

JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF GEORGIA

General Session
Supplemental Materials

Friday, August 14, 2020
10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.



By Remote Conferencing



SUPREME COURT OF GEORGIA

FILED

Administrative Minutes
August 11, 2020

Thérèse S. Barnes

Clerk/Court Executive

SUPREME COURT OF GEORGIA

FIFTH ORDER EXTENDING DECLARATION OF STATEWIDE JUDICIAL EMERGENCY

On March 14, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Honorable Harold D. Melton, as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia, issued an Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency pursuant to OCGA § 38-3-61. That Order has been extended four times, with modifications, by orders issued on April 6, May 11, June 12, and July 10, 2020. After consulting with the Judicial Council of Georgia and other judicial partners, recognizing again that most in-court proceedings compel the attendance of various individuals rather than allowing them to decide how best to protect their own health, and further recognizing that the novel coronavirus continues to spread in Georgia, it is hereby determined that the Order should be extended again.

Courts in Georgia have continued to perform essential functions despite the pandemic. In an effort to return to more robust court operations, many of the deadlines imposed by law on litigants in civil and criminal cases that had been suspended, tolled, or extended since the initial March 14 Order were reimposed as of July 14, allowing more pending and newly filed cases to move forward in the judicial process. However, given the current levels of COVID-19 around the state, this order continues the prohibition on all jury proceedings. This broad prohibition cannot last too much longer, even if the pandemic continues, because the judicial system, and the criminal justice system in particular, must have some capacity to resolve cases by indictment and trial. Accordingly, the Judicial COVID-19 Task Force is focusing on how grand jury and jury trial proceedings could safely be conducted even where levels of COVID-19 are high, including the possibility of conducting grand jury proceedings and jury selection remotely.

As has been the direction since the original Order, all Georgia courts must continue to conduct proceedings, remotely or in-person, in

compliance with public health guidance, applicable statutes and court rules, and the requirements of the United States and Georgia Constitutions, including the public's right of access to judicial proceedings and a criminal defendant's rights to confrontation and an open courtroom. All courts should continue to use and increase the use of technology to conduct remote judicial proceedings as a safer alternative to in-person proceedings, unless required by law to be in person or unless it is not practicable for technical or other reasons for persons participating in the proceeding to participate remotely. This order again delineates the health precautions required for all in-person judicial proceedings and requires courts to adopt and maintain operating guidelines consistent with the Georgia Court Reopening Guide and any more specific local public health guidance.

Accordingly, the Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency, which would have expired on Tuesday, August 11, 2020, at 11:59 p.m., is further **extended until Thursday, September 10, 2020, at 11:59 p.m.** All Georgia courts shall continue to operate under the restrictions set forth in that Order as extended; **the provisions of this order below are identical to the July 10 extension order except for minor revisions to the language of Sections I (C), II (A), and IV (C) (2) and the deletion of Section IV (C) (4).** Where this order refers to "public health guidance," courts should consider the most specific current guidance provided by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH), and their local health departments.

I. Continued Prohibition on Jury Trial Proceedings and Most Grand Jury Proceedings

(A) Current public health guidance recommends social distancing and other measures that make it impracticable for courts to protect the health of the large groups of people who are normally assembled for jury proceedings, including jury selection. Accordingly, the suspension of jury trials shall remain in effect and until further order, all courts are prohibited from summoning new trial jurors and grand jurors and from conducting criminal or civil jury trials.

(B) Grand juries that are already impaneled or are recalled from a previous term of court may meet to attend to time-sensitive essential matters, but these grand juries shall not be assembled except when necessary and only under circumstances in which social distancing and other public health guidance can be followed. A guidance document about the continued authority of grand juries impaneled prior to the issuance of the Order is included in the Appendix to this order. Courts and counsel are reminded that many criminal cases may proceed on accusation and do not require a grand jury indictment.

(C) The Judicial COVID-19 Task Force continues to develop policies, procedures, and templates to allow the safe resumption of jury trials and grand jury proceedings. These materials will be publicized when ready.

II. Reimposition of Deadlines on Litigants

(A) The July 10 extension order reimposed all deadlines and other time schedules and filing requirements (referred to collectively herein as “deadlines”) that are imposed **on litigants** by statutes, rules, regulations, or court orders in civil and criminal cases and administrative actions and that have been suspended, tolled, extended, or otherwise relieved by the March 14, 2020 Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency, as extended, on the following schedule and with the following exceptions and conditions:

(1) Consistent with Section I above, **deadlines for jury trial proceedings (including statutory speedy trial demands), deadlines for grand jury proceedings, and deadlines calculated by reference to the date of a civil or criminal jury trial or grand jury proceeding shall remain suspended and tolled.** This provision does not apply to deadlines calculated by reference to the date of non-jury (bench) trials. Until grand jury proceedings are generally authorized, statutes of limitation in criminal cases shall also remain tolled.

(2) **All other deadlines imposed on litigants shall be reimposed effective July 14, 2020,** as further explained below.

(3) **In cases that were pending before the March 14 Order**, litigants will have the same amount of time to file or act after July 14 that they had as of March 14. For example, if an answer in a civil case was due on March 20, that answer will now be due on July 20, and if a criminal defendant's pretrial motions were due on March 23, they will now be due on July 23.

(4) **In cases filed between March 14 and July 13, 2020**, the time for deadlines will begin running on July 14. For example, if a civil complaint was filed in June and the answer would have been due 30 days later, that 30-day period will begin on July 14 and the answer will be due on August 13.

(5) **In cases filed on or after July 14, 2020**, litigants shall comply with the normal deadlines applicable to the case.

(6) If the reimposed deadline falls on a **weekend or legal holiday**, the deadline will as normal be the next business day. See OCGA § 1-3-1 (d) (3).

(7) Any **extension of time** for a litigant's filing or action that was granted by a court, or was agreed or consented to by the litigants as authorized by law, before July 14, 2020 shall also extend the time for that filing or action after July 14. For example, if a litigant's filing was initially due on March 10 but she was granted a 10-day extension of that deadline (to March 20), the filing will be due on July 24 (10 days after July 14).

(8) Litigants may be entitled to additional time based on the provisions of a local judicial emergency order applicable to their case if such an order tolled applicable deadlines before the March 14, 2020 Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency or tolls applicable deadlines after July 14, 2020.

(9) The tolling and suspension of deadlines imposed **on litigants** in civil and criminal cases that are **calculated by reference to terms of court** shall be lifted as of July 14, 2020, and any regular term of court beginning on or after July 14 shall count toward such

deadlines. See also the May 4, 2020 Guidance on Deadlines and Time Limits Defined by Reference to Terms of Court included in the Appendix.

(10) The 122 days between March 14 and July 14, 2020, or any portion of that period in which a statute of limitation would have run, shall be excluded from the calculation of that statute of limitation.

(11) Litigants may apply in the normal way for extensions of reimposed deadlines for good cause shown, and **courts should be generous in granting extensions particularly when based upon health concerns, economic hardship, or lack of child care.**

(B) Recognizing the substantial backlog of pending cases, **deadlines imposed on courts shall remain suspended and tolled.** All courts should nevertheless work diligently to clear the backlog and to comply with usual deadlines and timetables to the extent safe and practicable.

(C) If before July 14 a court reimposed deadlines by order in a specific case based on the authority to do so granted by prior extension orders, **the case-specific order reimposing deadlines shall control over the deadlines for the same filings or actions reimposed by this statewide order.**

(D) If in a divorce or adoption case a time period required by law actually passed or passes before the court entered or enters a consent order, consent judgment, or consent decree regarding the divorce or adoption, such order, judgment, or decree shall not be invalid based on any suspension or tolling of the applicable period by the March 14 Order as extended.

III. Proceedings Conducted Remotely Using Technology

(A) All courts should continue to use and increase the use of technology to conduct remote judicial proceedings as a safer alternative to in-person proceedings, unless required by law to be in person or unless it is not practicable for technical or other reasons for persons participating in the proceeding to participate remotely.

(B) Courts should understand and utilize the authority provided and clarified by the emergency amendments made to court rules on videoconferences and teleconferences.

(C) Courts may compel the participation of litigants, lawyers, witnesses, and other essential personnel in remote judicial proceedings, where allowed by court rules (including emergency amendments thereto). Such proceedings, however, must be consistent with public health guidance, must not impose undue burdens on participants, and must not be prohibited by the requirements of the United States or Georgia constitutions or applicable statutes or court rules.

(D) In civil, criminal, juvenile, and administrative proceedings, litigants may expressly consent in the record to remote proceedings not otherwise authorized and affirmatively waive otherwise applicable legal requirements.

(E) Courts must ensure the public's right of access to judicial proceedings and in all criminal cases, unless affirmatively waived in the record, a criminal defendant's rights to confrontation and an open courtroom.

IV. In-Person Proceedings Under Guidelines for Safe Operations

(A) Courts have discretion to conduct in-person judicial proceedings, but only in compliance with public health guidance and with the requirements of the United States and Georgia constitutions and applicable statutes and court rules, including

the public's right of access to judicial proceedings and a criminal defendant's rights to confrontation and an open courtroom.

(B) No court may compel the attendance of any person for a court proceeding if the court proceeding or the court facility in which it is to be held is not in compliance with this order, including in particular large calendar calls. Courts are also prohibited from compelling in-person participation in any court-imposed alternative dispute resolution session that is to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with applicable public health guidelines.

(C) Each court shall develop and implement operating guidelines as to how in-court proceedings generally and particular types of proceedings will be conducted to protect the health of litigants, lawyers, judges, court personnel, and the public.

(1) The Judicial Council Strategic Planning Committee and the Judicial COVID-19 Task Force have issued a bench card entitled "Georgia Court Reopening Guide," which is included in the Appendix and should be used as the template for such operating guidelines, which at a minimum should include all subject matters contained therein. Courts should also consider guidance from local health departments and guidance provided by CDC and DPH; if local public health guidance is more restrictive than the bench card, the local public health guidance should be followed instead.

(2) With regard to everyone who works in a court facility, the operating guidelines shall require **isolation** of any person with known or suspected COVID-19 and **quarantine** of any person with COVID-19 exposure likely to result in infection, in accordance with the DPH Eighth Amended Administrative Order for Public Health Control Measures, a link to which may be found in the Appendix, or any subsequent version thereof.

(3) When there is reason to believe that anyone who works or has visited a court facility has been exposed to COVID-19, DPH or the local health department shall be notified and **notification** of persons

who may have been exposed shall occur as directed by DPH or the local health department.

(D) Courts of different classes that share courthouse facilities or operate in the same county should coordinate their operating guidelines, and should seek to coordinate operating guidelines with non-judicial entities sharing courthouse facilities.

(E) Each court must submit its operating guidelines to the Administrative Office of the Courts at <https://georgiacourts.gov/covid-19-court-operating-guidelines-form/> to be posted at <https://georgiacourts.gov/covid-19-court-operating-guidelines/> as a centralized website available to litigants, lawyers, and the public. Operating guidelines also should be prominently posted at courthouse entrances and on court and local government websites to provide advance notice to litigants, lawyers, and the public.

(F) Operating guidelines shall be modified as public health guidance is modified, and shall remain in effect until public health guidance indicates that they are no longer required.

V. Discretion of Chief Judges to Declare More Restrictive Local Judicial Emergencies

(A) Nothing in the Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency as extended and modified limits the authority of the Chief Judge of a superior court judicial circuit under OCGA §§ 38-3-61 and 38-3-62 to add to the restrictions imposed by the statewide judicial emergency, if such additional restrictions are constitutional, necessitated by local conditions, and to the extent possible ensure that courthouses or properly designated alternative facilities remain accessible to carry out essential judicial functions. A Chief Judge may impose such additional restrictions only by a properly entered order.

(B) No court may disregard the restrictions imposed by the Order as extended and modified.

VI. Guidance on Application of the Order

Included in the Appendix are several guidance documents that clarify the application of the Order in particular contexts. Additional guidance documents may be posted on the AOC's website at <https://georgiacourts.gov/judicial-council/aoc/>. Guidance related to the tolling of deadlines should be read in light of the reimposition of deadlines by this order and by orders in specific cases.

VII. Professionalism

With regard to all matters in this challenging time, all lawyers are reminded of their obligations of professionalism. Judges are also reminded of their obligation to dispose of all judicial matters promptly and efficiently, including by insisting that court officials, litigants, and their lawyers cooperate with the court to achieve that end, although this obligation must not take precedence over the obligation to dispose of matters fairly and with patience, which requires sensitivity to health and other concerns raised by court officials, litigants and their lawyers, witnesses, and others.

VIII. Notice Provisions

(A) Notice will be provided as to the expected termination of the Order as extended and modified at least one week in advance to allow courts to plan for the transition to fuller operations.

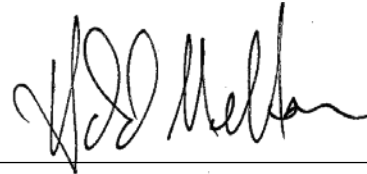
(B) The clerks and court administrators of trial courts that conduct jury trials and convene grand juries will be provided sufficient notice of the resumption of jury proceedings to allow the complicated process of summoning potential jurors to be completed.

(C) The impact of COVID-19 varies across the state, and the level of response and adjustment will likewise vary among courts. Courts should make available to the public the steps they are taking to safely increase operations while responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recognizing that not all courts have a social media presence or website, the Administrative Office of the Courts will continue to post court-specific information as it becomes available on the AOC website at <https://georgiacourts.gov/covid-19-preparedness/>.

(D) Pursuant to OCGA § 38-3-63, notice and service of a copy of this order shall immediately be sent to the judges and clerks of all courts in this State and to the clerk of the Court of Appeals of Georgia, such service to be accomplished through means to assure expeditious receipt, which include electronic means. Notice shall also be sent to the media, the State Bar of Georgia, and the officials and entities listed below and shall constitute sufficient notice of the issuance of this order to the affected litigants, counsel for the affected litigants, and the public.

IT IS SO ORDERED this 11th day of August, 2020, and effective at 11:59 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. D. Melton", written over a horizontal line.

Chief Justice Harold D. Melton
Supreme Court of Georgia

APPENDIX

[Guidance on Tolling of Filing Deadlines \(March 27, 2020\)](#)

[Guidance on Tolling of Statutes of Limitation \(April 6, 2020\)](#)

[Guidance on Deadlines and Time Limits Defined by Reference to Terms of Court \(May 4, 2020\)](#)

[Guidance on Grand Juries \(May 4, 2020\)](#)

[Further Guidance on Grand Juries \(May 11, 2020\)](#)

[Georgia Court Reopening Guide \(June 11, 2020\)](#)

[DPH Eighth Amended Administrative Order for Public Health Control Measures \(July 28, 2020\)](#)

Governor Brian P. Kemp
Lt. Governor Geoff Duncan
Speaker David Ralston
State Bar of Georgia
Administrative Office of the Courts
Judicial Council of Georgia
Council of Superior Court Clerks of Georgia
Department of Juvenile Justice
Criminal Justice Coordinating Council
Council of Accountability Court Judges
Georgia Commission on Dispute Resolution
Institute of Continuing Judicial Education of Georgia
Georgia Council of Court Administrators
Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism
Judicial Qualifications Commission
Association County Commissioners of Georgia
Georgia Municipal Association
Georgia Sheriffs' Association
Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police
Georgia Public Defender Council
Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of Georgia
Department of Corrections
Department of Community Supervision
Georgia Court Reporters Association
Board of Court Reporting
State Board of Pardons and Paroles
Constitutional Officers Association of Georgia
Council of Magistrate Court Clerks
Council of Municipal Court Clerks

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA
Clerk's Office, Atlanta

I certify that the above is a true extract from the minutes of the Supreme Court of Georgia.
Witness my signature and the seal of said court hereto affixed the day and year last above written.

 , Clerk



SUPREME COURT OF GEORGIA

FILED
Administrative Minutes
August 11, 2020

Thérèse S. Barnes
Clerk/Court Executive

Thérèse S. Barnes

The Honorable Supreme Court met pursuant to adjournment.
The following order was passed:

IN RE: GEORGIA CODE OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT RULE 3.15 ANNUAL DISCLOSURE REPORTS

Rule 3.15 (D) of the Georgia Code of Judicial Conduct requires all Georgia judges to file with the office of the Clerk of the Supreme Court of Georgia a report of compensation received for extra-judicial activities involving personal services and gifts or similar benefits received in the previous calendar year between January 1 and April 15 of the following year. This deadline has been tolled by the Chief Justice's March 14, 2020 Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency, as extended. By this order, the deadline for Rule 3.15 reports for calendar year 2019 is hereby reimposed so that the report is now due by September 15, 2020, and future Rule 3.15 reports will be due by the date set forth in the rule. Reports may be filed electronically at <http://rule315.gasupreme.us>. A copy of this order will be provided to the council for each class of court for distribution to the judges of that class.

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA
Clerk's Office, Atlanta

I certify that the above is a true extract from the minutes of the Supreme Court of Georgia.

Witness my signature and the seal of said court hereto affixed the day and year last above written.

Thérèse S. Barnes, Clerk

FY 2022 - Budget Comparison

Judicial Council Standing Committee on Budget Report

Judicial Council Program & Subprograms	AFY 2021 Request	Enhancement Requests	FY 2022 Request	% Change
Administrative Office of the Courts	\$ 6,520,505		\$ 6,756,618	3.49%
<i>Judicial Workload Assessments</i>		\$ 236,113.00		
Legal Services for Domestic Violence	\$ 1,502,172	175,000.00	\$ 1,677,172	
Legal Srvs for Kinship Care Families	\$ 225,326	100,000.00	\$ 325,326	
GA Council of Court Administrators	\$ 16,389		\$ 16,389	
<i>Juvenile Data Exchange (JDEX) Program</i>	\$ -	243,945.00	\$ 243,945	
Council of Municipal Court Judges	\$ 13,919		\$ 13,919	
Child Support Collaborative	\$ 119,000		\$ 119,000	
Council of Magistrate Court Judges	\$ 165,998		\$ 165,998	
Council of Probate Court Judges	\$ 159,490		\$ 159,490	
Council of State Court Judges	\$ 2,849,204		\$ 2,849,204	
Judicial Council Programs and Subprograms Total	\$ 5,051,498	\$ 518,945.00	\$ 5,570,443	9.32%
Other Programs				
Accountability Courts	\$ 667,696		\$ 667,696	
Inst of Continuing Jud Ed Operations	\$ 545,866		\$ 545,866	
Judicial Qualifications Commission	\$ 798,820		\$ 798,820	
Resource Center	\$ 775,000		\$ 775,000	
Other Programs Total	\$ 2,787,382	\$ -	\$ 2,787,382	0.00%
Total	\$ 14,359,385	\$ 755,058.00	\$ 15,114,443	5.00%



House of Representatives

18 CAPITOL SQUARE, SW
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STANDING COMMITTEES:
VICE-CHAIRMAN
APPROPRIATIONS- EDUCATION
DEFENSE & VETERAN'S AFFAIRS
PUBLIC SAFETY & HOMELAND SECURITY
VICE-CHAIRMAN
EDUCATION- ACADEMIC INNOVATION
MILITARY AFFAIRS WORKING GROUP
MARTOC

August 11, 2020

Mr. Christopher Hansard, Division Director
Judicial Council of Georgia
Administrative Office of the Courts
244 Washington Street
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear Mr. Hansard,

I submit this letter of support for the request of an additional judgeship for the Clayton Judicial Circuit. I have reviewed the request and workload assessments. It is in my opinion, while our current judges are doing great works, the county is growing and the already burdened workload is expeditiously increasing.

It is for these and other reasons I wholeheartedly support the request and ask for your full and favorable consideration. I also mention that I was not available to submit a letter in June, but did give my verbal approval to be included in the support request.

I respectfully recommend an additional superior court judgeship for the Clayton Judicial Circuit. I kindly ask that you forward this letter of recommendation along with any others that may be sent to Chief Justice Melton and the Judicial Council. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me directly at (678) 479-7730 or reach me at my Capitol office at (404) 657-1803.

Respectfully,

Honorable Mike Glanton, Sr



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: August 7, 2020

The Judicial Council Standing Committee on Technology met on Thursday, July 9, 2020. The following report reflects matters and topics discussed during that meeting.

Portal Sub-Committee □ Mr. Jorge Basto, Sub-Committee Chair

Mr. Basto updated the committee on the single sign-on gateway. The Georgia Court site continues to be a source of assistance during the COVID pandemic. The website supported by Mr. Sterling Perry has begun to host Court standards and guidelines. Mr. Basto emphasized the Gateway accesses totals has continued to grow daily.

Standards Committee □ Judge David T. Emerson, Chair

Judge David Emerson provided a brief recap of the case management system standards in collaboration with Christopher Hansard. The JC Committee of Technology will assist in development of the Criminal E-filing Rules; Judge Emerson will collaborate with the subcommittee to complete the rules.

Rules Committee □ Judge Jim Altman, Chair

Judge Altman reviewed the proposed modification of Superior Court Rule 6.1. The discussion lead to have Judge Emerson's standards sub-committee review the Superior Court Rule 6.1 if further review is deemed necessary.

Authentication of Judicial Signature- Judge Stephen Kelley

Judge Kelley reports that the authentication of judicial signature rule has passed the first read phase with Superior Court Committee. The upcoming committee meeting will be held via Zoom at which the rule regarding the authentication of judicial signature will be discussed.

Next Meeting

The next committee meeting is scheduled for September 10, 2020 via Zoom Communication



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: Judicial COVID-19 Task Force

RE: Task Force Updated Report Draft

DATE: August 12, 2020

Please note that the Judicial COVID-19 Task Force report has been updated. The most current draft can be found at <https://georgiacourts.gov/judicial-covid-19-task-force/draft-documents/>.



GEORGIA STATE-WIDE BUSINESS COURT

NATHAN DEAL JUDICIAL CENTER
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ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334

WALTER W. DAVIS
JUDGE

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Georgia State-wide Business Court Judicial Council Meeting August 14, 2020

To the Judicial Council:

Thank you for taking a moment to read this brief update on the new Georgia State-wide Business Court (the “Court”). Before turning to substance, however, I want to begin by saying “thank you” to those of you who—in the face of great personal risk—continue to administer justice in your local communities and on the front lines. You are meeting an unprecedented challenge with grace and fortitude, and we are grateful for your service.

I am pleased to report that the Georgia State-wide Business Court has commenced operations effective August 1. To be sure, it is an historic moment and cause for celebration. That said, it is, in many respects, an odd and disconcerting moment in time for the Court and its staff. We carry with us, on the one hand, immense hope and enthusiasm for our new venture, emboldened by the moments when we see the Court coming to life, now and over the last several weeks (some of which I share below). On the other hand, however, we are reminded every day that we are under a continuing State of Judicial Emergency, beset by a global pandemic that seems, in our weaker moments, almost endless. It is, therefore, with equal parts pride and guilt that I share with you the following update.

In the months since our last meeting, the Business Court has emerged from concept to reality and has experienced a number of highlights and “firsts” along the way, including:

- In June, the Court made its first hire – E. Lynette Jimenez, Senior Staff Attorney and Court Administrator. Lynette previously served as the Program Director and Staff Attorney for the Metro Atlanta Business Case Division.

- In late June and into July, the Court moved into its permanent offices in the Nathan Deal Judicial Center. I would like to specially thank the Supreme Court, in particular Tee Barnes, Lynn Terrell, and Bob McAteer, for allowing us to impose upon you and your team over the last several months. This journey would have been impossible to navigate without your kindness, support, and expertise, none of which I can ever adequately describe or re-pay.
- Also in late June, the Court extended its Memorandum of Understanding with the AOC, under which the AOC will continue to provide the Court with a variety of administrative and support services. (Onsite IT support will continue to remain in the capable hands of Bob McAteer, Director of Technology for the Supreme Court, and his team.)
- Also during the summer, the Court submitted its proposed rules to the Supreme Court for review and approval. A public comment period followed thereafter, and the Court is currently working with Justices Peterson and McMillian to finalize a revised set of rules for re-submission to the Supreme Court. In the meantime, the Court will operate under a Standing Order and the Uniform Superior Court Rules.
- The Court's website (www.gsbc.us) went live in late July, and is slowly moving up in Google's search results. (Note: Nothing makes you feel more helpless, and more like a "start-up," than the moment you are told that you have to earn Google's attention, even as a state agency.) If you are so inclined, a quick visit to the Court's website by the Judicial Council and its members would go a long way in speeding up the "attention-getting" process.
- On July 27, Governor Kemp nominated Angie T. Davis, the longtime Clerk of Court for the State Court of Cobb County, as the first Clerk of Court for the Business Court. Angie was confirmed by a Joint Session of the House and Senate Judiciary Committees and was sworn in earlier this month.

- And perhaps most importantly, the Court received its first case filing on Saturday, August 1 and another soon thereafter – milestones each and, hopefully, the first of many.

I would like to close the update the way I opened, with an expression of thanks and gratitude. At the appropriate time, and (hopefully) in the not-too-distant future, the Court will celebrate its opening and these and other milestones in a post-pandemic world. Until then, please accept our sincere thanks for your continued support, counsel, and fellowship.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Walter W. Davis", written over a horizontal line.

Walter W. Davis
Judge, Georgia State-wide Business Court