

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF DOUGHERTY COUNTY

STATE OF GEORGIA

IN RE: Declaration of Judicial Emergency

Date: September 11, 2020
-----)

FILED
2020 SEP 14 AM 9:08
EVONNE S. FULL
DOUGHERTY COUNTY
CLERK OF COURTS

ORDER EXTENDING DECLARATION OF JUDICIAL EMERGENCY

Based on the continued transmission of the Coronavirus/COVID-19 throughout

Dougherty County, on March 13, 2020, the undersigned entered pursuant to O. C. G. A. §38-3-61 an Order Declaring Judicial Emergency for the Municipal Court of Albany, and the Probate, Juvenile, Magistrate, State and Superior Courts of Dougherty County and clerks. March 14, 2020, Chief Justice Harold Melton, of the Supreme Court of Georgia, entered an Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency.

Since the above dates, the undersigned and Chief Justice Melton have repeatedly modified and extended the Judicial Emergency Orders mentioned above, as the conditions which necessitated them have either remained the same or gotten worse.

The most recent Statewide Judicial Emergency Order was set to expire Thursday, September 10, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. However, on that date, Chief Justice extended the Statewide Judicial Emergency Orders until October 10, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.

The current Dougherty Circuit Judicial Emergency Order is set to expire on Friday, October 11, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. Wherefore the undersigned hereby

ORDERS that the current Dougherty Judicial Circuit Judicial Emergency Order be extended and remain in effect until October 11, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.

All courts in this Circuit are again directed to adhere to the court Guidelines and any amendments, modifications or clarifications of them, in the conduct of in-person judicial proceedings, as well as the amendments, requirements, guidance and clarifications regarding the operations of the Courts that are set forth in the Statewide Emergency Orders issued by Chief Justice Melton, unless and until such orders are vacated, amended, modified or further extended.

All courts in this Circuit are again directed to continue to use teleconferences and video conferences as the preferred alternative to in-person proceedings to conduct both essential and non-essential civil and criminal proceedings whenever possible.

This Circuit judicial emergency order shall be subject to and governed by all of the provisions contained in Chief Justice Melton's statewide order, particularly with regard but not limited to the reimposition of deadlines on litigants.

Specifically with regard to Grand Jury Proceedings and Jury Trials, the Courts in this Circuit will proceed as directed and be governed by Section I and Section II of the Chief Justice's above referenced Statewide Emergency Order entered September 10, 2020. The undersigned may, in his discretion, amend this Order to incorporate any clarifications, guidelines and procedures that are adopted for the resumption of grand jury proceedings, as well as jury trials once the Chief Justice authorizes Courts to proceed with jury trials.

Pursuant to O. C. G. A. §38-3-63, the undersigned hereby

ORDERS that the Sheriff of Dougherty County post this Order on the Sheriff's notification site and in the Dougherty County Judicial Building (Courthouse);

FURTHER ORDERS that a copy of this Order be immediately served upon Chief Justice Harold Melton of the Supreme Court of Georgia, such service to be accomplished via email to Tee Barnes, the Clerk of the Supreme Court of Georgia at barnest@gasupreme.us;

FURTHER ORDERS that a copy of this Order be immediately served upon the Judges of the Court of Appeals of Georgia, such service to be accomplished via email to Steve E. Castlen, the Clerk of the Court of Appeals of Georgia at castlen@gaappeals.us ;

FURTHER ORDERS that a copy of this Order be served upon each of the Judges of the Municipal Court of Albany, and the Probate, Juvenile, Magistrate, State and Superior Courts of Dougherty County, and the Clerk of Superior and State Courts, by reasonable means to assure expeditious receipt;

FURTHER ORDERS that notice of the issuance of this Order be given to affected parties, counsel for affected parties, and the public by means calculated to reach such, including by posting at the courthouse, in the newspaper, email, facsimile, or announcements on radio or television.

SO ORDERED, September 11, 2020 at 4:00 o'clock p.m.



WILLIE E. LOCKETTE, Chief Judge
Dougherty County Superior Court
Dougherty Judicial Circuit