:** Any case alleging failure to comply with a previously existing court order, seeking to change the terms of a previously existing court order, or any other post-judgment activity in a general civil case.

**Contract:** Any case involving a dispute over an agreement between two or more parties.

**Garnishment:** Any case where, after a monetary judgment, a third party who has money or other property belonging to the

defendant is required to turn over such money or property to the court.

**General Tort:** Any tort case that is not defined or is not attributable to one of the other torts.

**Habeas Corpus:** Any case designed to test the legality of the detention or imprisonment of an individual, not the question of guilt or innocence.

**Injunction/Mandamus/Other Writ:** Cases involving a written court order directed to a specific party, requiring that party to perform or refrain from performing a specific act.

**Landlord/Tenant:** Any case involving landlord/tenant disputes wherein the landlord removes a tenant and his/her property from the premises or places a lien on tenant property to repay debt.

**Medical Malpractice Tort:** Any tort case that alleges misconduct or negligence by a person in the medical profession acting in a professional capacity, such as doctors, nurses, physician's assistants, dentists, etc.

**Product Liability Tort:** Cases alleging that injury is caused by the manufacturer or seller of an article due to a defect in, or the condition of, the article sold or an alleged breach of duty to provide suitable instructions to prevent injury.

**Real Property:** Any case involving disputes over the ownership, use, boundaries, or value of land.

**Restraining Petition:** Any petition for a restraining order that does not result from a domestic altercation or is not between parties considered to be in a domestic relationship.

**Other General Civil:** Any case in which a plaintiff requests the enforcement or protection of a right or the redress or prevention of a wrong but does not fit into one of the previously defined case categories.

## Section 3 - State Court [To the top](#)

### Introduction

Georgia's 71 State Courts are county-based courts that exercise limited jurisdiction. State court judges have criminal jurisdiction over misdemeanor offenses, felony preliminary hearings, traffic violations, and application and issuance of search and arrest warrants. Civil matters not reserved exclusively to the superior courts can be adjudicated in state courts. Appeals of judgments from the magistrate courts may be sent to the state court and handled as a *de novo* appeal. The General Assembly creates state courts by local legislation establishing the number of judges and their status as full-time or part-time. State court judges are elected to four-year terms in countywide, non-partisan elections.

For reporting in the Georgia framework, state court caseload is divided into two major categories: civil and criminal. The state court reporting framework described in the Guide is used for reporting state court caseload data.

### State Court Definitions

#### Civil

**Automobile Tort:** Any tort case involving personal injury, property damage, or wrongful death resulting from alleged negligent operation of a motor vehicle.

**Civil Appeal:** Any case disrupting the finding of a limited jurisdiction trial court, department, or administrative agency.

**Contempt/Modification/Other Post-Judgment:** Any case alleging failure to comply with a previously existing court order, seeking to change the terms of a previously existing court order, or any other post-judgment activity in a general civil case.

**Contract:** Any case involving a dispute over an agreement between two or more parties.

**Garnishment:** Any case where, after a monetary judgment, a third party who has money or other property belonging to the defendant is required to turn over such money or property to the court.

**General Tort:** Any tort case that is not defined or is not attributable to one of the other torts.

**Landlord/Tenant:** Any case involving landlord/tenant disputes wherein the landlord removes a tenant and his/her property from the premises or places a lien on tenant property to repay debt.

**Medical Malpractice Tort:** Any tort case that alleges misconduct or negligence by a person in the medical profession acting in a professional capacity, such as doctors, nurses, physician's assistants, dentists, etc.

**Product Liability Tort:** Cases alleging that injury is caused by the manufacturer or seller of an article due to a defect in, or the condition of, the article sold or an alleged breach of duty to provide suitable instructions to prevent injury.

**Other General Civil:** Any case in which a plaintiff requests the enforcement or protection of a right or the redress or prevention of a wrong but does not fit into one of the previously defined case categories.

## **Criminal**

**Serious Traffic:** Cases including misdemeanor DUI, reckless driving, homicide by vehicle, aggressive driving and fleeing, or attempting to elude a police officer.

**Non-Traffic Misdemeanor:** Cases involving an offense punishable by incarceration for less than a year and/or fines. Use this case type for misdemeanor cases that are not attributable to one of the other previously defined misdemeanor case types, or when all misdemeanor cases are reported as a single case type.

**Other Traffic:** Criminal cases involving a violation of statutes and local ordinances governing traffic, parking, and violations involving operation of a motor vehicle. Use this case type for cases of unknown specificity when motor vehicle cases are not attributable to one of the other previously defined motor vehicle case types.

**Probation Revocation:** Number of probation revocation petitions filed by either private or public probation officers, including waivers signed by defendants.

## Section 4 – Juvenile Court [To the top](#)

### Introduction

Jurisdiction of the juvenile courts extends to individuals under the age of 18 alleged to be dependent, alleged to be a child in need of services (CHINS), or alleged to have committed a juvenile traffic offense. Jurisdiction also extends to individuals alleged to have committed a delinquent act who is under the age of 17. Individuals up to the age of 23 may also be subject to juvenile court jurisdiction under certain circumstances. OCGA § 15-11-2(10).

In addition to matters alleging delinquency, dependency, CHINS, and the commission of a juvenile traffic offense, juvenile courts also have exclusive original jurisdiction over so-called special proceedings including proceedings for obtaining judicial consent to the marriage, employment, or enlistment in the armed services of any child if such consent is required by law; for permanent guardianship brought pursuant to provisions of the juvenile code; for the termination of parental rights when brought pursuant to provisions of the juvenile code; for emancipation; and for obtaining a waiver of the requirement of parental notice of abortion. OCGA § 15-11-10.

Juvenile courts have concurrent jurisdiction with superior courts in certain matters involving legitimation; child custody and support; temporary guardianship when properly transferred from probate court; and any criminal case properly transferred from superior court for the purpose of facilitating a parent's participation in a family treatment court division program. OCGA § 15-11-11 and § 15-11-15(d).

Certain specified violent offenses when committed by an individual under the age of 17 are within the exclusive jurisdiction of the superior court. Other specified offenses or combination of offenses otherwise under the exclusive jurisdiction of the juvenile court may be transferred under certain circumstances for prosecution in the superior court.

As required by Georgia law, detailed information regarding minor abortion petitions is also collected. The juvenile court reporting framework described in the Guide is used for reporting juvenile court caseload data.

## Juvenile Court Definitions

### Unit of Count

- For delinquency, CHINS, emancipation, traffic, and special proceeding cases count the juvenile and all allegations involved in a single incident as a single case. If the filing document contains multiple juveniles involved in a single incident, count each juvenile as a single and separate case.
- For dependency cases and termination of parental rights, count the petition as a single case. A dependency case that contains multiple parties (e.g. children/siblings) or multiple causes of action is counted as one case.

### Children in Need of Services (CHINS):

- (A) A child adjudicated to be in need of care, guidance, counseling, structure, supervision, treatment, or rehabilitation and who is adjudicated to be:
- (i) Truant;
  - (ii) Habitually disobedient, or a child who places himself or herself or others in unsafe circumstances;
  - (iii) A runaway;
  - (iv) A child who has committed a status offense;
  - (v) A child who wanders or loiters about the streets of any city or in or about any highway or any public place between the hours of 12:00 Midnight and 5:00 A.M.;
  - (vi) A child who disobeys the terms of supervision after adjudication as a child in need of services; or
  - (vii) A child who patronizes any bar where alcoholic beverages are being

sold, unaccompanied by his or her parent, guardian, or legal custodian, or who possesses alcoholic beverages; or

(B) A child who has committed a delinquent act and is adjudicated to be in need of supervision but not in need of treatment or rehabilitation.

OCGA § 15-11-2(11).

### Delinquency - Class A Designated Felony:

A delinquent act committed by a child 13 years of age or older, which if committed by an adult, would be one or more of the following crimes:

- Aggravated Battery- certain offenses
- Aggravated Assault - certain offenses
- Armed Robbery (without a firearm)
- Arson in the first degree
- Attempted Murder
- Escape – certain circumstances
- Hijacking a motor vehicle in the first degree
- Kidnapping
- Home invasion in the first degree
- Gang activity – certain circumstances such as violent felonies
- Drug trafficking - certain substances
- Specified offenses in combination with a prior record of felony offenses

OCGA § 15-11-2(12).

### Delinquency – Class B Designated Felony:

A delinquent act committed by a child 13 years of age or older, which if committed by an adult, would be one or more of the following crimes:

- Aggravated Assault – certain offenses
- Arson in the second degree
- Attempted Kidnapping
- Battery of a teacher or other school

- personnel
- Racketeering
- Robbery
- Home invasion in the second degree
- Gang activity – certain offenses such as graffiti or tagging
- Smash & Grab Burglary
- Certain offenses involving destructive devices or hoax destructive devices
- Obstruction of a law enforcement officer.
- Possession of a handgun by an individual under the age of 18
- Possession of a weapon on school property or at school sponsored event

OCGA § 15-11-2(13).

**Delinquency Not Designated:** A count of cases not designated as either Class A or Class B felonies.

**Dependency:** Dependency cases are a subcategory of juvenile cases in which it is alleged that a child has been abused or neglected or is otherwise without proper parental care and/or supervision.

**Emancipation:** The release of a minor from his or her parents, which entails a complete relinquishment of the right to the care, control, custody, services, and earnings of such child and a repudiation of parental obligations.

**Special Proceedings:** A child who is the subject of a filing or disposition that does not fall within any of the above case types, e.g. request for permission to marry or join the armed services, notification of abortion, proceedings relating to mental illness, legitimation, guardianship, transfer from probate court, transfers from superior court, and superior court referrals for custody investigations.

**Traffic:** An individual under 17 years of age who violates any motor vehicle law or local ordinance governing the operation of motor vehicles on the streets or highways or upon the waterways of the state of Georgia, excluding specified offenses deemed to be delinquent offenses as described by O.C.G.A. §15-11-630.

**Termination of Parental Rights:** An action on behalf of a child to end the rights and obligations of a parent on the grounds listed in O.C.G.A. §15-11-310.

**Parental Notification of Abortion Total Petitions Filed:** A count of petitions filed requesting the waiver of the requirement for parental notification of abortion.

**Appointed Guardian Ad Litem:** A count of cases involving a petition for waiver of parental notification of abortion in which the juvenile court appointed a guardian ad litem for the minor.

**Court Appointed Counsel:** A count of cases involving a petition for the waiver of parental notification of abortion in which the juvenile court appointed an attorney for the minor.

**Without Notification:** Cases in which the petitioner was granted a waiver of the parental notification requirement after notification was attempted but the parent or legal guardian of the minor could not be located.

**Denied:** A count of cases in which the court denied the petition to waive parental notification of abortion.

**Appealed:** A count of cases in which the petitioner appealed the juvenile court's denial of the petitioner's request for waiver of parental notification of abortion.

**Affirmed:** A count of cases appealed in which the juvenile court's denial of a petition for waiver of parental notification of abortion was affirmed.

**Reversed:** A count of cases appealed in which the juvenile court's denial of a petition for waiver of parental notification of abortion was reversed.

### **Juvenile Manners of Disposition**

#### **Delinquency or CHINS Dispositions**

**Adjudicated:** A count of cases in which the court finds the child committed the offense (by admission or after trial).

**Dismissed:** A count of cases in which the complaint or petition is dismissed for any reason prior to trial or the court finds at trial that the child is not delinquent or a CHINS. Examples: (1) If the court found the child delinquent but found that the child was not in need of rehabilitation and dismissed the case. (2) If the court held the disposition open for a period of time and eventually dismissed the case. (3) If the court diverted the case.

**Transferred to Another Juvenile Court:** A count of cases in which the court transfers the case to another juvenile court for trial.

**Transferred to Superior Court:** A count of cases in which the court transfers the case to superior court for trial

**Informal Adjustment:** A count of cases in which the offense is disposed of informally. If this option is selected, the "case disposition" will also be "informally adjusted."

**CHINS Protocol:** A count of cases in which the offense is handled through the CHINS protocol and no petition is filed. If this

option is selected, the "case disposition" will also be "CHINS protocol."

#### **Dependency Dispositions**

**Adjudicated:** A count of cases in which the court finds the child is dependent.

**Dismissed:** A count of cases in which the court dismisses the case for any reason prior to trial or finds that the child is not dependent at trial.

**Order entered:** A count of cases in which the court enters an order following any hearing, other than the adjudication hearing, on a dependency case.

#### **Special Proceedings, Termination of Parental Rights, and Emancipation Dispositions**

**Granted:** A count of cases in which the court grants the petition.

**Denied:** A count of cases in which the court denies the petition.

**Dismissed:** A count of cases in which the court dismisses the case for any reason prior to trial or finds that the child is not dependent at trial.

**Order entered:** A count of cases in which the court enters an order following any hearing, other than the adjudication hearing, on a dependency case.

## Section 5 – Probate Court [To the top](#)

### Introduction

Probate courts exercise exclusive, original jurisdiction in the probate of wills, administration of estates, appointment of guardians, and involuntary hospitalization of incapacitated adults and other individuals. Probate court judges are constitutional officers who are elected to four-year terms. All probate court judges administer oaths of office and issue marriage licenses. In some counties probate judges may hold habeas corpus hearings or preside over criminal preliminary hearings. Unless a jury trial is requested, a probate court judge may also hear certain misdemeanors, traffic cases, and violation of state game and fish law in counties where there is no state court. In counties with a population of 90,000 or greater, the probate judges must be an attorney meeting the qualifications of a superior court judge. In those counties, jurisdiction is expanded or enhanced to include the right to a jury trial, with appeals directly to the Court of Appeals or Supreme Courts. When authorized by local statute, probate judges serve as election supervisors and make appointments to certain local public offices.

For reporting in the Georgia framework, probate court caseload is divided into four major categories: general probate, mental health, criminal, and administrative actions. The probate court reporting framework described in the Guide is to be used for reporting probate court caseload data.

### Unit of Count

The unit of count for general probate cases is by petitions. General probate petitions are categorized by case type and filing categories.

### General Probate Case Categories

**Estates:** Cases that deal with managing the assets, liabilities, and property of decedents.

**Guardianship Minor:** Cases that involve establishing a temporary or permanent legal guardian for a child.

**Conservatorship Minor:** Cases that appoint a person to manage a minor's property.

### Guardianship/Conservatorship Adult:

Cases that involve either the establishment of a guardian for an adult ward or for a manager/conservator of an adult ward's property.

**Trusts:** Cases that create a legal entity that allows one person to hold legal title to property for the benefit of another person.

**Other Filings:** Any case that does not fall within the previous categories.

### General Probate Filing Categories

**Initial Petition:** The petition or other document that creates an entirely new case. All initial petitions must be disposed before other petitions can be filed.

**Secondary Petition:** Any subsequent petition that is filed in the same case created by an initial petition.

**Motion:** A written application for an order.

**Objection/Caveat:** Pleading to the court and petitioners opposing the performance of certain acts requested in a petition (may be in response to an initial or secondary petition).

**Discharge (Uncontested):** A petition that seeks final closure of a case and is not contested by any relevant party.

**Discharge (Contested):** Any discharge that is contested by a relevant party and requires adjudication.

**Set to Review:** A count of cases that, following an initial Entry of Judgment and at the end of the reporting period, are awaiting regularly scheduled reviews involving a hearing before a judicial officer. For Example, a Guardianship case is filed with the court (counted as a New Filing), and the court makes its initial finding to appoint the guardian, thus disposing the case through this judgment (counted as an Outgoing case in the Entry of Judgment column). At that time, the court schedules a review 6 months in the future and an additional review 12 months in the future. This case gets counted in the Set for Review column, and not as part of the court's End Pending-Active caseload. In some states reviews of Guardianship or Conservatorship cases do not require a judicial hearing and may only call for a hearing if there is a concern after staff or clerks first review case files. For guardianship and conservatorship cases ONLY, if cases are scheduled for administrative or audit reviews, count in the Set for Review section, even if they do not always result in a judicial hearing.

## Other General Probate Actions

**Inventory and Asset Management Plan:** A description of all assets and liabilities of the decedent, including a list of all personal and real property owned by the decedent at the time of death that is subject to administration of an estate's personal representative or in the event of a conservatorship of a minor or adult, a list of personal and real property owned by the ward and subject to management by a conservator, which includes a plan to manage the property and income for the following year.

**Personal Status:** A report pertaining to the status of an adult ward or a minor child.

**Annual/Final Return:** Accounting, under oath, of the receipts and expenditures on behalf of a decedent's estate or adult or minor conservatorship during the year preceding the anniversary date of appointment, together with a statement of all other assets or transfers of assets which are necessary to show the true condition of the Estate. The final return is due with a petition for discharge or petition for dismissal.

**Bond:** A count of the number of surety bonds issued.

**Guardian ad Litem (GAL):** A count of the number of times a court has to appoint someone to investigate and represent the best interest of a minor child, alleged incapacitated adult, or missing or unknown heirs at law with regard to a particular matter pending before the court.

**Indigent Affidavit:** A count of the number of times an affidavit of indigence is filled in which a court waives filing fees for citizens unable to afford the fees.

## **Mental Health**

**Involuntary Treatment:** Petitions that order a person, or drug addiction to be committed into a treatment facility. This category includes both inpatient and outpatient treatment orders.

**Order to Apprehend:** A legal order allowing law enforcement officers to apprehend a person who is suffering from mental illness or drug addiction.

**Other Mental Health:** Any mental health petitions or orders that are not included in the previous two categories.

## **Criminal**

**Unit of Count:** The unit of count for criminal cases heard by the probate court is by defendant.

**Serious Traffic:** The following cases are considered misdemeanor serious traffic offenses: DUI, reckless driving, aggressive driving, and evading a police officer.

**Non-Serious Traffic:** All traffic cases other than the ones included in the serious traffic category.

**Other Criminal Citations:** All non-traffic misdemeanor cases handled by the probate courts.

## **Manner of Disposition**

**Transfer:** A case disposed by sending it to a higher court.

**Bench Trial:** A trial held in front of a judge without a jury.

**Non-Trial:** Any form of disposition that does not involve a formal trial.

## **Administrative Actions**

**Firearms:** A count of all the weapons carry permits filled in a probate court along with a count of all the permit denials and revocations.

**Vital Records:** Certificates or reports of birth, death, and data related thereto.

- Birth Certificates- A count of all the birth certificates issued by a probate court.
- Certified Birth Copies- All certified copies of birth certificates issued.
- Death Certificate- A count of all the death certificates issued by a probate court.
- Certified Death Copies- All certified copies of death certificates issued.

**Marriage:** A count of all marriage licenses issued by a probate court.

- License Issued- A count of all original marriage licenses issued by the probate court.
- Certified Copies- All certified copies of marriage licenses issued by the probate court.

**Passports:** A count of all passport applications processed by a probate court.

**Elections:** First, indicate whether or not the court oversees elections by selected “yes” or “no”. If a court does handle elections, it will then show the number of voting precincts found within the county along with the number of election cycles handled in that calendar year. An election cycle refers to the number of election rounds not the number of candidates or offices being voted upon. For example, a county that experiences a primary, general, and runoff election in a single calendar year would be considered to have three election cycles regardless of the

number of candidates or offices involved.

**Miscellaneous Administrative:** All other administrative actions that do not fall within one of the previous categories.

## Section 6 – Magistrate Court [To the top](#)

### Introduction

Magistrate court jurisdiction includes: civil claims of \$15,000 or less, certain minor criminal offenses, distress warrants and dispossessory writs, county ordinance violations, deposit account fraud, preliminary hearings, summonses, arrest, and search warrants. A chief magistrate, who may be assisted by one or more magistrates, presides over each of Georgia’s 159 magistrate courts. Chief magistrates are elected in partisan and non-partisan, countywide elections to four- year terms. Terms for other magistrate judges run concurrently with that of the chief magistrate.

For reporting in the Georgia framework, magistrate court caseload is divided into four major categories: criminal, civil, warrants, and hearings. The Magistrate court reporting framework described in the Guide is to be used for reporting magistrate court caseload data.

### Magistrate Court Definitions

#### Criminal

**Ordinance Violations:** Cases alleging violations of local regulations passed by county, city, or other local governing bodies.

**Misdemeanors:** A count of violations of state laws that include: Possession of less than one ounce of marijuana (O.C.G.A. §16-13-2), Theft by shoplifting (O.C.G.A. §16-8-14), Furnishing alcoholic beverages to and purchase and possession of alcoholic beverages by a person under 21 years of age (O.C.G.A. §3-3-23.1), Criminal trespass (O.C.G.A. §16-7-21), Refund fraud (O.C.G.A. §16-8-14.1), Deposit account fraud/issuance of bad checks (O.C.G.A. §16-9-20).

#### Civil

**Claims:** Any cases where the amount demanded or the value of the property claimed does not exceed \$15,000.

#### Dispossessory and Distress Warrants:

Proceedings involving landlords and tenants either for removal of the tenant from the property or for seizure of the property for non-payment of rent.

**Garnishments:** A proceeding in which the property or money in possession or control of another person are applied to pay a debt or judgment to a third person. This is most commonly an action in which a creditor garnishes a person’s wages from the employer.

**Foreclosures and Attachments:** A means of enforcing payment of a debt by selling the property upon which the debt is owed. Attachment is a process in which the court is asked to have property seized in order to satisfy a debt (to satisfy the court judgment in post-judgment actions).

#### Warrants

**Felony Arrest:** A type of arrest warrant that authorizes the arrest of a person suspected of committing a felony crime.

**Misdemeanor Arrest:** A type of arrest warrant that authorizes the arrest of a person suspected of committing a misdemeanor crime.

**Good Behavior:** A type of warrant against a person whose conduct indicates that the safety of another person may be at risk.

**Search:** A type of warrant that authorizes law enforcement officers to conduct a search of a person, location, or vehicle for evidence of a crime and to confiscate evidence if it is found.

## **Hearings**

**Warrant Application:** This is a hearing to determine if there is probable cause for issuance of an arrest warrant when application has been made by a person other than a peace officer or law enforcement officer and for commission of an offense against the penal laws.

**First Appearance:** The purpose of this hearing is to inform the defendant of the charges, the defendant's rights, and to set a bond to guarantee the defendant's appearance at court for the next proceeding.

**Commitment:** This is a pre-trial or preliminary hearing to determine if there is sufficient evidence (probable cause) for the case to proceed to trial.

**Good Behavior:** The purpose of this proceeding is to determine if there is sufficient cause to require the defendant to post a good behavior bond and to set the amount of the bond.

## Section 7 – Municipal Court [To the top](#)

### Introduction

Georgia’s municipal courts hear traffic and ordinance violation cases in towns and cities. Municipal court judges hear municipal ordinance violations, issue criminal warrants, conduct preliminary hearings, and sometimes have concurrent jurisdiction over shoplifting cases and cases involving possession of one ounce or less of marijuana.

For reporting in the Georgia framework, municipal court caseload is divided into eight major criminal categories: traffic, ordinances, serious traffic, drugs/marijuana, misdemeanors, and bindovers. The municipal court reporting framework described in the Guide is used for reporting municipal court caseload data.

### Municipal Court Definitions

#### Criminal

**Serious Traffic (DUI):** Cases alleging driving a motor vehicle while intoxicated, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or driving while impaired.

**Serious Traffic (Other):** All fingerprintable criminal traffic offenses except driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs (e.g. reckless driving, and operating a commercial vehicle without a CDL).

**Misdemeanor Traffic:** Criminal traffic violations involving the operation of a motor vehicle. Use this case type for motor vehicle cases that are not attributable to one of the other previously defined case types (e.g. speeding, failure to obey stop sign, failure to use turn signal, and seat belt violations).

**Misdemeanor Drugs:** Any drug-related misdemeanor criminal charges (e.g. possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia).

**Misdemeanor (Other):** Any criminal violations punishable by a maximum fine of \$1,000 or 12 months confinement. Also includes any violations that do not fit within aforementioned categories (e.g. vandalism and shoplifting valued less than \$300).

**Parking Violation:** Cases alleging parking a motor vehicle in violation of a state statute or local ordinance.

**Ordinance:** Cases alleging violations of local regulations passed by county, city, state, or other local governing bodies (e.g. animal control violations, solid waste violations, solicitation without a permit, and zoning violations).

#### Civil

**Non-Criminal Traffic Violations:** Non-criminal cases involving operation of a motor vehicle (e.g. Red light camera violations and School bus camera violations).

## Section 8 – Civil Court and Recorder’s Court [To the top](#)

### Introduction

For reporting in the Georgia framework, civil court and recorder’s court caseloads are divided into criminal and civil categories. The civil court and recorder’s court reporting framework described in the Guide is used for reporting civil court and recorder’s court caseload data.

### Civil Court and Recorder’s Court Definitions

**Serious Traffic (DUI):** Cases alleging driving a motor vehicle while intoxicated, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or driving while impaired.

**Serious Traffic (Other):** All fingerprintable criminal traffic offenses except driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs (e.g. reckless driving, and operating a commercial vehicle without a CDL).

**Misdemeanor Traffic:** Criminal traffic violations involving the operation of a motor vehicle. Use this case type for motor vehicle cases that are not attributable to one of the other previously defined case types (e.g. speeding, failure to obey stop sign, failure to use turn signal, and seat belt violations).

**Misdemeanor Drugs:** Any drug-related misdemeanor criminal charges (e.g. possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia).

**Misdemeanor (Other):** Any criminal violations punishable by a maximum fine of \$1,000 or 12 months confinement. Also includes any violations that do not fit within aforementioned categories (e.g. vandalism and shoplifting valued less than \$300).

**Parking Violation:** Cases alleging parking a motor vehicle in violation of a state statute or local ordinance.

**Ordinance:** Cases alleging violations of local regulations passed by county, city, state, or other local governing bodies (e.g. animal control violations, solid waste violations, solicitation without a permit, and zoning violations).

#### Civil

**Claims:** Any cases where the amount demanded or the value of the property claimed does not exceed the limit set by local legislation.

**Dispossessory and Distress Warrants:** Proceedings involving landlords and tenants either for removal of the tenant from the property or for seizure of the property for non-payment of rent.

**Garnishments:** A proceeding in which the property or money in possession or control of another person are applied to pay a debt or judgment to a third person. This is most commonly an action in which a creditor garnishes a person’s wages from the employer.

**Foreclosures and Attachments:** A means of enforcing payment of a debt by selling the property upon which the debt is owed. Attachment is a process in which the court is asked to have property seized in order to satisfy a debt (to satisfy the court judgment in post-judgment actions).

**Non-Criminal Traffic Violations:** Non-criminal cases involving operation of a motor vehicle (e.g. red light and school bus camera violations).

## Section 9 – Data Submission and Verification [To the top](#)

### Data Submissions

Efforts to simplify the reporting of caseload data led to the development of the online forms available at [casecount.georgiacourts.gov/aocportal](http://casecount.georgiacourts.gov/aocportal). Clerks of all courts may access the forms by registering at the website and logging in to submit or edit their data.

Once you have registered or if you have previously registered, navigate to the Caseload Reporting Site [casecount.georgiacourts.gov/aocportal](http://casecount.georgiacourts.gov/aocportal), and login using the user name and password you created. Once inside Caseload Reporting site, you may now select the appropriate court and enter your caseload data.

If you do not know the email address you previously registered with the JC/AOC or if you experience any technical issues with the portal, please contact the Office of Research and Data Analysis at 404-656-5171 or email [casecount@georgiacourts.gov](mailto:casecount@georgiacourts.gov).

**Please note: Mailed, emailed, and faxed forms are not accepted.**

### Data Verification

The Research staff will reviews all data submitted through the caseload reporting site for completeness and compare it with data from prior years to identify potential questions and issues addressing data reliability. Clerks are notified of any questions or concerns to allow editing or additional verifications before data are certified as final. Data should be submitted during the collection period to ensure the integrity of the data published.

## Section 10 – Reporting Timeline [To the top](#)

Below are dates of various events in the caseload reporting process. Please be mindful of these dates in order to allow ample time for verification and subsequent analysis.

All dates are in 2022.

**January 3<sup>rd</sup>** – Caseload reporting initiated.

**March 1<sup>st</sup>** – 15-day reminder sent to courts that have not submitted.

**March 4<sup>th</sup>** – 10-day reminder sent to courts that have not submitted.

**March 8<sup>th</sup>** – Final reports sent to council presidents, judges, court administrators, and clerks.  
5-day reminder sent to courts that have not submitted.

**March 11<sup>th</sup>** – 2-day reminder sent to courts that have not submitted.

**March 15<sup>th</sup>** – Portal closes.

**March 17<sup>th</sup>** – Caseload data is past due. First late notice is sent to courts that have not submitted.

**March 18<sup>th</sup>** – Second late notice sent to unresponsive courts.

**April 15<sup>th</sup>** – All submitted data are final.

## Section 11 – Contact Information [To the top](#)

If you have comments, questions, or concerns, please contact at the Research Office.

Jeffrey Thorpe  
[jeffrey.thorpe@georgiacourts.gov](mailto:jeffrey.thorpe@georgiacourts.gov)  
404-656-6413

Matthew Bishop  
[matthew.bishop@georgiacourts.gov](mailto:matthew.bishop@georgiacourts.gov)  
404-656-0371

Shimike Dodson  
[shimike.dodson@georgiacourts.gov](mailto:shimike.dodson@georgiacourts.gov)  
404-656-2614

Christopher Hansard  
[christopher.hansard@georgiacourts.gov](mailto:christopher.hansard@georgiacourts.gov)  
404-463-1871

**CY 2021 Superior Court Caseload Report**

(January 1- December 31, 2021)

Instructions for completion of the form, and message from the Office of Research and Data Analysis

Edit Box, Submitted By, Time Stamp

**General Civil**

	Cases			Manner of Disposition				Case Characteristics	
	Open	Filed	Disposed	Jury Trial	Bench/ Non- Jury	Non-Trial	ADR	Self- Represented Litigants	Limited English Proficiency
Automobile Tort									
Civil Appeal									
Contempt/ Modification/ Other Post-Judgement									
Contract									
Garnishment									
General Tort									
Habeas Corpus									
Injunction/ Mandamus/Other Writ									
Landlord/Tenant									
Medical Malpractice Tort									
Product Liability Tort									
Real Property									
Restraining Petition									
Other General Civil									

**Domestic**

	Cases			Manner of Disposition				Case Characteristics	
	Open	Filed	Disposed	Jury Trial	Bench/ Non- Jury	Non-Trial	ADR	Self- Represented Litigants	Limited English Proficiency
Adoption									
Contempt									
Dissolution/Divorce/Separate Maintenance/Alimony									
Family Violence Petition									
Modification									
Paternity/ Legitimation									
Support- IV-D									
Support- Private (non-IV-D)									
Other Domestic Relations									

**Criminal**

	Cases			Manner of Disposition				Case Characteristics	
	Open	Filed	Disposed	Jury Trial	Bench/ Non- Jury	Non-Trial	ADR	Self- Represented Litigants	Limited English Proficiency
Death Penalty									
Serious Felony									
Felony									
Serious Traffic									
Misdemeanor									
Probation Revocation									

Submit      Save and Finish Later      Cancel

**Juvenile Court Caseload Report Calendar Year 2021**  
(January 1- December 31, 2021)

Juvenile Court of Apppling County

Instructions for completion of the form

**Case Types**

Edit Box, Submitted By, Time Stamp

	Status Categories			Manner of Disposition					Case Characteristics		
	Cases Open	Cases Filed	Cases Disposed	Adjudicated	Dismissed	Transferred to another Juvenile Court	Transferred to Superior Court	Informal Adjustment	Chins Protocol	Self-Represented Litigant	Limited-English Proficient Litigant
Children In Need of Services											
Class A Delinquency											
Class B Delinquency											
Delinquency Not Designated											
Traffic											

	Status Categories			Manner of Disposition			Case Characteristics	
	Cases Open	Cases Filed	Cases Disposed	Adjudicated	Dismissed	Order Entered	Self-Represented Litigant	Limited-English Proficient Litigant
Dependency								

	Status Categories			Manner of Disposition				Case Characteristics	
	Cases Open	Cases Filed	Cases Disposed	Granted	Denied	Dismissed	Order Entered	Self-Represented Litigant	Limited-English Proficient
Emancipation									
Termination of Parental Righsts									
Special Proceeding									

**Minor Abortion Petitions**

Data provided pursuant to O.C.G.A. 15-11-64(b) and O.C.G.A. 16-12-141-1(g)

Total Petitions Filed	Appointed Guardian Ad Litem	Appointed Counsel
Without Notification	Denied	Appealed
		Affirmed
		Reversed

Submit	Save and Finish Later	Cancel
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**CY 2021 Probate Court Caseload Report**  
 (January 1- December 31, 2021)  
 Probate Court of Appling County

Instructions for completion of the form, and message from the Office of Research and Data Analysis

Edit Box, Submitted By, Time Stamp

**Case Counts**

	Initial Petition			Secondary Petition			Motions			Objections/Caveats			Discharge (Uncontested)			Discharge (Contested)			Set to Review
	Open	Filed	Disposed	Open	Filed	Disposed	Open	Filed	Disposed	Open	Filed	Disposed	Open	Filed	Disposed	Open	Filed	Disposed	
General Probate																			
Estates																			
Guardianship - Minor																			
Conservatorship - Minor																			
Guard/Conserv - Adult																			
Trust																			
Other Filings																			

	Quantity Received					
	Inventory/Asset Management Plan	Personal Status	Annual/Final Returns	Bond	GAL	Indigent Affidavit
Other Civil Actions						

**Mental Health**

	Petition		
	Open	Filed	Disposed
Involuntary Treatment			
Order to Apprehend			
Other Mental Health			

**Criminal**

	Case			Manner of Disposition		
	Open	Filed	Disposed	Transfer	Bench Trial	Non-Trial
Serious Traffic						
Non-Serious Traffic						
Other Criminal Citations						

**Case Characteristics**

Case Characteristics	Self-Represented Litigants	Interpreters

**Administrative Actions**

Firearms	Applications	Denied	Revocations

Vital Records	Birth	Certified Birth Copies	Death	Certified Death Copies

Marriage	Licenses Issued	Certified Copies

Passports	Number Issued

Elections	# of Precincts		# of Elections Cycles
	Yes	No	

Misc. Administrative	Number Issued

Submit    Save and Finish Later    Cancel

**CY 2021 Magistrate Court Caseload Report**  
 (January 1- December 31, 2021)  
**Magistrate Court of Appling County**

Instructions for completion of the form, and message from the Office of Research and Data Analysis

	Edit Box, Submitted By, Time Stamp								
	Cases			Manner of Disposition				Case Characteristics	
	Open	Filed	Disposed	Trial	Non-Trial	Transfer	ADR	Self-Represented Litigants	Limited English Proficiency
Criminal									
Ordinance Violations									
Misdemeanor									

	Edit Box, Submitted By, Time Stamp								
	Cases			Manner of Disposition				Case Characteristics	
	Open	Filed	Disposed	Trial	Non-Trial	Transfer	ADR	Self-Represented Litigants	Limited English Proficiency
Civil									
Civil Claims									
Dispossessory/Distress Warrants									
Garnishments									
Foreclosure/ Attachments									

**Warrants Issued**

Felony Arrest	Misdemeanor Arrest	Good Behavior	Search

**Hearings**

	Warrants Applications	First Appearance	Commitment	Good Behavior
Misdemeanor				
Probation Revocation				

Submit	Save and Finish Later	Cancel
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# TAB 5



# Judicial Council of Georgia

## Administrative Office of the Courts

**Chief Justice Harold D. Melton**  
*Chair*

**Cynthia H. Clanton**  
*Director*

### Memorandum

TO: Judicial Council

FROM: Judge J. Wade Padgett  
Vice Chair, Ad Hoc Committee on Cybersecurity Insurance for the Judiciary

RE: Ad Hoc Committee on Cybersecurity Insurance for the Judiciary

DATE: April 3, 2020

---

On March 25, 2020, the Ad Hoc Committee on Cybersecurity Insurance for the Judiciary held its last meeting.

As a result of its discussions and research, the Committee considered the following four risk-mitigation options:

- Option A: Single Policy for All State Judicial Entities with Tiered Coverage.
- Option B: Single Policy for All State Judicial Entities without Tiered Coverage.
- Option C: Each State Judicial Entity Purchases an Independent Policy.
- Option D: Self-insure without Purchasing Cybersecurity Insurance.

After consideration of Options A-D above, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Judicial Council pursue a single policy for all state judicial entities with tiered coverage.

Under a tiered coverage system, similarly-situated state judicial entities would be grouped in a logical manner, such as entity size, network structure and interconnectivity, or risk profile. For example, a tiered program could provide the following categories of coverage: (1) coverage for entities that are connected to the JC/AOC network; (2) coverage for entities that maintain standalone networks or are otherwise not directly connected to the JC/AOC network; and (3) coverage for entities that maintain data only on third-party vendor networks.

The Committee believes that a single policy for all state judicial entities with some form of tiered coverage presents a reasonable amount of coverage for the judicial branch while, at the same time, presenting a good use of taxpayer funds.

**Attachment:** Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Cybersecurity Insurance for the Judiciary



## Judicial Council of Georgia Administrative Office of the Courts

**Chief Justice Harold D. Melton**  
*Chair*

**Cynthia H. Clanton**  
*Director*

### Memorandum

TO: Chief Justice Harold D. Melton, Chair  
Judicial Council of Georgia

FROM: Judge J. Wade Padgett, Vice-Chair  
Judicial Council of Georgia/Ad Hoc Committee on Cybersecurity Insurance for the  
Judiciary

RE: Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Cybersecurity Insurance for the Judiciary

DATE: April 3, 2020

---

This memorandum details the activities and recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on Cybersecurity Insurance for the Judiciary (Committee), which was created “for the purposes of researching and providing recommendations concerning cybersecurity insurance and related cybersecurity safeguards to protect state judicial entities against cyberattacks or disruption of services.” The Committee met on four occasions and took the actions articulated below.

At its first meeting on October 2, 2019, the Committee took the following actions:

- Reviewed the Committee’s mandate and duties.
- Received a high-level overview of cybersecurity insurance and cyber threats.
- Reviewed the process of obtaining cybersecurity insurance and the current cybersecurity insurance coverage of the Executive Branch.
- Noted that the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia provides cybersecurity insurance coverage to counties with implied coverage of courts as constituent parts of county government.
- Discussed a single judicial branch policy versus a tiered policy like the cybersecurity insurance policy obtained by the University System of Georgia (USG).
- Directed the Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts (JC/AOC) to identify state judicial entities that would be covered by a cybersecurity insurance policy.
- Received a recommendation from Committee member Ms. Phyllis Sumner of King & Spalding LLP that cybersecurity incident response plans (IRPs) should be created and utilized.
- Received a recommendation from Col. David Allen of the Georgia Technology Authority (GTA) that the Committee should gain an understanding of the information technology and governance of all state judicial entities.
- Received further advice from Ms. Sumner that the creation and contents of IRPs would impact premiums for cybersecurity insurance.
- Created a Subcommittee chaired by Ms. Sumner to collect and analyze current IRPs from state judicial entities.

On December 3, 2019, the Committee met for the second time and took the following actions:

- Reviewed a state judicial entity organizational chart created by the JC/AOC to identify the entities that would be covered by a cybersecurity insurance policy.
- Identified the need to map the information technology services and infrastructure of all state judicial entities named on the organizational chart created by the JC/AOC.
- Directed JC/AOC staff to map the information technology services and infrastructure of all state judicial entities named on the organizational chart created by the JC/AOC.
- Agreed that a single enterprise-wide IRP should be created for all state judicial entities, while more detailed entity-specific IRPs should be tailored to the needs of each individual judicial entity.
- Received a recommendation from Ms. Sumner that a gap assessment of state judicial entities would be prudent prior to soliciting cybersecurity insurance policy coverage.
- Directed the JC/AOC to identify which judicial entities already have an IRP or cybersecurity insurance, as well as whether such entities are drafting an IRP or seeking cybersecurity insurance coverage.
- Received recommendations from the Subcommittee regarding what elements should be included in an enterprise-wide IRP as well as individual entity IRPs.
- Received a report from Judge Coomer that the Legislative Branch does not have cybersecurity insurance coverage and would rely on the Executive Branch's GTA for assistance to address a cybersecurity incident.

At its third meeting on January 28, 2020, the Committee took the following actions:

- Received a report from Mr. Darron Enns (JC/AOC) regarding a cybersecurity insurance and infrastructure questionnaire that was distributed by the JC/AOC to all 32 state judicial entities and one executive branch agency staffed by the judiciary with a 100 percent response rate.
- Acknowledged that the creation of a document detailing the network connectivity and cybersecurity preparedness of state judicial entities was a high-risk but necessary activity to prepare judicial branch entities for the possible purchase of cybersecurity insurance.
- Discussed and agreed to limit access to highly sensitive judicial branch information technology services and infrastructure details gleaned from the responses to the cybersecurity insurance and infrastructure questionnaire referenced above.
- Agreed to provide Ms. Sumner's team and certain JC/AOC staff who have a need to know with access to the highly sensitive judicial branch network connectivity and cybersecurity preparedness information related to the questionnaire referenced above.

Subsequent to the Committee's meeting on January 28, 2020, JC/AOC staff and the Subcommittee successfully analyzed and diagramed the information technology services and infrastructure of all 32 state judicial entities and one executive branch agency staffed by the judiciary. The results of this survey were reduced to a for official use only summary and several confidential appendices, access to which was provided only to persons with a demonstrated need to know as determined by the Chair of the Committee due to the extreme sensitivity of the information gathered. The responses to the questionnaire provided the Subcommittee critical information it needed to assist the Committee articulate the options detailed below. The gathering of such information also served the purpose of having a detailed analysis of the information technology services and infrastructure of state judicial entities ready for review by potential cybersecurity insurance carriers.

On March 25, 2020, the Committee met for the fourth and final time and took the following actions:

- Received a briefing by Mr. Enns and Ms. Sumner regarding the memorandum referenced above which provides a high-level summary of the information technology services and infrastructure of state judicial entities and one executive branch agency staffed by the judiciary.
- Discussed and approved draft recommendations for inclusion in its final Report.
- Directed the JC/AOC staff to circulate for comment to the Committee members a draft Report based on the actions of the Committee.
- Agreed to finalize the Committee’s Report and make a recommendation.

On April 3, 2020, the Committee approved the final draft of this Report via e-mail, thereby fulfilling its mandate of “researching and providing recommendations concerning cybersecurity insurance and related cybersecurity safeguards to protect state judicial entities against cyberattacks or disruption of services.” The Committee’s research and recommendations are as follows:

### **Overview of Cybersecurity Insurance**

Over the past decade, cybersecurity insurance has become an increasingly common line of insurance for companies and organizations seeking to protect against risks and costs arising from data breaches and other cybersecurity incidents. Typically, cybersecurity policies provide two primary types of coverage: (1) “first-party” coverage for costs incurred in the investigation and response to an incident (e.g., costs of hiring a third-party forensic investigation firm, legal counsel, and public relations firm, as well as costs for the replacement or restoration of electronic data); and (2) “third-party” coverage for claims asserted against the organization as a result of an incident (e.g., costs for defending and settling a lawsuit brought by an individual or entity impacted by the incident). Many cybersecurity policies also offer some level of ransomware and extortion coverage to protect against an incident where a hacker renders an organization’s systems or data unusable and demands payment in return for unlocking the systems or data.

Within this general framework, numerous insurers offer varying levels of coverage that can be tailored to address a policyholder’s specific risk profile, taking into consideration factors such as organizational structure, the types of sensitive data that are maintained or handled, and the likelihood of being targeted by hackers.

### **Options for Consideration**

As a result of its discussions and research, the Committee considered the following four risk-mitigation options:

#### **Option A: Single Policy for All State Judicial Entities with Tiered Coverage**

The first option identified by the Committee is the purchase of a single cybersecurity insurance policy for all 32 state judicial entities with “tiered” coverage. This option would put in place a single policy to cover all entities, but several tiers of coverage would be developed to put the various entities in “buckets” based on their structure and risk profile. The Committee noted in its deliberations that the University System of Georgia (USG) recently purchased cybersecurity insurance coverage for 28 colleges and administrative offices varying in student enrollment from more than 25,000 students to 5,000 or fewer students. To tailor cybersecurity insurance coverage to the size of each of its organizations, the USG purchased a cybersecurity insurance policy with

four tiers based on student head count. The Committee noted in its research that the size of state judicial entities also varies greatly and could be similarly served by a tiered cybersecurity insurance policy.

In the state judicial branch context, a tiered program could provide the following categories of coverage: (1) coverage for entities that are connected to the JC/AOC network; (2) coverage for entities that maintain standalone networks or are otherwise not directly connected to the JC/AOC network; and (3) coverage for entities that maintain data only on third-party vendor networks. Another option would be to provide tiered coverage based on the size of each judicial entity (e.g., by employee headcount), similar to the USG’s approach discussed above.

The advantage of a tiered program would primarily be the ability to group similarly-situated entities in a logical manner — such as based on size or network structure and interconnectivity — with the goal of grouping entities by risk profile for purposes of underwriting. A tiered approach would allow for different levels of coverage for each tier — e.g., the “tier one” entities could be offered more robust coverage with higher limits given the increased risks inherent in having a large number of entities on the same network. Premiums for the various entities could also be based on tier level. The research performed by the Committee, including the cybersecurity insurance and preparedness survey, will serve as an invaluable resource to determine the most appropriate tiered approach. Additional front-end work will be needed, however, to categorize and assign each entity to a coverage tier. When assigning entities to a certain tier, it is also important to recognize that a tiered structure based strictly on entity size may not necessarily reflect its risk profile — for example, an entity with more employees may not necessarily be at greater risk for experiencing a cybersecurity incident or be more likely to incur substantial costs should such an incident occur.

### **Option B: Single Policy for All State Judicial Entities without Tiered Coverage**

The second option identified by the Committee is the purchase of a single cybersecurity insurance policy without tiered coverage. Under this approach, all 32 entities would be provided the same coverage regardless of their network infrastructure. This option would be more straightforward as each entity would have the same level of coverage, and thus would not require the “bucketing” of the entities into separate tiers. Relatedly, since an entity’s network infrastructure or level of connectivity with the JC/AOC could evolve, a non-tiered approach would not require shuffling of entities between tiers in the future. A primary downside of a non-tiered approach would be that by limiting the coverage options, certain entities may be forced to select — and pay for — unnecessary or unwanted coverage components.

### **Option C: Each State Judicial Entity Purchases an Independent Policy**

The next option identified by the Committee is the independent purchase of cybersecurity insurance by each individual state judicial entity. Under this approach, each entity would be responsible for selecting and purchasing its own cybersecurity policy. Advantages to this approach would include that each entity could select coverage tailored to its network infrastructure and risk profile, and, relatedly, that no entity would be required to purchase unnecessary or unwanted coverage components (e.g., an entity could determine that it wants limited “first-party” coverage for response costs, but not “third-party” coverage because it views the risk of having a claim asserted against it sufficiently low). On the other hand, leaving each entity to procure its own coverage could undermine the overall goal of risk mitigation for state judicial entities as a whole,

as some entities may not have the time, resources, or expertise to procure best-in-class coverage. Additionally, this approach would likely be costlier across the board because it would not leverage risk pooling to lower the premiums owed by each individual entity. In the event this option is selected, we would recommend providing resources and assistance to help guide individual entities through the underwriting process.

#### **Option D: Self-insure without Purchasing Cybersecurity Insurance**

The final option to consider would be self-insuring — i.e., foregoing cybersecurity insurance for any of the 32 entities. Obviously, under this approach each entity would fully bear the risk of a future cybersecurity incident and any costs that arise out of it, which could be significant. For example, the JC/AOC estimates the cost of recovery from its 2019 ransomware event at approximately \$125,200 to directly respond to the cyberattack and \$202,783 to make comprehensive systematic changes to protect against future attacks. These amounts exclude the intangible cost of the encryption of all JC/AOC-maintained data, rendering it unusable until a decryption key is recovered by law enforcement. The prospect of incurring significant costs as a result of a cybersecurity incident is what has led so many companies and organizations to turn to cybersecurity insurance to mitigate such risks. We would, therefore, recommend against self-insuring unless there are serious impediments to obtaining cybersecurity insurance under Options A-C above.

#### **Involvement of Cyber Insurance Broker**

While the summary above provides a high-level overview of the different program structures and pros and cons of each, the Committee recommends engaging an experienced cybersecurity insurance broker to guide state judicial entities through the process of further investigating coverage options, navigating the underwriting process, and, ultimately, securing cybersecurity insurance. In addition to providing additional insight on each option above, a broker would also be able to price out the different options and recommend ways to obtain sufficient coverage at the best rate and without paying for unnecessary coverage components.

#### **Other Considerations**

If a decision is made to pursue cybersecurity coverage under Options A-C above, it will be helpful to have in place some overarching policies and procedures relating to cybersecurity incident response that provide guidance to the 32 individual state judicial entities. This could include, for example, a general cybersecurity incident response plan (IRP) framework that — without supplanting any existing IRPs at the entity level — would provide some uniform standards for the entities to follow in the event of a cybersecurity incident (e.g., an escalation protocol and details of who to notify if a cybersecurity incident is suspected). Additionally, the Committee recommends that this overarching plan identify agreed-upon vendors — such as a forensic investigator, public relations firm, and legal counsel — to engage once an incident is discovered. Selecting vendors before an incident occurs can greatly reduce the lag time between the discovery of an incident and when remedial measures are initiated. Finally, having in place some uniform policies and procedures — even if general in nature — would be beneficial in the underwriting process, as insurers will assess the degree to which common practices apply across the different entities in gauging and pricing the risk.

The Committee also recognized the need to designate or establish a permanent entity to provide continued oversight, coordination, policy guidance, and training resources to all state judicial entities regarding cybersecurity insurance and safeguards, to include the drafting, collection, and maintenance of the IRPs referenced above.

### **Recommendation**

The Committee discussed the matter and then, after consideration of the final form of this Memorandum, voted to recommend that the Judicial Council pursue Option A referenced above. While the Committee would prefer a solution that would provide coverage to every judge in every class of court across Georgia, that possibility is simply unrealistic. We believe that Option A presents a reasonable amount of coverage for the judicial branch while, at the same time, presenting a good use of taxpayer funds. Until computer invasion is eliminated entirely, the Committee believes Option A strikes the proper balance, given the various competing interests.

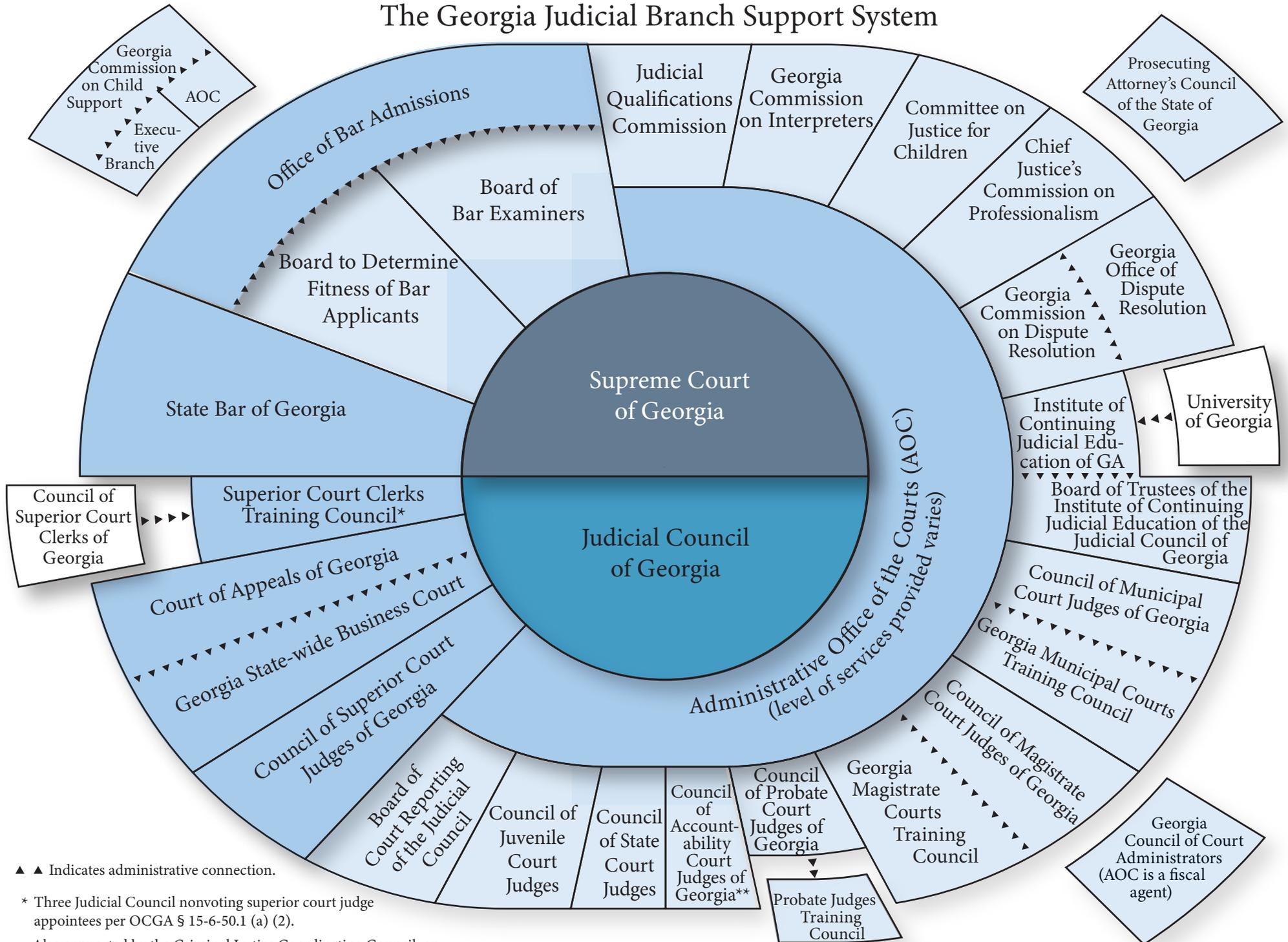
The Committee would respectfully request that the extraordinary efforts of Ms. Tynesha Manuel, Mr. Darron Enns, Ms. Phyllis Sumner, and her associates at King & Spalding LLP who have worked with the Committee on this project all be given special recognition for their incredibly diligent work in this matter. Additionally, Judge Christian Coomer should be recognized and thanked for his efforts in leading the Committee as he worked diligently to make this Memorandum a reality.

### **Conclusion**

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns. We believe that this Memorandum represents the conclusion of the work that the Committee was charged to complete. Please also let me know if the Committee can be of any further assistance to you or the Judicial Council.

cc: Judge Christian A. Coomer, Chair

# The Georgia Judicial Branch Support System



▲ ▲ Indicates administrative connection.

\* Three Judicial Council nonvoting superior court judge appointees per OCGA § 15-6-50.1 (a) (2).

\*\* Also supported by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, an Executive Branch agency.

# TAB 6



# Judicial Council of Georgia

## Administrative Office of the Courts

**Chief Justice Harold D. Melton**  
*Chair*

**Cynthia H. Clanton**  
*Director*

### Memorandum

TO: Judicial Council of Georgia

FROM: Cynthia Clanton, Director

RE: Judicial Council Meeting Update

DATE: April 24, 2020

Our world has changed forever since the last Judicial Council meeting on February 14, 2020. Since that time, Chief Justice Melton has issued a statewide judicial emergency order limiting courts to essential functions and five emergency Judicial Council calls were held to clarify how courts should move forward. I thank all of you for your leadership during this time of challenge and uncertainty.

The AOC continues to be fully functional and administrative services are being delivered to the many clients we serve each day. We are following the same time frame as the Chief's emergency order and working remotely to manage budgets, pay bills, deliver technology, provide contracts, and staff Judicial Council committee and other group meetings.

A brief synopsis of our current work follows:

- **Director's Division**
  - Our Legal Department is managing the award of additional appropriated funds to Atlanta Legal Aid and Georgia Legal Services Program for kinship care families. Notices were sent out announcing the FY 2021 Domestic Violence Grant application cycle to nonprofits throughout Georgia. Our staff attorneys answered many questions about the judicial emergency order and conducted extensive research on the remote swearing-in of witnesses by court reporters.
  - Our Budget Office continues to administer the Amended Fiscal Year 2020 and Fiscal Year 2021 Budget process and requests, as well as notifying all affected groups on the White Paper process for next year's budget cycles. A MOU between the Court of Appeals and the AOC was executed to clarify the provision of administrative services to the new Georgia State-wide Business Court.
  - Our Office of Governmental and Trial Court Liaison is monitoring the news concerning the restart of the 2020 legislative session, updates from the Governor's

Office, and assisting with uniform court rule submissions. Staff continue to support the day to day activities of the Council of Municipal Court Judges, and the Municipal Courts and Magistrate Courts Training Councils.

- In staff news, attorney Jessica Farah was promoted to AOC General Counsel, and Darron Enns achieved the designation of Policy Counsel for the AOC. Tracy Mason and Stephanie Hines completed the Carl Vinson Institute of Government Certified Public Manager Program, and successfully presented proposals with ideas to improve existing AOC services.
- **Judicial Services Division**
  - The Office of Court Professionals and Georgia Courts Registrar staff shifted to handling all licensing applications and answering phones remotely. The staff continues to support Board of Court Reporting, Court Reporting Matters Committee, and Judicial Workload Assessment Committee meetings remotely. Research staff continued to collect caseload reporting data, which officially closed April 15 with over 85% of courts reporting. For updated information see: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/publish?EQBCT=6c448643814647279b235260ac7f76b3>
- **Information Technology Division**
  - The Case Management Team continues its progress with eCourt in two production courts, Milton Municipal Court and Wilkes Magistrate Court. Staff are working with the development team and a vendor to complete standard financial reports for the courts. Work continues in the Hall County courts to migrate their legacy data and the Carroll Magistrate Court personnel are receiving training on their system.
  - Amazon Web Services management continues to secure our IT services. Staff are attending daily training sessions and doing individualized work to familiarize themselves with the new AOC environment and tools to improve maintaining our systems.
  - Staff are assisting several groups with new tools: helping implement Zoom; standing up DocuSign on a review basis; expanding use of Microsoft Teams; and, building and maintaining our COVID-19 website.
- **Financial Administration Division**
  - Invoices and Purchase Orders continue to be processed daily with additional guidance provided on our website.
  - Travel and other reimbursement requests are being processed daily with guidance provided on our website.
  - Payroll has been established for the Georgia State-wide Business Court and AOC staff are starting to procure needed items for this new Court.
- **Communications, Children, Families and the Courts Division**
  - Communications work continues in real-time news announcements and news monitoring. Staff are also collecting stories of how judges have transformed themselves in a week by using technology to keep court business moving forward.

- Staff support continues remotely to the Judicial Council Access to Justice Committee, the Child Support Commission, the Supreme Court of Georgia's Justice for Children Committee. I urge you to read the separate memo in your materials where the staff provides the details of their day to day work.

#### **Judicial Branch Events** (highlights):

- State of the Judiciary Address, 2/24/2020 -archived below
  - <https://www.gpb.org/television/shows/lawmakers/episode/ef73c8fb-bf04-4a69-b887-880a1aef3a66> where it was announced that a new committee of Georgia judicial leaders will look for ways to restructure the state's law libraries to serve a growing number of self-represented litigants which the AOC will staff.
- The AOC published profiles of Georgia's African American judges for Black History Month in February and women judges for Women's History Month in March. Summaries of these profiles are below.
  - See: <https://wakelet.com/wake/bc89d5df-9b54-44fb-8198-a1fee9560a8d> & <https://wakelet.com/wake/a3bb2bdd-42e6-467d-9cb7-10cf0862c246>
- The AOC published a Deaf and Hard of Hearing Counter Card and we are working with a group at Georgia Tech to create a braille version of this Counter Card. We hope to distribute this card to you when we meet in person.
  - See: <https://twitter.com/BoteroMpa/status/1245346156441407494>
- Three new appellate judges were sworn-in by Governor Kemp on April 10, 2020: Justice Carla McMillian to the Supreme Court; and Judge Verda Colvin and Judge Trea Pipkin to the Court of Appeals. Congratulations to new Court of Appeals Vice Chief Judge Brian Rickman!
  - See: <https://twitter.com/AppealsCourtGA/status/1244014120103563267>
- Chief Judge Brasher was profiled in the media, which we enjoyed promoting.
  - See: <https://twitter.com/GACourts/status/1237044972689461253>
- Videos featuring Judicial Council members Probate Court Judge Kelli Wolk and Lookout Mountain Circuit Superior Court Judge Ralph Van Pelt, Jr. were posted by the AOC in our twitter feed
  - See: <https://twitter.com/GACourts/status/1247964718192459776> & <https://twitter.com/GACourts/status/1245052154294996992>

The AOC exists to serve you – the members of the Judicial Council. Thank you for your courage and patience as we work through the new “normal” together. Please let me know how our office can assist you in the days ahead.



## Judicial Council of Georgia

### Administrative Office of the Courts

Chief Justice Harold D. Melton  
*Chair*

Cynthia H. Clanton  
*Director*

#### Memorandum

TO: Judicial Council of Georgia

FROM: Michelle Barclay, Division Director

RE: JC/AOC's Communications, Children, Families, and the Courts Division

DATE: April 24, 2020

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The Communications, Children, Families and the Courts Division of the JC/AOC serves as the hub for all communications and provides staff for the Supreme Court of Georgia Committee on Justice for Children, chaired by Presiding Justice David Nahmias; the Georgia Commission on Child Support, chaired by Troup County Juvenile Court Judge Michael Key; and the Access to Justice Committee of the Judicial Council, chaired by Justice Charles Bethel. This Division assists with general grant work for courts in partnership with the legal staff in the Director's Division.

Following is a brief synopsis of the current work.

- **Committee on Justice for Children (J4C):** Federal grant funding for 2020 is underway and will last until December 31, 2020. Federal funding is in place through 2021. The priorities for J4C now include:
  - **Multi-Disciplinary Child Abuse and Neglect Institute (MD-CANI):** The Institute is a Georgia-specific iteration of a national Child Abuse and Neglect Institute provided by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. MD-CANI Planning place in August 2016 and brought together stakeholders from across the state for a two-day introduction to the CANI curriculum. MDCANI Part 1 is an intensive, two-day immersion training in local jurisdictions, now expanded to include judges and all stakeholders, which covers the law and best practices in the first 75 days of a dependency case. MDCANI Part 2 is another intensive, two-day training for local jurisdictions, this time focusing on issues related to child wellbeing and permanency. As of January 31, 2020, we provided MD-CANI Part 1 & 2 training to 54 jurisdictions. MDCANI is on hold for March-May 2020. Our next MDCANI is scheduled for mid-June.

- The Court Process Reporting System (CPRS) provides a daily snapshot of data relating to every child in foster care, permitting judges, attorneys, and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) to stay up-to-date on every factor related to the child's permanency plan. The system also allows for uploading and e-filing of court orders, which are then sent to the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) every day, resulting in improvement of outcomes when the State seeks federal reimbursement for a portion of foster care expenses (by being able to easily account for all the court orders). In partnership with Georgia CASA, CPRS is also developing a CASA-specific module to allow case-tracking, report dissemination, and periodic reporting to national CASA. As of 2019, all Special Assistant Attorneys General (SAAGs) representing DFCS must upload all court orders to CPRS; CPRS in turn transmits these orders daily to the DFCS SHINES system. It is estimated by DFCS that using CPRS to upload orders will save the State some \$4 million dollars each year; this is the amount typically lost in federal IV-E reimbursements due to unavailability of court orders when the state is audited by our federal partners. CPRS is adding features to assist with virtual hearings.
- The Cold Case Project is a joint project of J4C, the Office of the Child Advocate (OCA), and the Division of Family and Children Services. The Project identifies children in foster care whose cases are not moving toward permanency via a computer model and convenes the stakeholders to review substantive due process rights of the children and to brainstorm solutions to permanency roadblocks. Cold Case Roundtable meetings are continuing by phone and video during the judicial emergency.
- The Court Improvement Initiative brings together leading juvenile court judges and their stakeholders twice a year. J4C reviews the best-practice model with each jurisdiction individually, and each jurisdiction reports on its efforts to implement best practices. Each meeting includes a session for judges to review data for each jurisdiction and J4C moderates discussions on best-practice implementation in light of needs revealed by the data.
- J4C also sponsors the Hines Awards for child welfare attorneys and DFCS case managers to highlight the importance of this work. 2019 awards were given at the State Bar meeting in Orlando, Florida to attorney Anissa Patton and DFCS case manager Jasmine Spratling. Awardees have been chosen for 2020, subject to further developments regarding the date of the State Bar Annual Meeting.
- J4C sponsored a Georgia Child Welfare Law Specialist meeting on March 4-6, 2020. Our last meeting in 2019 was attended by over 50 attorneys. We currently have some 60 GA Georgia attorneys who are Child Welfare Legal Specialist (CWLS) certified.
- J4C, DFCS and OCA sponsored the third annual statewide Child Welfare Law Summit on Nov. 13-15, 2019, with nearly 650 participants. Planning for the 4<sup>th</sup> Summit for November 2020 is underway.
- **The next J4C Committee meeting will be on May 29, 2020.**
- **Communications:** Improving communication can improve justice in all Georgia courts through collaboration and innovation, so it is a priority under the Judicial Council Strategic Plan. One communication tool is our monthly Courts Journal newsletter <https://georgiacourtsjournal.org/>. We also promote and create positive content about

Georgia's judicial branch, all courts, and judges through our social media pages daily. Our aim with all stories about the judicial branch is to instill faith in our state's system of justice and the rule of law. Our goal for this month is to capture the stories of judges who have pivoted to technology tools to keep the work moving. We are still exploring creating civics kits to help fulfill that aim in partnership with the Georgia Department of Education and the State Bar of Georgia. Our platforms are:

<http://georgiacourts.knack.com/gcd2/>; (<https://www.facebook.com/GACourts>;  
<https://twitter.com/Gacourts>; and our YouTube channel-<https://tinyurl.com/y9x6d32x>.

- **Child Support Commission:** The Commission staff works collaboratively with Georgia's Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Child Support Services (DCSS) in several areas. These areas include providing an online child support calculator for court and public use, training of the calculator for the courts, lawyers, and the public, supporting the Parental Accountability Courts (PAC), providing a website for self-represented litigants with resources on Georgia's Income Deduction Order (IDO) process, (<https://georgiacourts.gov/ido/>), and generally supporting the process and the law surrounding child support.
  - Child Support Commission Meetings: The next Child Support Commission meeting was scheduled for April 17, 2020 but has been postponed due to COVID-19. The meeting will be rescheduled as soon as possible.
  - Legislation: The Commission did not submit legislation during the 2020 session for O.C.G.A. § 19-6-15. Changes made to the statute in 2019 have been incorporated in training curriculum.
  - Study Committees: The Child Support Commission established two study committees that began work at the end of 2019 for a period of no more than two years. Commission member, Superior Court Judge Emory Palmer, is chair of the Low-Income Deviation study committee, while Commission member and family law attorney Kathleen Connell is chair of the Parenting Time Deviation Study Committee. The purpose of the study committees is to explore whether changes, including the potential for adding formulas to the calculations, should be made to the Low-Income Deviation, O.C.G.A. § 19-6-15(i)(2)(B), and the Parenting Time Deviation, O.C.G.A. § 19-6-15(i)(K). Surveys were developed and have been collected from judges, attorneys and the general public. The surveys continue to be available for public comment at <https://georgiacourts.gov/csc/>. The survey responses are being reviewed and summarized by staff for consideration by the study committees. Meetings scheduled for both study committees in March 2020 have been postponed due to COVID-19 and will be rescheduled shortly.
  - Child Support Calculator: Courts, attorneys, mediators and the public are using the online calculator deployed on August 8, 2016. Internet connectivity within the courthouses is still an issue around the state. The Excel calculators were retired on October 1, 2018. Staff continues to provide training on the online calculator throughout the state and has added virtual training to comply with social distancing. Trainings include an update on child support case law, the correct use of multiple child support worksheets, use of the low-income deviation, imputed income, and income deduction orders.
  - Parental Accountability Court evaluation: We continue to support and train PAC coordinators on use of the database to produce statistical evidence of the efficacy

of those courts. JC/AOC's Research Division performed a study in 2018 of the results of data collected over a three-year period, which was shared with DCSS and all PAC judges. A second study is underway now on six additional courts for the Alcovy, Appalachian, Coweta, Flint, Northeastern, and Southwestern Judicial Circuits. This study will be completed and published in 2020.

- **Access to Justice Committee (A2J):** The mission of the Access to Justice (A2J) Committee is to improve the public's trust in the judicial branch by focusing on access and fairness through the elimination of systemic barriers related to gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, indigence, and language. The A2J Committee, is currently working on several projects:
  - Judge Rodatus, Judge Cassandra Kirk and former intern Timur Selimovic with GSU's University's Center for Access to Justice wrote the Self-Help Resources Tool Kit for Georgia Judges. This tool-kit provides information on a variety of self-help service delivery models. It was disseminated during the Judicial Council's meeting on April 26, 2019 and given to some religious leaders in southwest GA during our first two Record Restrictions (Expungement) Clinics. A2J received a grant from the Georgia Civil Justice Foundation for additional printing, and we are in the process of updating this resource.
  - The A2J Committee is partnering with and has adopted the State Bar's Justice for All (JFA) Strategic Plan and suggested projects. Foundational work of the strategic plan was initiated at our May 2018 Summit, a follow-up to our 2016 Summit (GA Reflections on Ferguson): GA Reflections on Access and Fairness in the Courts. Part 2: Engaging the Faith Community. We were able to identify various religious organizations throughout the State of Georgia to participate in the event and study. Foundational surveys and fact-gathering interviews were conducted with the faith-based community leaders to assess what current practices, if any, are in place. Work to assist the Dougherty County Law Library in creating a prototype at the local level for assisting self-represented litigants is underway. The Committee will focus on a combination of strengthening local law libraries, online forms for self-filing, local pop-up legal clinics, and low bono models of attorney representation, with the assistance of Mike Monahan, Judge Kristina Blum, the Georgia Technology Authority and the Director from the Dougherty County Law Library. Additionally, the AOC's Research Division is creating and assisting with the metrics of the model's effectiveness. The A2J Committee received an additional grant in the amount of \$40,000 from the State Bar of Georgia in 2019 via the JC/AOC to be used for the ongoing initiatives in the JFA Strategic Plan. This continued funding is the result of a partnership between the State Bar's Justice for All Committee and the A2J Committee. Last year we held several Pop-up Free Legal Clinics, and the 3rd Clinic was planned for March 13th in Dalton, but fortunately canceled at the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak. In light of our "new normal" under COVID-19 restrictions, we are collaborating with the Georgia Justice Project to continue these important services through a Virtual Free Legal/Record Restrictions Clinic. The State Justice Institute recently awarded the A2J Committee a grant to assist in funding our Clinics throughout the state. Some of the grant will be utilized to provide

- low-bono pay to our volunteer attorneys. Our first attorneys training session will be held on April 23, 2020 and the webinar has been scheduled for April 29, 2020.
- The A2J Committee’s Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) working group collaborated with several ADA attorney specialists to create a Best Practices for DHH Courthouse Accessibility counter card. This counter card is for all court personnel, and its purpose is to instruct on the ADA required steps that must be taken if someone presents with a DHH need. The 3rd draft was submitted for final review during our December Committee meeting and changes were suggested by the Commission on Interpreters. This Counter card is ready for distribution, and we are currently collaborating with GTA and Ga Tech to have the Counter card translated into Braille format.
  - The A2J Committee’s Self Represented Litigant's (SRL) Forms working group is updating the most widely used family law forms. This working group will ensure that all of the forms are pdf-fillable and translated into “plain language”.
  - The A2J Committee internally distributed a final draft of the Georgia-specific guide for judges on the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act for review. The A2J Committee partnered with Emory University, Georgia State University and the State Bar of Georgia Military-Veterans Law Section on this project. The Guide was distributed during the previous JC meeting, and the SCRA Guide companion bench card is currently being finalized. Similar guides have been created in other states, and you can find one similar state-specific guide at this link: [https://mckinneylaw.iu.edu/practice/clinics/\\_docs/IndianaJudgesGuide.pdf](https://mckinneylaw.iu.edu/practice/clinics/_docs/IndianaJudgesGuide.pdf). Any judges interested in learning more about the project or possibly participating in the project should contact Tabitha Ponder at [tabitha.ponder@georgiacourts.gov](mailto:tabitha.ponder@georgiacourts.gov).
  - **The next A2J Committee meeting will be on May 13, 2020.**

# TAB 7



**Supreme Court  
State of Georgia**

NATHAN DEAL JUDICIAL CENTER

Atlanta 30334

**Judicial Council Meeting  
April 24, 2020**

I want to recognize my new colleague, Justice Carla Wong McMillian, who was recently appointed to the Court by Governor Brian Kemp to fill the vacancy left by Justice Robert Benham. Justice McMillian comes to us from the Court of Appeals with a wealth of judicial experience as well as extensive experience in private practice. She is also a historic appointment to our Court, as she is the first Asian Pacific American to serve on the state's highest court, or on any Supreme Court in the southern United States. It is a joy for me to welcome Justice McMillian to the Supreme Court and I look forward to the day we can re-establish our tradition of hearing cases seated at the same bench and deciding cases at the same banc table.

The Supreme Court, like other courts, is quickly adapting to new procedures during the COVID-19 crisis. This week, the Court held its first fully remote oral argument sessions. I think the sessions went well, but not without several practice sessions by the Justices and the Court's IT Team, who also set up personal tests with counsel in each case. I want to thank Bob McAteer and our outstanding IT team for guiding us through the experience. It was important for the Justices to feel comfortable both in the actual execution of the arguments and in addressing security concerns. The Court is dedicated to continuing its business as usual and, in addition to oral arguments, this week we issued more than a dozen opinions and a slew of determinations in certiorari petitions and habeas corpus matters. Although we are able to continue working remotely, we understand that not all attorneys or courts are in the same position to do so. We therefore have extended filing deadlines. Nevertheless, we are encouraging judges and attorneys to keep matters moving as much as possible so we will not have to address an insurmountable backlog when the crisis ends.

The Court has filed more than 130 orders declaring the existence of a judicial emergency submitted by various county and municipal courts. I am very proud of the manner in which the courts have responded to the crisis and I appreciate how much work has gone into maintaining essential operations, including courthouse access, while protecting court staff who rely on in-person contact to do their jobs. The Supreme Court has been working with many courts and with the State Bar and with the Office of Bar Admissions to come up with temporary rule changes to address operations during the crisis. Those orders are posted on the Supreme Court website.

I just want to acknowledge that I know for many of you, this virus has hit home in your own courthouses. We have lost colleagues to COVID-19 and we know of staff and others who have lost relatives because of it. We are all looking forward to a time when we are no longer saddled with the anxiety of not knowing what tomorrow will bring. I am convinced, however, that we will all get through this and we will be stronger people, and a stronger judiciary, than we ever have been. I also want to acknowledge the loss of former Court of Appeals Judge Gary Andrews, a beloved colleague who passed away recently for causes unrelated to COVID-19.

Finally, I am grateful to the entire judiciary, and this goes beyond just the courts, for working collaboratively in coming up with a plan in response to this crisis. I appreciate the support the Judicial Branch has received from Governor Kemp. We could not have arrived at a cohesive response without his support and assistance. I am optimistic about the future of the Judicial Branch and I look forward to when we can come together for the purpose of planning a return to full operations.

Respectfully submitted,



Harold D. Melton  
Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Georgia



# GEORGIA STATE-WIDE BUSINESS COURT

NATHAN DEAL JUDICIAL CENTER  
330 CAPITOL AVENUE, S.E.  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334

WALTER W. DAVIS  
JUDGE

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(404) 428-5908

## Georgia State-wide Business Court Judicial Council Meeting April 24, 2020

The Business Court has settled into temporary space in its new home in the Nathan Deal Judicial Center (though it is mostly unused at present), and remains on schedule to begin accepting cases on August 1, 2020.

Following our last meeting, the Business Court entered into an Memorandum of Understanding with the AOC, whereby the AOC will provide the Business Court with administrative support, including fiscal, HR and other administrative services, with the lone exception of onsite IT support (which will be provided by the Supreme Court's IT group, led by Bob McAteer). This could not have happened without the generosity, cooperation, and support of the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, and the AOC. And special thanks to Maleia Wilson and Drew Townsend of the AOC and Jan Kelley of the Court of Appeals, in particular, for going above and beyond to bring this to fruition.

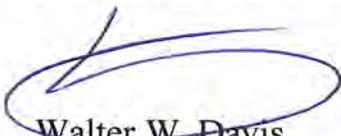
With its physical location and administrative support structure in place (and with supplemental appropriations obtained), the Business Court has turned its attention to, among other things:

- Uniform Rules: The Business Court has, since November, been supported in the rulemaking process by a Commission of eight lawyers, judges, and academics from across the state (Jessica Corley – King & Spalding; Rocco Testani – EvershedsSutherland; Bob Watts – Jones Day; Will Horkan – James Bates Brannan & Groover; Joel Wooten – Butler Wooten; Lester Johnson III; Usha Rodrigues – UGA Law; Judge Stephen Schuster – Cobb Superior Court). The Commission has also received invaluable support from Darron Enns and Christopher Hansard of the AOC. The Business Court's uniform rules will be submitted to the Supreme Court for review and consideration on Monday, April 20.

- E-Filing & Case Management: The Business Court is in the process of finalizing contracts with its e-filing and case management providers, with a goal of having both services customized and operational by June 1 to allow time for beta-testing in advance of “going live” on August 1. A special thanks to Judges Schuster (Cobb County Superior Court) and Emerson (Douglas County Superior Court) for both their time and invaluable counsel on this subject.
- Build-Out/Furnishing: For much of the last several months, the Business Court has been in the process of working with the architects, designers, and contractors on the design, furnishing, and build-out of the courtroom, chambers, and Clerk of Court’s offices. Construction has been underway for several weeks (Stage 1). A special thanks to the justices, judges and staff of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals for graciously putting up with yet another round of construction.
- Other: The Business Court is also in the process of filling out the remainder of its staff and working with the Governor’s office on the selection of a Clerk of Court for the Business Court. The latter is, by statute, subject to appointment and confirmation in the same manner as Business Court judges.

Let me end my first written submission to the Judicial Council on a personal note. As reflected in the above, the work to bring the Business Court from concept to reality has been, and will continue to be, a team effort in every sense, dependent upon the goodwill and support of a great many. I want to extend my sincere thanks to all of you for your support and for welcoming me, and a new Business Court, to the Georgia judiciary. I am honored to be a part of it.

Respectfully submitted,



Walter W. Davis  
Judge, Georgia State-wide Business Court



## **Council of Superior Court Judges of Georgia**

Suite 104, 18 Capitol Square, Atlanta, Georgia 30334

(404) 656-4964 Fax (404) 651-8626

### **Council of Superior Court Judges Report to Judicial Council April 2020**

The Council thanks the chief superior court judges for their leadership during the current pandemic and for ensuring that core judicial functions continue while at the same time protecting the public and court personnel. CSCJ President Shawn Ellen LaGrua has fielded the concerns of the superior court bench and has remained in contact with Chief Justice Harold Melton to keep him informed and get his feedback.

The new officers of the Council of Superior Court Judges will assume their positions on May 1, 2020. Judge Brian J. Amero will become President; Judge J. Wade Padgett will become President-Elect; and Judge Arthur L. Smith III will become Secretary-Treasurer. Judge LaGrua will serve in the role of Immediate Past President. She will also serve on the Executive Committee for another year and will serve as Chairman of the Nominations Committee.

CSCJ is currently working with staff of the Institute for Continuing Judicial Education to plan the summer conference and training seminar which is scheduled for the last week in July. Topics will include case management for single county and multi-county circuits; civil and criminal case assistance exchanges; an update on the Child Support Guidelines; judicial wellness; mandatory electronic filing and related issues; reflections from the bench from retired Judge Lamar Sizemore; recent appellate decisions including guilty pleas; a Judicial Qualifications Commission panel; and case law and evidence updates.

Governor Brian Kemp appointed Judge Benjamin Coker to fill the newly created judgeship in the Griffin Judicial Circuit. Governor Kemp also appointed Judge T. Buckley Levins to the bench of the Enotah Judicial Circuit to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge N. Stanley Gunter.

The Council congratulates Judge Verda Colvin of the Macon Judicial Circuit and Judge John A. "Trea" Pipkin III of the Flint Judicial Circuit on their appointments to the Court of Appeals by Governor Kemp. The Council also congratulates Chief Judge Kathy Palmer of the Middle Judicial Circuit on her retirement and thanks all three judges for their service.

The Council is sad to report the death of Senior Judge Quillian Baldwin of the Coweta Judicial Circuit.



***Council of State Court Judges***  
***Impartial Courts • Judicial Excellence • Accessible and Efficient Justice***

**Report of the Council of State Court Judges**  
**Judicial Council Meeting**  
**April 24, 2020**

*Staff*

*Bob Bray*  
*Executive Director*

*Executive Committee*

*Judge T. Russell McClelland*  
*President (Forsyth)*

*Judge Wesley B. Taylor*  
*President-Elect (Fulton)*

*Judge Alvin T. Wong*  
*Secretary (DeKalb)*

*Judge R. Violet Bennett*  
*Treasurer (Wayne)*

*Judge Nancy Bills*  
*Immediate Past President (Rockdale)*

*District 1*  
*Judge Gregory V. Sapp (Chatham)*

*District 2*  
*Judge R. Violet Bennett (Wayne)*

*District 3*  
*Judge John K. Edwards, Jr. (Lowndes)*

*District 4*  
*Judge Jeffrey B. Hanson (Bibb)*

*District 5*  
*Judge Alan W. Throver (Baldwin)*

*District 6*  
*Judge John G. Breakfield (Hall)*

*District 7*  
*Judge Ronald B. Ramsey, Sr. (DeKalb)*

*District 8*  
*Judge Allen Dee Morris (Cherokee)*

The Council of State Court Judges wishes to express its appreciation to Chief Justice Harold Melton on his leadership during this time of danger to public health from the COVID-19 pandemic. Eleven years ago, Justice Melton chaired the Judicial Council Ad Hoc Committee on Court Emergency that developed a Georgia Pandemic Bench Guide and Continuity of Operation Planning Guide which were recently updated in 2018. The judiciary is very fortunate to have the right person, at the right place at the right time during this historic state, national and global event.

The Council expresses its deepest condolences to the Probate Court Judges on the loss of Judge Nancy B. Stephenson of the Probate Court of Dougherty County. The loss is not only devastating to her colleagues and to the citizens of her community, but also to her beloved husband, State Court Judge John M. Stephenson. Our Council also holds the other judges and families affected by the novel coronavirus close to our hearts and thoughts.

The Council has been participating with all Judicial Council telephone and video emergency conferences being held weekly and as needed and following them up with weekly meetings of the Executive Committee of the Council of State Court Judges. President Russ McClelland has communicated all information related to the Declaration of Judicial Emergency to the membership on a regular basis by emails and video conferencing as circumstances change and dictate.

District 6 of the Council of State Court Judges held a dinner meeting in Athens, Georgia on January 30<sup>th</sup>. The topics discussed included legislation pending before this year's General Assembly.

District 8 of the Council of State Court Judges hosted a luncheon meeting at the State Capitol on February 27<sup>th</sup> and met with several legislators. The topics discussed also included pending legislation with several members of the Georgia General Assembly. Also attending were Ms. Cynthia Clanton, Director of the Judicial Council's Administrative Office of the Courts and many of the staff who support our Council and Executive Director.

The Council welcomes Judge Joseph L. Cushner sworn in as Judge to the State Court of Bulloch County on March 5, 2020.

The Council also congratulates former Fayette County State Court Judge Carla McMillian on her appointment by Governor Brian Kemp to the Supreme Court of Georgia.

The Council congratulates Gwinnett County State Court Judge Carla Brown on her recognition as Outstanding Alumnus 2020 by Mercer Law School.

The Council also wishes to congratulate Judge Charles Auslander on his Accountability Court being named one of four National DWI Treatment Courts by the National Center of DWI Courts and National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration in Athens on February 28<sup>th</sup>. The Athens-Clarke DWI Treatment Court is the only court in the nation to have achieved this honor three previous times. The first being under the leadership of the Judge N. Kent Lawrence who recently passed away in March.



*Judge Charles Auslander accepts the Award designating the Athens-Clarke County DWI Treatment Court as a National DWI Academy Court along with his DWI Court Treatment Team.*

Our Executive Director has been working with officials in Barrow and Paulding Counties with information to support their local legislation creating state courts for each of their counties pending in the General Assembly this session.

The Council also recently accepted the recommendation of the Board of Trustees of the Institute of Continuing Education to cancel its on-site Spring Conference in Athens this May. The Council will be hosting its Fall Educational Conference October 14 – 16, 2020 in St. Simons, Georgia. The Council is working with ICJE to simulcast the educational presentations and record them so that judges who are not able to attend the meeting in St. Simons can still participate to earn credit for their mandatory judicial education hours.

Respectfully submitted,

*T. Russell McClelland*

Judge T. Russell McClelland, President



COUNCIL OF JUVENILE COURT JUDGES  
OF GEORGIA

**REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF JUVENILE COURT JUDGES  
JUDICIAL COUNCIL MEETING**

**April 24, 2020**

The Council of Juvenile Court judges responded immediately as did the other trial court councils to address the COVID-19 pandemic. In response to the Chief Justice's call for the chief superior court judges to issue judicial emergency orders, the juvenile courts of the state met and collaborated with their chief superior court judges to specifically address juvenile court matters. Once Chief Justice Melton issued the Supreme Court emergency order, the juvenile courts adjusted their processes and procedures to comply with the recommendations and mandates of the order. Likewise, the Council has assisted the juvenile courts in their compliance with the mandates of Governor Brian Kemp.

We are very confident that the Council of Juvenile Court Judges and its membership have continued to do the work of the juvenile courts with the safety and health of the employees and parties involved. We have been assisted greatly with the many technological avenues available to the courts to ensure the juvenile courts remain open and available to the public while providing for the safety of our communities.

In addition, we have worked closely with the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Division of Family and Children's Services, other state agencies and the many lawyers, and individuals that work in the juvenile courts.

Regrettably, we made the responsible decision to cancel the spring education seminar that was scheduled to be held in St. Simons Island. Given the uncertainty of the Covid-19 pandemic, there was no effective way to ensure the safety and health of attendees and presenters with the implementation of an in-person seminar. We are currently working through our Council Education and Certification Committee to address the cancellation of our spring educational seminar. I am confident that our Committee and the ICJE staff will find a resolution that will support the educational requirements and the needs of the juvenile court judges. In addition, the Council Technology Committee and Benchbook Committee are collaborating in an effort to address the courts needs to develop an e-filing rule and recommendation for the various courts.

Honorable Juliette Scales, President, 2019-2020  
Council of Juvenile Court Judges of GA



# Council of Probate Court Judges of Georgia

Judge T. J. Hudson  
*President (Treutlen)*

Judge Kelli Wolk  
*President Elect (Cobb)*

Judge Kerri Carter  
*First Vice President (Dade)*

Judge Darin McCoy  
*Secretary-Treasurer (Evans)*

Judge Sarah Harris  
*Immediate Past President (Macon-Bibb)*

## Report to Judicial Council of Georgia April 24, 2020

The following is a summary of activities and current initiatives by the Council of Probate Court Judges:

### **Judge Nancy Stephenson**

On April 1, 2020, our Council suffered a devastating loss, as Judge Nancy Stephenson of Dougherty County succumbed to complications of COVID-19. Judge Stephenson will be remembered for her kindness, quick wit, intellect and passion for public service. Judge Stephenson was respected among her colleagues, by her staff and in her county. Judge Stephenson served as the probate judge in Dougherty County for 27 years and was an active member of our Council. We earnestly solicit continued prayers for her husband John, sons Mark and Will, her staff and the host of family and friends who will miss her dearly.

### **2020-2021 Council Officers**

Our Training Council, in consultation with our Council's leadership and staff of the ICJE, made the necessary decision to cancel our combined Spring Conference and Traffic Seminar, which were scheduled for April 20-24 at The Classic Center in Athens. In lieu of the live event, our executive committee opted to allow for electronic voting for the purpose of nominating and electing our 2020-2021 slate of Council officers. Our 2020-2021 elected officers are as follows: Judge Kelli Wolk, President (Cobb); Judge Kerri Carter, President-elect (Dade); Judge Thomas Lakes, First Vice President (Harris); and Judge Darin McCoy, Secretary-Treasurer (Evans). The oaths will be administered to our newly elected officers at a later date.

### **COVID-19 Response**

Considering the declared national and state public health emergencies, the probate courts, not unlike other judges across the state, have had to adapt to this remarkable circumstance. Our executive committee issued guidance to our judges regarding essential functions and encouraged them to craft a succession plan, if they did not already have one in place. Not surprisingly, our judges have proven themselves to be able and flexible to ensure that they carry out the necessary functions of their courts and continue the dedicated service to the citizens of their respective counties. I would like to personally thank the members of our Council's executive committee for being diligent and responsive during this unparalleled time in our nation's history.

Respectfully submitted,

Judge T. J. Hudson  
President, Council of Probate Court Judges of Georgia



# Council of Magistrate Court Judges

244 Washington St., S.W., Suite 300, Atlanta, GA 30334-5900  
(404) 656-5171 • Fax (404) 651-6449  
Georgiamagistratecouncil.com

Executive Director  
Sharon Reiss

President  
Judge Michael Barker  
Chatham County

President-Elect  
Judge TJ Hudson  
Treutlen County

Vice-President  
Judge Bobby H. Smith, III  
Long County

Secretary  
Judge Berryl A. Anderson  
DeKalb County

Treasurer  
Judge Jennifer Lewis  
Camden County

Immediate Past President  
Judge Glenda Dowling  
Pierce County

District One  
Judge Scott Lewis  
Judge Gary Browning

District Two  
Judge Beth Carter  
Judge Bryan Cavenaugh

District Three  
Judge Angela Sammons  
Judge James Thurman

District Four  
Judge Phinia Aten  
Judge Curtis Miller

District Five  
Judge John DeFoor II  
Judge Cassandra Kirk

District Six  
Judge Wanda Dallas  
Judge Rebecca Pitts

District Seven  
Judge Brandon Bryson  
Judge Jennifer Inmon

District Eight  
Judge Mike Greene  
Judge Rizza O'Connor

District Nine  
Judge Bill Brogdon  
Judge Gene Cantrell

District Ten  
Judge Caroline Power  
Judge Deborah L. Green

Members-at-Large  
Judge Melanie Bell  
Judge Shawn Rhodes

## Council of Magistrate Court Judges Report

The cancellation of our spring recertification brought three main problems to light for our Council. First, the Council normally conducts its annual meeting at that conference. Second, the Bylaws require elections to be conducted at the annual meeting "by written ballot," which can be no later than June 30. Third, there are a large number of judges who now need to find a way to satisfy their yearly ICJE requirements.

The Executive Committee voted unanimously to suspend the Bylaws during this unprecedented period in order to conduct the Annual meeting and the elections online. This is not a step anybody took lightly, but the current states of emergency required us to be creative in how we conducted our business. Both the digital meeting and the online election were successful.

The Awards Committee performed the arduous task of considering nominees for Magistrate of the Year, Workhorse of the Year, Lifetime Achievement, and Humanitarian of the Year. Those decisions have been made, but the awards will not be presented until the October recertification in Savannah.

The Magistrate Court Training Council is actively considering all possibilities to address the repercussions related to cancelling spring recertification, including expanding opportunities during the October recertification. Also, Judge Jennifer Lewis was elected Chair and Judge Bobby Smith was elected Vice-Chair. Congratulations to both of them.

We are moving our main method of intra-council communication from Yahoo to Google. That transition is almost complete.

Finally, we are preparing for the avalanche of cases and hearings that will come once the emergency order is lifted. To assist, we are preparing memos dealing with deadline calculation and how the CARES Act impacts dispossessories and real property foreclosures.



# Council of Municipal Court Judges

## Report to the Judicial Council of Georgia – April 2020

The following is an overview of recent events, programs, and activities of the Council of Municipal Court Judges (CMuCJ):

### Thank You

As this is my final Judicial Council meeting as President of CMuCJ, please indulge me in expressing my sincere gratitude to Chief Justice Melton and Presiding Justice Nahmias for allowing me to serve with them on this auspicious body in pursuit of the improvement of judicial services in Georgia. It has been the honor of my lifetime to serve with so many incredible people and for such a noble purpose. I want to especially thank our CMuCJ Executive Committee, and particularly President-Elect Weaver and Vice President Duff, without whom we could not have been nearly as effective. Most importantly, I wish to thank LaShawn Murphy, Trial Court Liaison for her dedication and hard work in bringing honor and professionalism to our class of court. I will miss serving as a member of the Judicial Council, but I am comforted to know we are leaving this body in such capable hands.

### Council Meeting Endeavors

The Council's full Executive Committee met in person on March 9, 2020, at the Administrative Office of the Courts in Atlanta, Georgia.

From the onset of the Statewide Judicial Emergency Orders implemented by Chief Justice Melton, the Council leadership and membership have been engaged. And to the extent possible, municipal courts have remained open to address essential functions for its constituents. These past weeks have been challenging and have shown the fortitude of judges and clerks across the State of Georgia. We will continue to look towards the future of courts reopening and plan accordingly.

In final, the CMuCJ is exploring the option of conducting a Judicial Town Hall meeting in conjunction with Chief Justice Melton. The event will serve to provide dialogue and answer questions judges may have related to the current events and the functioning of the Courts.

### Legislation

For the 2020 session of the General Assembly, the CMuCJ did not seek any legislative initiatives, but continued to monitor for any legislation that affected the Council.

The Council held a successful Legislative Breakfast and Day at the Capitol, Monday, March 9, 2020, in Room 132 of the Georgia State Capitol. In addition to Council members, invitations were extended to the Georgia General Assembly, Judicial Council members, the Appellate Courts and some special guests.

#### **Judge Dale "Bubba" Samuels,** **President**

**City of Franklin Springs & Monroe**

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Telephone: 678-482-0208

[bubba@bubbasamuels.com](mailto:bubba@bubbasamuels.com)

#### **Chief Judge Willie Weaver Sr.**

**President-Elect**

**City of Albany**

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#### **Chief Judge Lori Duff, Vice President**

**City of Loganville**

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#### **Judge JaDawnya Baker, Secretary**

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#### **Judge Ted Echols, Treasurer**

**City of McDonough**

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#### **Chief Judge Matthew McCord**

**Immediate Past President**

**City of Stockbridge**

[matt@matthewmccordlaw.com](mailto:matt@matthewmccordlaw.com)

#### **District One**

Judge Chris Middleton

Judge Billy Tomlinson

#### **District Two**

Judge Vernita Bender

Judge Gregory T. Williams

#### **District Three**

Judge Fred Graham

Judge Bill NeSmith

#### **District Four**

Judge Michael Nation

Judge Davis Will

#### **District Five**

Judge Tiffany Carter Sellers

Judge Parag Shah

#### **District Six**

Judge J. Kristi Lovelace

Judge Clayton Davis

#### **District Seven**

Judge Robert Cowan

Judge Nathan Wade

#### **District Eight**

Judge Joseph Sumner

Judge Dexter Wimbish

#### **District Nine**

Judge Pamela Boles

Judge Claude Mason

#### **District Ten**

Judge Graham McKinnon

Judge Ryan S. Hope

# Council of Municipal Court Judges

Additionally, the CMuCJ is still actively participating through its representative on the Certiorari Review Subcommittee, whose purpose is to re-examine existing law with an effort to streamline and economize the Courts appellate practice in Georgia. The Council looks forward to the great work to come from this working group to standardize the process for municipal courts.

## **Continuing Judicial Education**

Considering the recent Orders invoked by Governor Kemp and Chief Justice Melton, due to the continuing statewide emergency involving the transmission of Coronavirus/COVID-19, the Municipal Judges Training Council cancelled its Summer Law and Practice Update. In doing so, members agreed to continue to monitor current events, while planning to move forward with the Fall Law and Practice Update in person. Sessions will be simulcasted to judges that register to participate remotely. The Training Council's main priority is to assure that they are proceeding to the extent achievable and consistent with public health guidance for municipal court judges and clerks.

## **Next Meeting**

The Council of Municipal Court Judges Executive Committee is tentatively scheduled to meet June 16, 2020, via Zoom and teleconference.

Respectfully submitted,

*Judge Dale "Bubba" Samuels*

President, Council of Municipal Court Judges



April 24, 2020

Dear Judicial Council Members and Interested Stakeholders,

The following is a summary of activities and current initiatives by the State Bar of Georgia:

### **COVID-19 Operations**

The State Bar, like our friends in the judiciary, has quickly had to adapt to the changes presented by the current COVID-19 crisis. The Bar has taken several steps in recent weeks to allow Georgia lawyers to meet requirements and face obstacles during these unprecedented times.

#### **a. Extended CLE Deadline**

On March 12, the Georgia Supreme Court extended the deadline for attorneys to complete their 2019 CLE credits to April 30, 2020. The deadline for attorneys to complete their 2019 credits was previously set for March 31. Additionally, the Court will allow attorneys to complete all 12 CLE hours virtually, rather than requiring 6 in-person credits for the 2019 calendar year.

#### **b. No Increase in 2020-2021 State Bar Licensing Fee**

On April 3, the State Bar's Board of Governors held its spring meeting via Zoom. The Board voted to keep the State Bar's annual licensing fee at \$254.00, rather than increasing dues as initially planned. The Bar was able to subsidize its revenue shortfall with a generous grant from the Commission on Continuing Lawyer Competency (CCLC) so that Georgia lawyers will not face a dues increase amid the current economic uncertainty arising from the COVID-19 crisis.

#### **c. Remote Notarization for Attorneys**

The State Bar has worked closely with the Governor's Office to draft two executive orders related to remote online notarization and remote closings. The Governor's March 31st executive order permitted remote notarization and remote witnessing for real estate documents. Since then, title insurance companies that underwrite policies in Georgia have come up with specific criteria for attorneys to follow in order to perform a real estate closing in Georgia. Many attorneys have successfully been able to close real property transactions using these means and continue business during these turbulent times.

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#### **HEADQUARTERS**

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Tifton, GA 31793-1390  
229-387-0446 · 800-330-0446  
Fax 229-382-7435

On April 9th, the Governor signed Executive Order 03.09.20.01 permitting remote notarization by an attorney/notary or a notary that is supervised by an attorney. The executive order also permitted remote witnessing of documents by real-time audio-visual technology. This executive order has allowed attorneys throughout the state to execute wills, powers of attorney, advanced healthcare directives and other critical legal documents while avoiding in-person contact.

Legal services were designated as “critical infrastructure” in Governor Kemp’s April 2nd shelter-in-place order and attorneys have continued to provide services to their clients in various innovative ways. We continue to be inspired by the ability for our profession to adapt and continue to serve clients during this critical time.

#### **d. Provisional Practice for Recent Law School Graduates**

On April 17, the Georgia Supreme Court issued an order rescheduling the July 28-29 bar exam for September 9-10. The Court also has adopted a temporary rule allowing recent graduates to become provisionally admitted to practice law before taking the bar exam. Before beginning the practice of law, any provisionally admitted graduate must register with the State Bar of Georgia and identify a Georgia lawyer who will supervise the graduate. The Bar’s Executive Committee has voted to create a provisional licensing category and will move forward to create the necessary infrastructure to register these provisional attorneys to practice temporarily before they sit for the September bar exam.

#### **State Bar COVID-19 Resources**

The Bar continues to update its COVID-19 Resource Page has a wealth of information, including a “Suggested Practices” guide for attorneys notarizing documents under the Governor’s April 9th executive order, as well as county-by-county court orders from around the state. We encourage each class of court to send us any information they wish to share with Georgia attorneys so that we can post it on the Bar’s resource page and distribute it among the membership as necessary.

In order to identify issues in profession resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, I’ve created a COVID-19 committee chaired by Savannah attorney Paul Painter. The committee will look at issues impacting the legal system and the delivery of legal services. The committee will meet remotely to identify and coordinate solutions to those issues, as well as identify resources necessary to carry out necessary solutions.

#### **Annual Meeting and Future Operations**

After extensive consideration, the State Bar has determined that we must cancel the annual meeting, which was to be held from June 11 - June 14 in Sandestin, Florida. Plans are in the works to hold the annual meeting via Zoom so that the Board of Governors can continue to conduct business.

Attorney Dawn Jones of Atlanta will be sworn in as the 58th President of the State Bar of Georgia in a private ceremony sometime in June.

At this time, the State Bar's office in Atlanta, Tifton, and Savannah will remain closed through May 13. We plan to work alongside the Georgia Supreme Court as we contemplate reopening and will closely follow CDC and Ga. Department of Public Health guidelines as we plan to bring the Bar staff back to the Bar Center to continue operations.

As always, we appreciate the support of our friends in the judiciary and value the work that you do, side-by-side with Georgia lawyers, to protect and promote the rule of law in our great state. Please let me know if the State Bar can be of assistance to you or your courts as we all continue to cope with the changes brought about by this unprecedented public health crisis.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Darrell Sutton", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Darrell Sutton  
President, State Bar of Georgia

# TAB 8



# Council of Accountability Court Judges

**Chief Kathlene F. Gosselin**  
*Executive Committee Chair*  
*Northeastern Judicial Circuit*

**Taylor Jones**  
*Executive Director*

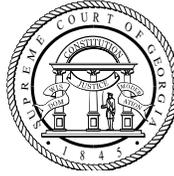
## **Council of Accountability Court Judges** **Report to Judicial Council** **April 2020**

In the time since the Council of Accountability Court Judges (CACJ) last reported to the Judicial Council, CACJ's Executive and Standing Committees have been busy supporting the accountability courts. In addition to regular, ongoing duties, staff and leadership have been providing remote support and technical assistance to the courts during the pandemic. CACJ staff have been sending weekly COVID-19 newsletters to the courts to share unique ideas so that programs can continue providing essential services to participants while adhering to social distancing requirements. Future trainings have been postponed to reduce non-essential travel and staff continue to explore remote teaching options. A snapshot of CACJ's activity is detailed below.

- During the month of March 2020, CACJ hosted the following trainings:
  - An Adult Felony Drug Court Operational Tune-up training was provided by the National Drug Court Institute (NDCI). The following teams were in attendance: Cherokee Circuit Drug Court, Clayton County Adult Drug Court, Conasauga Circuit Drug Court, Northern Judicial Circuit Felony Drug Court, Pataula Adult Felony Drug Court, Paulding Circuit Drug Court, Toombs Judicial Circuit Adult Felony Drug Court, and Troup County Felony Adult Drug Court.
  - An Operational Tune-Up training was also provided by NDCI for the family treatment courts. The following teams were in attendance: Coweta Family Treatment Court, Douglas County Family Treatment Court, Enotah Family Treatment Court, and Hall County Family Treatment Court.
  - An Operational Tune-up training was provided by Justice for Vets for the veterans' treatment courts. The following teams were in attendance: Atlantic Judicial Circuit Veterans Treatment Court, Augusta Judicial Circuit Veterans Treatment Court, and Cherokee County Veterans Treatment Court.
  - CACJ also provided an Operational Refresher for adult mental health courts. The following teams attended: Cherokee County Treatment Accountability Court, DeKalb County Felony Mental Health Court, Henry County Resource Court, Macon-Bibb County Mental Health Court, Newton County Mental Health Court, Rockdale County Resource Court, and Rome Circuit Mental Health Court.
  - During the month of March 2020 CACJ trained over 150 accountability court professionals through the various Operational Tune-up and Refresher opportunities.
- The CACJ Training Committee approved the FY21 accountability court training calendar, including the 2020 annual training conference agenda. In addition to a new judge training in August and treatment-specific trainings throughout the fiscal year, CACJ will kickoff its new certified coordinator program hosted in conjunction with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government.
- The FY21 grant season began in February and courts submitted grant requests to CACJ in March. Even during the current state of emergency, all programs successfully submitted their grant applications on time. The CACJ Funding Committee will meet virtually the last week of April to review grants and make funding decisions.
- The Standards and Certification Committee certified over 100 programs and continues to work with teams to improve court functions.

# CHIEF JUSTICE'S COMMISSION ON PROFESSIONALISM

Hon. Harold D. Melton, Chief Justice  
Supreme Court of Georgia, Chair



Karlise Y. Grier  
Executive Director

## Memorandum

TO: Judicial Council of Georgia

FROM: Karlise Y. Grier, Executive Director

RE: Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism

DATE: April 24, 2020

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The Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism (Commission), the first body of its kind in the nation, was created in 1989 by the Supreme Court of Georgia with the primary charge to enhance professionalism among Georgia's judges and lawyers. Chief Justice Harold D. Melton serves as the current Chair of the Commission. Other judges who serve on the Commission are as follows: Judge Clyde L. Reese III for the Court of Appeals of Georgia; Judge Meng H. Lim (Tallapoosa Judicial Circuit) for the Council of Superior Court Judges; and Judge Susan E. Edlein (Fulton County State Court) for the Council of State Court Judges. Judge William McCrary Ray II has been appointed to serve on the Commission for the federal judiciary. Justice Sarah Hawkins Warren is a very active advisor to the Commission. You will find a complete list of Commission members, advisors, and liaisons at the Commission's web site at [www.cjcpga.org](http://www.cjcpga.org).

### PROFESSIONALISM SURCHARGE UPDATE

The Commission has a 22-year history of conservative fiscal management that has enabled the Commission to consistently maintain the professionalism surcharge at an amount of \$15 since 1998, and to build a surplus reserve in the amount of \$1,081,792 as of June 30, 2019. The surplus reserve amount includes \$250,000 (plus interest) that the Commission received from a Consent Order entered by Judge Hugh Lawson on December 31, 1998. Although the amount of the professionalism surcharge has been

\$15 since 1998, in 2018, the Commission changed the collection of the surcharge from a \$15 *hourly* rate to a \$15 *annual* rate, and this change went into effect on July 1, 2018. The accounting firm of Mauldin & Jenkins has audited the Commission's Financial Reports annually since the fiscal year ending June 30, 1999. Notwithstanding this historically consistent professionalism surcharge amount, the Commission is pleased to announce to the Board of Governors that the Commission has voted to reduce the annual professionalism surcharge amount from \$15 per year per active member of the Bar under 70 years of age to \$11 per year per active member of the Bar under 70 years of age. On April 3, 2020, the State Bar of Georgia Board of Governors, by a 94% majority vote, approved the professionalism fee surcharge of \$11 being placed on the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 annual dues statements of active members of the Bar under 70 years of age.

#### **21<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL JUSTICE ROBERT BENHAM AWARDS FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Since 1998, the Commission has presented the Justice Robert Benham Awards for Community to honor lawyers and judges in Georgia who have made significant contributions to their communities and who demonstrate the positive contributions of members of the Bar beyond their legal or official work. The awards are presented to selected attorneys in the judicial districts of Georgia from which nominations are received. The 2020 District Award recipients are as follows: Ms. Rita C. Spalding, *Brunswick*; Ms. Connie L. Williford, *Macon*; Mr. Donarell Rhea Green IV, *Athens*; Ms. Jennifer Leigh Weizenecker, *Atlanta*; The Honorable Robert Dale Leonard II, *Marietta*; and Ms. Sally Quillian Yates, *Atlanta*. The Lifetime Achievement Award, the Commission's highest recognition, is reserved for a lawyer or judge who in addition to meeting the criteria for receiving the Justice Robert Benham Award for Community Service, has demonstrated an extraordinarily long and distinguished commitment to volunteer participation in the community throughout his or her legal career. The recipients of the 2020 Lifetime Achievement Awards recognize the contributions of two outstanding community and public servants, Mr. Thomas William Malone (posthumously) of Atlanta and Ms. Jacqueline L. Payne of Marietta.

On March 14, 2020, the Commission had planned to continue a 21-year tradition of honoring lawyers and judges at an annual Justice Robert Benham Awards for Community Service ceremony. The event, which was scheduled to take place at the Omni Atlanta Hotel at CNN Center, was intended to give the legal community an opportunity to honor an exceptional group of lawyers and judges who volunteer in

numerous ways in the community. The awards ceremony was also intended to afford attendees with one of the first opportunities to hear Justice Benham speak since his retirement from the Supreme Court of Georgia on March 1, 2020, after 30 years of service.

Nevertheless, to ensure the health and safety of everyone involved, the Commission decided not to hold the Awards Ceremony on March 14, 2020, after the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 (Coronavirus disease) a pandemic. At the time of the writing of this memorandum, a statewide “Shelter-In-Place” Order was in effect until April 30, 2020. Therefore, the Commission had not yet discussed or made plans for a rescheduled awards ceremony.

### **SUICIDE AWARENESS PROGRAM**

The Commission had planned to hold a **Suicide Awareness Program** on **Tuesday, April 28, 2020, from 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.** in person at the State Bar of Georgia Auditorium in Atlanta, with videoconferencing to Savannah and Tifton and live streaming to approximately 25 locations throughout the State of Georgia. Nevertheless, to ensure the health and safety of everyone involved, the Commission decided not to hold the Suicide Awareness Program on April 28, 2020, for many reasons including the issuance of an Executive Order by Governor Kemp mandating a statewide “Shelter-In-Place” Order until April 30, 2020. The Commission does plan to reschedule the program, but the Commission has not yet discussed or made plans for a new date and time. The Commission is deeply grateful for the support of the members of the Judicial Council for helping with the implementation of the program, and the Commission looks forward to working again with the Judicial Council on the program when the date is rescheduled.

### **STATEWIDE TOWN HALL MEETING AND CLE: MOVING FORWARD WITH PROFESSIONALISM IN THE MIDST OF A PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY**

In lieu of the Suicide Awareness Program, the planning team for that program, decided to move forward with a different program on **April 28, 2020, from 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm**, entitled *Moving Forward with Professionalism In the Midst Of A Public Health Emergency*. The planning team for the revised April 28<sup>th</sup> program is **Judge Clyde L. Reese III**, Court of Appeals of Georgia (State Bar of Georgia SOLACE Committee Co-Chair); **Judge Render Heard**, Tifton County Juvenile Court (State Bar of Georgia

SOLACE Committee Co-Chair) and **Judge Shondeana Crews Morris**, Superior Court of DeKalb County (State Bar of Georgia Suicide Prevention Committee Chair). **Chief Justice Harold D. Melton** will serve as the Keynote Speaker for the event. The planning team respectfully requests the support of the members of the Judicial Council for the revised program. Please share the information about the program with members of the local and voluntary bar associations in your judicial circuit and encourage attorneys to participate. A **DRAFT** flyer about the program is attached as “Exhibit A.” The Commission thanks Amber Rikard in the State Bar of Georgia’s Communication’s Department for her graphic design work on the flyer.

### **FIRST PROFESSIONALISM POP-UP: PROFESSIONALISM DURING A TIME OF PHYSICAL DISTANCING**

The Commission held its first online “Professionalism Pop-Up” CLE entitled *Professionalism During A Time of Physical Distancing* on April 6, 2020. The Commission hosted the CLE on the Zoom Webinar platform. According to the Zoom report generated for the CLE, the CLE was attended by 812 “unique visitors.” The Commission has reported attendance for 801 attorneys to the State Bar of Georgia’s Commission on Continuing Legal Education Department. The Commission is also working to confirm the attendance of attorneys who participated by telephone so that those attorneys may receive CLE credit. During the CLE, the Commission took a voluntary poll of the attendees, and some of the poll results may help inform the discussion at the April 28<sup>th</sup> Town Hall meeting. The flyer about the program is attached as “Exhibit B.” The results from some of the poll questions are attached as “Exhibit C.” Thank you to Cynthia Clanton, Michelle Barclay, and John Ramspott of the Administrative Office of the Courts for assisting the Commission with providing information about the CLE to attorneys.

### **SECOND PROFESSIONALISM POP-UP: GETTING THE DEAL DONE WITH PROFESSIONALISM DURING A TIME OF PHYSICAL DISTANCING**

The Commission held its second online “Professionalism Pop-Up” CLE entitled *Getting the Deal Done With Professionalism During A Time of Physical Distancing* on April 16, 2020. The Commission hosted the CLE on the Zoom Webinar platform. As of April 15, 2020, the Commission had 885 attorneys registered for the CLE. The Commission anticipated that between 500 and 600 attorneys would actually

attend the CLE. The flyer about the program is attached as “Exhibit D.” Thank you to Cynthia Clanton, Michelle Barclay, and John Ramspott of the Administrative Office of the Courts for assisting the Commission with providing information about the CLE to attorneys.

### **LAW SCHOOL ORIENTATIONS ON PROFESSIONALISM**

The Commission staffs the State Bar of Georgia Committee on Professionalism (Committee), and in that role supports the Committee’s work on the Law School Orientations on Professionalism. The orientations are designed to provide incoming 1Ls with their first introduction to professionalism. Georgia judges and lawyers are invited to serve as “Group Leaders” during the orientations to help students learn the meaning of professionalism and why it is important for them as law students. The sub-committee that is planning the 2020 law school orientation programs is chaired by Mr. Michael Herskowitz, U.S. Attorney’s Office, Northern District of Georgia.

Assuming that the law schools are able to hold in-person orientations this year, the **TENTATIVE** dates for the professionalism orientation sessions are as follows.

- Friday, August 7, 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm – Mercer University School of Law
- Tuesday, August 11, late afternoon – Georgia State University School of Law
- Friday, August 14, early afternoon – University of Georgia School of Law
- Thursday, August 13, early afternoon – Emory University School of Law
- Saturday, August 8, morning – Atlanta’s John Marshall Law School

The Commission, the law school orientation sub-committee and the law schools will begin formulating alternative plans for holding the orientations either in-person on the schools’ campuses or online based on the guidelines regarding social distancing that are in effect in August. The Commission will provide Group Leader registration information and other updates about the law school orientations on its website, on its social media platforms and in the State Bar of Georgia’s E-News as it becomes available.

### **Commission Website and Social Media**

The Commission continues to enhance the Commission website, [www.cjcpga.org](http://www.cjcpga.org). For example, a picture of the 2019-2020 Commission members, advisors, and liaisons is now on the Commission's website. In addition, the Commission is now developing its social media content internally with the assistance of an intern, Ms. Jordyn Irons, who is an undergraduate senior at Georgia State University. The Commission enjoys communicating with judges and lawyers on its social media platforms. Connect with us!

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/CJCPGA>

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/CJCPGA>

**LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/company/cjcpga/>

**YouTube:**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/cjcpga/videos>



# EXHIBIT A

**DRAFT v. 04-16-20**

*The Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism*

# MOVING FORWARD

## WITH PROFESSIONALISM

### IN THE MIDST OF A PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

TUESDAY, APRIL 28 | 2 - 4 P.M. | BROADCAST VIA ZOOM.US | REGISTER ON EVENTBRITE



*Chief Justice  
Harold Melton*

**KEYNOTE  
SPEAKER**

#### **PRESIDING:**

Hon. Shondeana Crews Morris, *Judge, DeKalb County Superior Court*

#### **WELCOME:**

Justice Sarah Hawkins Warren, *Supreme Court of Georgia*

#### **PANEL MODERATOR:**

Hon. Clyde L. Reese III, *Judge, Court of Appeals of Georgia*

#### **PANELISTS:**

Dr. Alex Crosby, MD, MPH, *Chief Medical Officer, Division of Injury Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

Ms. Lynn Garson, Esq., *Chair, State Bar of Georgia Lawyer Assistance Program*

Hon. Render Heard, *Judge, Juvenile Court of Tift County*

Ms. Monica Johnson, MA, LPC, *DBHDD Director of the Division of Behavioral Health*

Ms. Dawn Jones, Esq., *Former ICU Registered Nurse and Current Solo Practitioner*

## 2 CLE HOURS INCLUDING 1 PROFESSIONALISM HOUR\*



#### **REMINDER TO ALL BAR MEMBERS**

You are entitled to six prepaid clinical personal counseling sessions per calendar year through the Lawyer Assistance Program of the State Bar of Georgia. #UseYour6

#### **FOR HELP:**

Bar members may contact the Bar's Lawyer Assistance Program confidential hotline at **800-327-9631** or call the Georgia Crisis Access Line at **1-800-715-4225**.

#### **CO-SPONSORED BY:**

Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts | State Bar of Georgia SOLACE Committee

State Bar of Georgia Wellness Committee | Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities

Learn more by contacting CJCP  
at [kygrier@cjcpga.org](mailto:kygrier@cjcpga.org).

\*CLE Credit is pending.



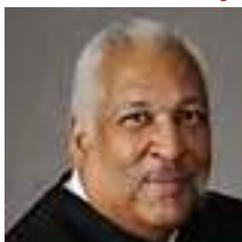
# EXHIBIT B



# Professionalism PopUp CLE

April 6, 2020, Noon to 1 PM via Zoom

**FREE, but you must Pre-register at <https://cjcpgapopup040620.eventbrite.com>**



Honorable Clyde L. Reese III  
Judge, Court of Appeals of Georgia  
Moderator



	<p>Hon. Shondeana Crews Morris Judge, Superior Court of DeKalb County</p>		<p>Ms. Dawn M. Jones, Esq. Former ICU Registered Nurse and Current Solo Practitioner</p>
	<p>Hon. Susan E. Edlein Judge, State Court of Fulton County</p>		<p>Ms. Natalie Kelly, Esq. Law Practice Management Director State Bar of Georgia</p>
	<p>Hon. Michael H. Barker Judge, Magistrate Court of Chatham County</p>		<p>Mr. Michael L. Monahan, Esq. Pro Bono Director State Bar of Georgia</p>
	<p>Hon. Render Heard Judge, Juvenile Court of Tift County</p>		<p>Ms. Karlise Y. Grier, Esq. Executive Director Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism</p>

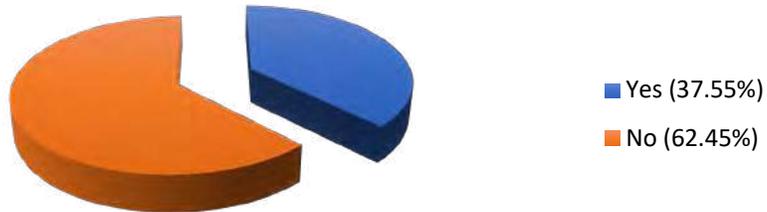
Connect with @CJCPGA



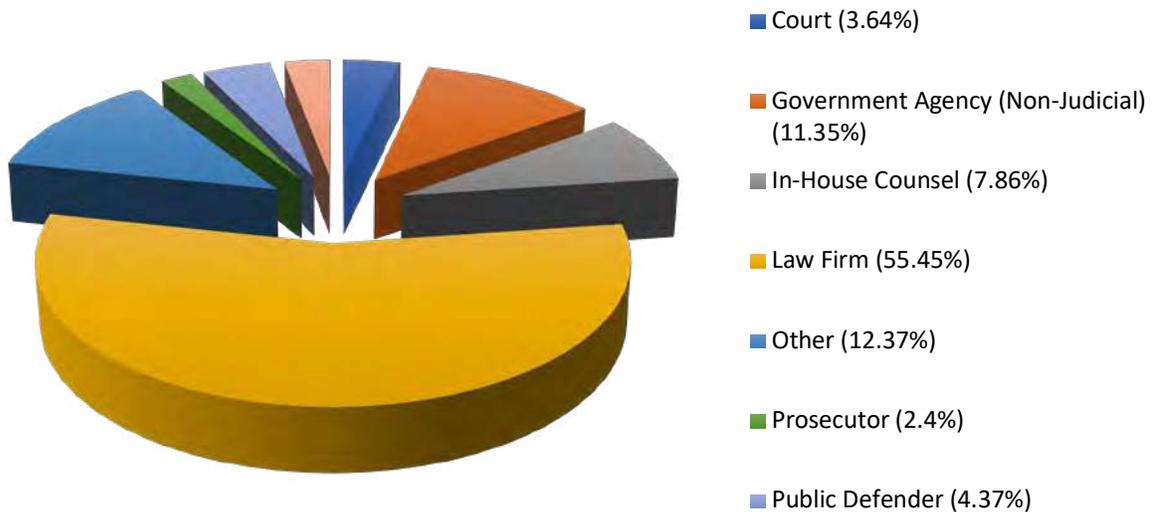
**#PopUpProfessionalism**

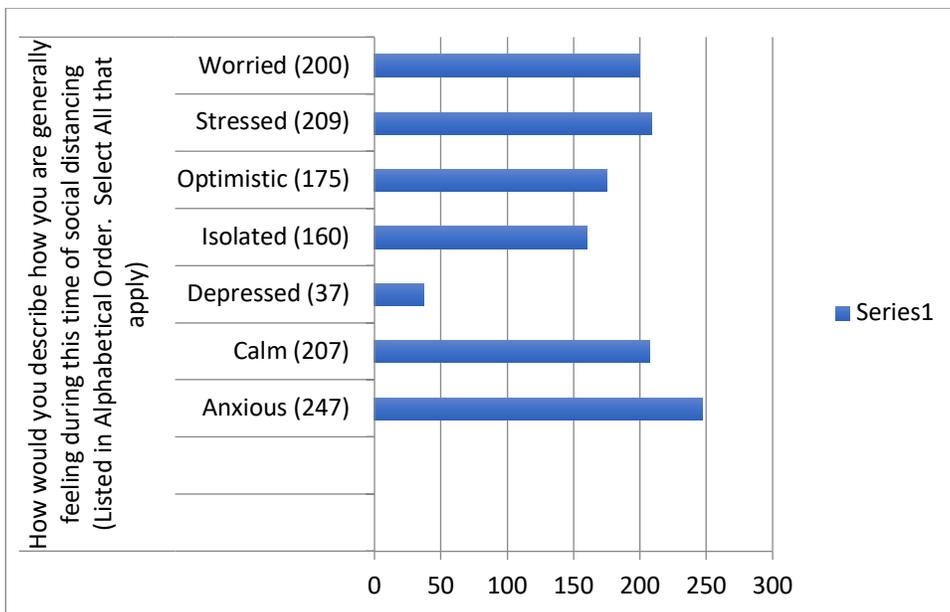
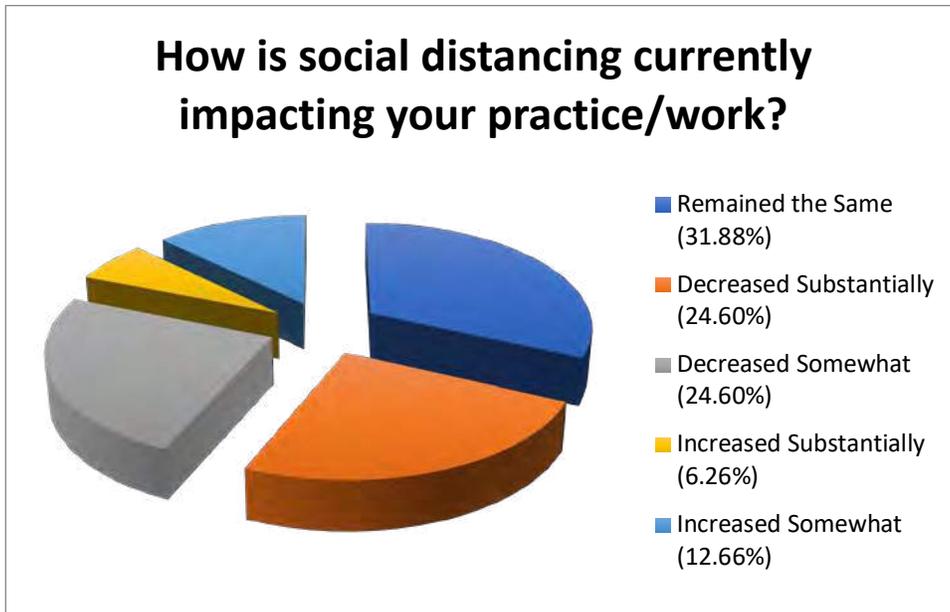
# EXHIBIT C

**Do you have a family member, loved one, friend, acquaintance, colleague or another individual that you personally know that has been infected with the coronavirus?**



**What type of practice setting do you normally work in?**





# EXHIBIT D

Chief Justice's  
Commission on Professionalism



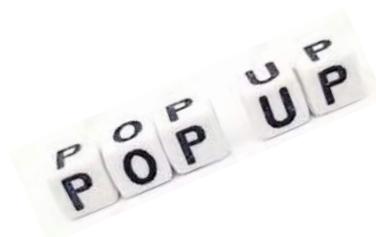
## Professionalism PopUp CLE

April 16, 2020, Noon to 1:30PM via Zoom.us

**FREE, but you must Pre-register at** <https://professionalismpopup041620.eventbrite.com>



**Patrise Perkins-Hooker,**  
**County Attorney**  
**Office of the**  
**Fulton County Attorney**  
**Moderator**



	<p>Michael Holiman Executive Director Council of Superior Court Clerks</p>		<p>T. Matthew Mashburn, Partner Commercial Finance Aldridge   Pite, LLP</p>
	<p>Angela Hsu Counsel Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP</p>		<p>Karlise Y. Grier, Esq. Executive Director Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism</p>
	<p>Shiriki C. Jones, Commercial Transactions Attorney Coyote, A UPS Company</p>		

Connect with @CJCPGA



**#PopUpProfessionalism**



# **REPORT TO JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF GEORGIA**

**COMPILED BY:**

**INSTITUTE OF CONTINUING JUDICIAL EDUCATION**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**

**1150 SOUTH MILLEDGE AVENUE**

**ATHENS, GA 30602-5025**

**April 24, 2020**

**From:** Douglas G. Ashworth  
**To:** [Douglas G. Ashworth](#)  
**Subject:** ICJE Exec Dtr Report - February 2020  
**Date:** Friday, February 28, 2020 9:55:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [ICJE Points Of Contact.pdf](#)

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Greetings:

Here is my monthly overview of ICJE activities for **February of 2020**. As always, I can be reached anytime on my cell at 706.201.7680.

**Summary:** During the 20 business days of January, ICJE facilitated **15 days** of educational programming and participated in various meetings on **10 different days**. Our **10 days of live programming** served Chief **Magistrates**; new non-attorney **Magistrate** Judges; and **Municipal** Court Clerks. Our **5 days of online programming** served **multiple classes of courts**. I also served as a presenter at the **Mid-Year Meeting of CLE Reg**, the national organization of continuing legal education regulators.

That's the **Summary**, **here are the Details**:

**February 3<sup>rd</sup> – February 14<sup>th</sup>: Presentations:** I was invited to speak at the Mid-Year Meeting of CLE Reg, held in Savannah. I was active in CLE Reg during 2005-2012, when I served as Director of the Transition Into Law Practice Program for the State Bar of Georgia. **The title of my presentation was: "A Cautionary Tale for CLE Regulators: The Traumatic Transition Of The Institute Of Continuing Legal Education of Georgia".** **Educational Programming Included:** (1) Chief Magistrate's Update at Jekyll Island; and, (2) Municipal Court Clerks; 16- Hour Certification in Athens. **Meetings Included:** (1) ICJE Board of Trustees' Called Meeting (to consider proposed revisions to ICJE By-Laws); (2) **House Appropriations** Hearings; (3) **Senate Appropriations** Hearings; and, (4) **Judicial Council** of Georgia (at which I presented the proposed revisions to the ICJE By-Laws).

**February 17<sup>th</sup> – February 28<sup>th</sup>: Educational Programming Included:** (1) 40-Hour Criminal Basic Course for new non-attorney **Magistrate** Judges, in Athens; and, (2) Mental Illness Issues in the Courts, **a 5-Day online course open to multiple classes of courts**. **Meetings Included:** (1) **Magistrate** Court Training Council (phone conference); (2) **Municipal** Court Training Council (in-person meeting hosted at ICJE office in Athens); (3) **State of the Judiciary Address** by Chief Justice Melton, in Atlanta; (4) Council of **Magistrate** Court Judges' Leadership ( to discuss the DRAFT MOU; future venues, and other educational programming matters); and, (5) **Magistrate Court Clerks'** Leadership meeting, in Forsyth.

**ICJE Points Of Contact Attached For Your Reference:** This monthly email report contains an attachment. In order to assist busy ICJE Constituents, and their administrative staffs, we are now placing the "ICJE Points of Contact" on the back cover of every ICJE seminar booklet. I hope you, and your staff, find this new resource to be a quick, but comprehensive, resource for reference.

If I can be of assistance prior to the next monthly update, please call on me anytime.

Thank you and best regards,

Douglas G. Ashworth, J.D., Executive Director

Institute of Continuing Judicial Education (ICJE)

The University of Georgia

1150 S. Milledge Avenue

Athens, Georgia 30602-5025

Direct: 706.369.5793

Email: [doug@icje.law.uga.edu](mailto:doug@icje.law.uga.edu)

Fax: 706.369.5840

Greetings ICJE Board of Trustees & ICJE Constituents:

Here is my monthly overview of ICJE activities for **March of 2020 (presented in a new format)**. As always, I can be reached anytime on my cell at 706.201.7680.

**1. Monthly Summary:** On March 13, 2020, ICJE facilitated “**Judging and Humanities**” a live, on-site seminar open to multiple classes of courts. Little did we know that it would be the last live, on-site educational event we would facilitate for a while due to the COVID-19 virus. Since that time, we have been in almost constant contact with all ICJE constituent group leadership to collaborate on canceling, rescheduling and/or restructuring educational events. Rarely has a full day transpired in the past 2 to 3 weeks that all of us in the judicial branch have not been involved in a daily series of phone conferences and/or “zoom” meetings.

**2. ICJE Staff Is Teleworking:** All ICJE staff members are teleworking. Ironically, we’ve always needed the ability to work remotely (when we’re sitting in the back of your seminar rooms peering into our laptops, we are doing three things at once: (1) monitoring your live event; but also (2) wrapping up post-event work from other seminars that just occurred; and, (3) facilitating pre-event work for seminars yet to come). So, the transition to teleworking actually hasn’t slowed us down all that much.

**3. Online Seminars Are Moving Ahead With No Delays – No Cancellations:** Our online seminar on “**Media Relations**” will occur April 13-17, 2020. This event is open to multiple classes of courts.

**4. Simulcasting and Taping Are Now Available For Any ICJE-Facilitated Event:** Necessity is the mother of invention. ICJE, working with an AV consultant we regularly use for live, on-site seminars, now has the capability to offer any live, on-site, ICJE-facilitated seminar in three (3) different program delivery formats: (1) live, on-site; (2) simulcast; and/or (3) taped, with the recorded seminar available for viewing after the event. This technology is now available, but it is important to note that whether or not accreditation will be allowed for the program delivery format of viewing a simulcast or a taped seminar, remains the decision of the educational apparatuses and council leadership groups.

**5. Alex Ferraro is our new Electronic Media Specialist:** Mr. Alex Ferraro, a UGA grad and Project Manager at UGA Law School, joins our ICJE staff on April 6, 2020, as our new Electronic Media Specialist. He’ll go right to work in online programming, working on our April online seminar upon his arrival.

**6. Calendar Year 2017, 2018, and 2019 Financial Information For ICJE Constituent Groups:** The ICJE Staff has prepared 26 financial spreadsheets showing educational training expenses administered by ICJE for 78 seminars for ten different ICJE constituent groups, covering Calendar Year 2017; Calendar Year 2018; and, Calendar Year 2019.

**TO VIEW THE CALENDAR YEAR 2017, 2018, and 2019 SPREADSHEETS:** All 26 spreadsheets are available for viewing by any ICJE Constituent Group. They are labeled by the ten ICJE constituent categories, and can be accessed on the following Google Drive Link:

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=14yy\\_nL7bmZqRW2aYYBtbAGFBz8zFikJ4](https://drive.google.com/open?id=14yy_nL7bmZqRW2aYYBtbAGFBz8zFikJ4)

**7. Calendar Year 2020 Financial Information To Date For ICJE Constituent Groups:** The ICJE Staff has prepared financial spreadsheets showing educational training expenses administered by ICJE for the time period January 1, 2020, to date. New spreadsheets are added as each event occurs.

***TO VIEW THE CALENDAR YEAR 2020 SPREADSHEETS TO DATE:*** All spreadsheets are available for viewing by any ICJE Constituent Group. They are labeled by ICJE constituent categories, and can be accessed on the following Google Drive Link:

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=10-FcXNc1bpkqxOTPiD\\_9-u3y904Nft5O](https://drive.google.com/open?id=10-FcXNc1bpkqxOTPiD_9-u3y904Nft5O)

**8. ICJE Orientation Power Point Available For Viewing:** “ICJE Orientation For Board of Trustees and Constituents” is a new resource – a comprehensive 50 slide power point presentation – designed to inform anyone about the educational mandates and/or training opportunities for all ICJE constituents

***TO VIEW THE ICJE ORIENTATION POWER POINT*** click on the following Google Drive Link:

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1WFAoaytQ4U5FZ\\_8yx5wAn1nCBgeKRK8p](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1WFAoaytQ4U5FZ_8yx5wAn1nCBgeKRK8p)

**9. This Monthly Report Is Sent To:** Judges; Clerks; Law School Deans; State Bar representatives; and, Judicial Branch employees serving numerous different entities, in an ongoing effort to provide information about ICJE’s services for its constituent groups.

***TO VIEW THE FULL DISTRIBUTION LIST OF RECIPIENTS WHO RECEIVE THIS MONTHLY REPORT*** click on the following Google Drive Link:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1RH-nVZMxReMRnQ07a6x75HoKzm1df2EW>

If I can be of assistance prior to the next monthly update, please call on me anytime.

Thank you and best regards,

**Douglas G. Ashworth, J.D., Executive Director**

**Institute of Continuing Judicial Education (ICJE)**

**The University of Georgia**

1150 S. Milledge Avenue

Athens, Georgia 30602-5025

**Direct:** 706.369.5793

**Email:** [doug@icje.law.uga.edu](mailto:doug@icje.law.uga.edu)

**Fax:** 706.369.5840

-END OF MONTHLY REPORT-

## ICJE CY 2020 Calendar (Updated 04.15.20)

Not Publicly Disseminated For Security Reasons

Date	Course	Format	Location
Jan. 21–24	Superior Court Judges' Winter Conference	Live Seminar	UGA Hotel & Conference Center–Athens
Jan. 27–30	State Court Judges' NJO	Live Seminar	Holiday Inn–Athens
Feb. 10–11	Magistrate Court Chief Judges' Update	Live Seminar	Jekyll Island Club Hotel
Feb. 11–12	Municipal Court Clerks' 16 Hr. Certification	Live Seminar	The Holiday Inn–Athens
Feb. 23–28	Magistrate Court Judges' 40 Hr. Criminal Certification	Live Seminar	The Holiday Inn–Athens
Feb. 24–28	Mental Illness	Online Self-Study Course	eLearningCommons–Online
Mar. 13	Judging & Humanities	Live Seminar/Multi-Class	Holiday Inn–Athens
Mar. 30–April 1 <del>CANCELLED</del>	Magistrate Court Judges' Spring Recertification	Live Seminar	King & Prince–St. Simons
April 1–3 <del>CANCELLED</del>	Juvenile Court Clerks' Annual Conference	Live Seminar	Savannah Marriott Riverfront
April 2 <del>CANCELLED</del>	Municipal Traffic Law/DUI Lunch & Learn Webinar	Live Webinar	GoToWebinar
Apr. 9–10 <del>CANCELLED</del>	Municipal Court Clerks' Recertification	Live Seminar	Legacy Lodge at Lake Lanier
April 13–17	Media Relations	Online Self-Study Course	eLearningCommons–Online
April 20–22 <del>CANCELLED</del>	Probate Court Judges' Spring Conference	Live Seminar	The Classic Center–Athens
April 23–24 <del>CANCELLED</del>	Probate Court Judges' Traffic Conference	Live Seminar	The Classic Center–Athens
May 11–13 <del>CANCELLED</del>	Juvenile Court Judges' Spring Conference	Live Seminar	King & Prince–St. Simons
May 13–15 <del>CANCELLED</del>	State Court Judges' Spring Conference	Live Seminar	UGA Hotel & Conference Center–Athens
May 18–22	Municipal Court Clerks' Online Recertification	Online Self-Study Course	eLearningCommons–Online
June 8–9 <del>CANCELLED</del>	Probate Court Clerks' LWEG & Traffic Training	Live Seminar	The Holiday Inn–Athens
June 15–19	Substance Abuse	Online Self-Study Course	eLearningCommons–Online
June 17–19 <del>CANCELLED</del>	Municipal Court Judges' 20 Hr. Certification	Live Seminar	Savannah Marriott Riverfront
June 17–19 <del>CANCELLED</del>	Municipal Court Judges' Law & Practice Update	Live Seminar	Savannah Marriott Riverfront
June 24–26 <del>CANCELLED</del>	Magistrate Court Clerks' Annual Training	Live Seminar	Savannah Marriott Riverfront
July 10	Judicial Ethics & Its Impact on Others	Live Seminar/Multi-Class	Holiday Inn–Athens
July 14–15 <del>CANCELLED</del>	Probate Clerks' LWEG & Traffic Training	Live Seminar	Oconee Fall Line Tech–Dublin
July 27–30	Superior Court Judges' Summer Conference	Live Seminar	Jekyll Island Convention Center
July 27–31	Ethics & Professionalism	Online Self-Study Course	eLearningCommons–Online
Aug. 11–12 <del>CANCELLED</del>	Probate Court Clerks' LWEG & Traffic Training	Live Seminar	UGA Hotel & Conference Center–Tifton
Aug. 17–21	Sovereign Citizens & Self-Representing Litigants	Online Self-Study Course	eLearningCommons–Online
Aug. 20–21	Municipal Court Clerks' Recertification	Live Seminar	Great Wolf Lodge–LaGrange
Aug. 26-27	Judicial Staff Attorneys' Annual Conference	Live Seminar	State Bar of GA–Atlanta
Sept. 6–11	Magistrate Court Judges' 40 Hr. Basic Civil Certification	Live Seminar	Holiday Inn–Athens
Sept. 13–16	CACJ Accountability Courts Training Conference	Live Seminar	Classic Center–Athens
Sept. 14–18	Cyber Security	Online Self-Study Course	eLearningCommons–Online
Sept. 23–24	Municipal Court Clerks' 16 Hr. Certification	Live Seminar	UGA Conference Center–Tifton
Sept. 30–Oct. 2	Municipal Court Judges' 20 Hr. Certification	Live Seminar	Legacy Lodge at Lake Lanier
Sept. 30–Oct. 2	Municipal Court Judges' Law & Practice Update	Live Seminar	Legacy Lodge at Lake Lanier
Oct. 5–6	Magistrate Court Judges' Fall Recertification	Live Seminar	The Westin–Savannah
Oct. 5–9	Municipal Court Clerks' Online Recertification	Online Self-Study Course	eLearningCommons–Online
Oct. 14–16	Juvenile Court Clerks' Annual Conference	Live Seminar	Savannah Marriott Riverfront
Oct. 14–16	State Court Judges' Fall Conference	Live Seminar	King & Prince Conference Center–St. Simons
Oct. 19–23	New Technology in the Courts	Online Self-Study Course	eLearningCommons–Online
Oct. 26–28	Juvenile Court Judges' Fall Conference	Live Seminar	UGA Hotel & Conference Center–Athens
Nov. 9–11	Probate Court Judges' Fall COAG	Live Seminar	Savannah Marriott Riverfront
Nov. 9–13	Processing Trauma	Online Self-Study Course	eLearningCommons–Online
Nov. 19-20	Municipal Court Clerks' Recertification	Live Seminar	Augusta Marriott at the Convention Center
Nov. 30–Dec. 2	Probate Court Judges' NJO/Traffic	Live Seminar	Holiday Inn–Athens
Dec. 7–10	Probate Court Judges' NJO	Live Seminar	Holiday Inn–Athens
Dec. 14–18	Superior Court Judges' NJO	Live Seminar	Holiday Inn–Athens