

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF SPALDING COUNTY  
STATE OF GEORGIA

FILED & RECORDED  
CLERK SUPERIOR COURT  
SPALDING COUNTY, GA

2020 JUN -8 A 10:39

**STANDING ORDER TEMPORARILY MODIFYING COURT PROCEDURES**  
**DUE TO CORONAVIRUS / COVID-19**

DEBBIE L. BROOKS, CLERK

The Superior Court of Spalding County, Georgia, in observation of the guidelines set forth by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") as well as the Georgia Department of Public Health ("DPH") concerning the outbreak of coronavirus/COVID-19, and in adherence to the Second Order Extending Declaration of Statewide Judicial Emergency entered on May 11, 2020, by the Hon. Harold D. Melton, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia, hereby adopts the following guidelines for in-court proceedings until further notice:

1. **Purpose.**

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide for public access to judicial proceedings and a criminal defendant's rights to confrontation and open courtrooms, while making reasonable provision for the health and safety of all persons attending court or working in the Courthouse.

2. **Definitions.**

- a. "Court" means the Spalding County Superior Court.
- b. "Courthouse" means the Spalding County Courthouse located at 132 E. Solomon Street, Griffin, Georgia.
- c. "Courtroom" means any physical space which is utilized by the Spalding County Superior Court to conduct hearings.
- d. "Face mask" means a surgical mask, N-95 respirator, or other cloth face covering as defined by the CDC which fits over the mouth and nose of the wearer but not the rest of the face.
- e. "Public Area" means all parts of the Courthouse not reserved exclusively for staff.

3. **Special Court Procedures.**

Due to the outbreak of COVID-19 and ongoing state of judicial emergency, the Court is employing special procedures to minimize the risk to everyone's health.

To this end, we are scheduling more court sessions with fewer cases summoned per session. Seating in the Courtroom will be limited to designated seats, designed to require distancing; and distancing will be enforced in conferences with staff. Handling of paperwork will be kept to a minimum. Court personnel will sanitize areas of the Courtroom between users.

Multi-case calendars shall either be staggered in times, or the cases placed "on-call" by the Court.

Hearings by teleconference are strongly encouraged. Attorneys willing to proceed by teleconference should contact their respective Judge's office for directions and scheduling.

4. **Directions for those who have, are suspected to have, have been in close contact with persons, or are considered especially vulnerable to, COVID-19**

Persons who in the preceding 14 days:

- a. have received a positive lab-confirmed test for COVID-19;
- b. are suspected to have COVID-19 based on symptoms recognized by the CDC or DPH;
- c. have experienced a fever or cough;
- d. have been in close contact with a person with known or suspected COVID-19; or
- e. have other health conditions which make them especially vulnerable to COVID-19 as recognized by the CDC or DPH

should NOT attempt to enter the Courthouse, and should call the telephone number provided with your court notice, or at the door, to speak with someone from the Court about appearing virtually or rescheduling their court date.

5. **Admission to the Courthouse.**

All persons entering the Courthouse SHALL:

- a. be screened for cough, fever and recent exposure to COVID-19;
- b. comply with directives of court and security personnel regarding appropriate distancing.

All persons are encouraged to wear a Face Mask at all times, while in the public areas of the Courthouse (which will be provided at the door, if needed).

6. **Movement within the Courthouse.**

Persons within the Courthouse for any purpose tied to the business of the Spalding County Superior Court, SHALL:

- a. Stay AT LEAST 6 feet from all other persons with whom they do not share a household.

- b. not board elevators with other persons except those with whom they share a household.
- c. not congregate or loiter in the hallways in a way which obstructs other persons' access to elevators, offices or Courtrooms, and
- d. comply with directives of court and security personnel regarding compliance with the terms of this Order.

**7. Admission to a Courtroom**

Persons physically entering the Courtrooms, chambers, conference rooms, waiting areas, or any other area of the Superior Court SHALL:

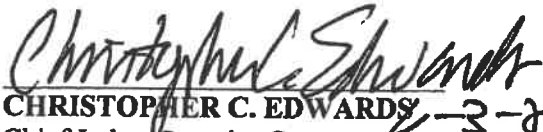
- a. stay AT LEAST 6 feet away from all other persons with whom they do not share a household, at all times;
- b. comply with directives of court and security personnel regarding their compliance with the terms of this Order;
- c. only sit or stand only in the area they are designated by the Court to be within at a given time in a given room which, to allow for distanced seating, may be marked by the Court with a tab (No one shall sit or stand within the Courtroom in a space not tabbed or where they do not otherwise have prior permission from the Court to be);
- d. when notified that a room is full, follow instructions for seating/standing elsewhere. (Due to the limited seating, those having official business before the Court will have priority seating.)
- e. return any office supplies, such as pens, pencils or clipboards, to the Court as directed for cleaning;
- f. maintain order and quiet so that everyone can see and hear the proceedings in the Courtroom; and
- g. exit the Courtroom after having completed their business with the Court.

**8. Meetings in Superior Court Chambers, Drop-Ins and Deliveries**

No persons other than those staff members with offices inside the Superior Court Chambers should enter or attempt to enter the chambers of the Superior Court without making prior arrangements with the Court. Unscheduled drop-ins or knock-and-talks are strongly discouraged. To the greatest extent possible, all persons needing to reach a member of the Superior Court staff are encouraged to please call or email a member of the Superior Court team.

Additionally, all persons needing to deliver mail, documents or other physical items to the Superior Court should place those items in the respective Judge's mailbox slot in the Courthouse lobby. A member of the Court Services team (recognizable as the uniformed law enforcement officers with the Spalding County Sherriff's Office stationed in the Courthouse lobby) should be notified if an oversized item needs to be left in the Courthouse lobby for delivery to the Superior Court.

SO ORDERED, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of May, 2020.



**CHRISTOPHER C. EDWARDS**  
Chief Judge, Superior Court  
Griffin Judicial Circuit



**W. FLETCHER SAMS**  
Judge, Superior Court  
Griffin Judicial Circuit

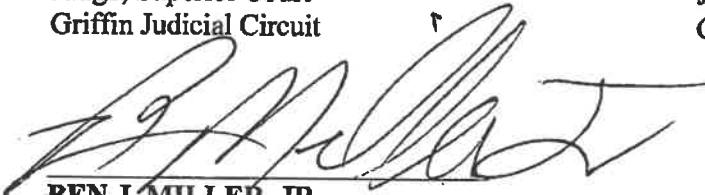
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**SCOTT L. BALLARD**  
Judge, Superior Court  
Griffin Judicial Circuit



**BENJAMIN D. COKER**  
Judge, Superior Court  
Griffin Judicial Circuit



**BEN J. MILLER, JR.**  
Judge, Superior Court  
Griffin Judicial Circuit