

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURTS OF THE ATLANTIC JUDICIAL CIRCUIT**  
**STATE OF GEORGIA**

**RE: JURY TRIALS**

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 a Statewide Judicial Emergency pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-61. That Order has been extended several times. During the Statewide Judicial Emergency, Courts in the Atlantic Judicial Circuit have continued to perform essential functions despite the pandemic.

The March 14, 2020, Statewide Judicial Emergency Order suspended, tolled or extended many of the deadlines imposed by law in civil and criminal cases. As of July 14, 2020, most of the deadlines on litigants have been reimposed. Subsequently, Chief Justice Melton through the March 9, 2021, extension to the Statewide Judicial Emergency, authorized the Chief Judge of each superior court, in his or her discretion, to resume jury trial proceedings, if doing so could be done safely and in compliance with public health guidance based on local conditions. This authorization has been included in the April 8, 2021, extension of the Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency.

On September 17, 2020, the judges of the superior courts of the Atlantic Judicial Circuit, held a meeting of the stake holders of the superior and state courts within the Atlantic Judicial Circuit. Invited to the meeting were representatives from the various sheriffs' offices, district attorney's office, public defender's office, clerks' offices, the state court judges, county governing authorities and representatives from the local bar. After the meeting, a plan to safely conduct court proceedings was prepared and submitted to the Administrative Office of the Courts.

**IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED**, as follows:

Pursuant to the authority granted to the undersigned by the Twelfth Order Extending Declaration of Statewide Judicial Emergency, entered March 9, 2021, and the subsequent extension thereof, jury trials are allowed to commence in the Atlantic Circuit in June 2021. It should be recognized that there are substantial backlogs of unindicted cases, and due to ongoing public health precautions, these proceedings should not occur at the scale or within the speed they occurred before the pandemic.

The Clerks of Superior Court are hereby directed to file a copy of this order in the minutes of the Court and provide a copy of the same to the office of the District Attorney and Circuit Public Defender.

**SO ORDERED**, this 3 day of May, 2021.

  
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**ROBERT L. RUSSELL, III**  
Chief Judge, Superior Courts  
Atlantic Judicial Circuit

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF McINTOSH COUNTY

STATE OF GEORGIA

IN RE: DECLARATION OF  
JUDICIAL EMERGENCY

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STANDING ORDER OF THE COURT

**TEMPORARY DESIGNATION OF AN ALTERNATE  
FACILITY FOR THE CONDUCT OF JUDICIAL BUSINESS**

On March 14, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Honorable Harold D. Melton, as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia, issued an Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency (“Order”) pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-61. That Order has been extended, with modifications, with the latest extension issued on April 8, 2021. Upon review of the Statewide Judicial Emergency Orders from the Supreme Court of Georgia and all relevant CDC guidelines and recommended practices, it is apparent that the holding of grand jury and jury trials in McIntosh County, Georgia, in the traditional location at the courthouse cannot be done safely (due to the ongoing pandemic) while following the recommended guidelines from the CDC, Georgia Department of Public Health and the Judicial Emergency Order and extensions thereof. There is a reasonably accessible and appropriate location for such business to be conducted in McIntosh County. The undersigned has determined that grand jury and jury trial proceedings can be conducted safely and in compliance with the public health guidelines, albeit with proper protocols and an alternative location for such proceedings.

As an “authorized judicial official” as defined in O.C.G.A. § 38-3-60, and acting in accordance with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 38-3-60, *et seq.*, and U.S.C.R. 45, it is hereby declared that this Court is confronted with a judicial emergency. Therefore,

pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-61, the undersigned, Chief Judge of the Superior Courts of the Atlantic Judicial Circuit, DOES HEREBY REAFFIRM the existence of a Judicial Emergency in the Atlantic Judicial Circuit in McIntosh County, Georgia. The nature of this emergency is the continued transmission of Coronavirus /COVID-19 throughout McIntosh County and the potential for infection of those who are required to appear in our courts, who may be required to interact with large groups and those who work in our court facilities.

**WHEREFORE**, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-61(c) the Court finds that the circumstances underlying the judicial emergency makes access to the McIntosh County Courthouse temporarily impossible or impractical for grand jury proceedings or jury trials. The Court hereby designates the following facility, which is reasonably accessible and appropriate, for the conduct of court business: McIntosh County Academy, 8945 Georgia Highway 17, Darien, Georgia 31305.

The alternate facility shall be accessible to the public pursuant to the Superior Court's Standing Administrative Order and during the hours required by O.C.G.A. § 15-6-93.

Unless otherwise ordered, this Order shall remain in effect until further order of this Court or until the Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency is rescinded or allowed to expire.

This Order shall not serve to alter, amend or in any way modify the earlier declarations and determinations referenced above.

**IT IS ORDERED** that the Sheriff of McIntosh County shall post this Order in a public manner in the affected courthouse location and at each public entry point of the courthouse.

There shall be no interruption of normal electronic filing services and electronic digital search capabilities in the affected courts to the extent they are otherwise normally available.

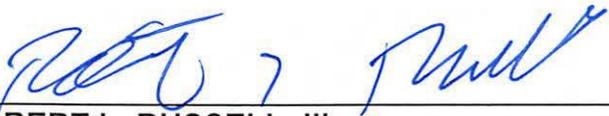
Moreover, the McIntosh County Courthouse shall remain open for public access during regular business hours 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, less and except legal holidays.

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that the undersigned shall immediately notify and serve Chief Justice Harold D. Melton of the Supreme Court of Georgia with a copy of this Order, such service to be accomplished via e-mail to Tee Barnes, the Clerk of the Supreme Court of Georgia at [barnest@gasupreme.us](mailto:barnest@gasupreme.us);

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

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

**SO ORDERED**, this 3 day of May, 2021.

  
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**ROBERT L. RUSSELL, III**  
Chief Judge, Superior Courts  
Atlantic Judicial Circuit

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF LONG COUNTY**

**STATE OF GEORGIA**

**IN RE: DECLARATION OF  
JUDICIAL EMERGENCY**

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**STANDING ORDER OF THE COURT**

**TEMPORARY DESIGNATION OF AN ALTERNATE  
FACILITY FOR THE CONDUCT OF JUDICIAL BUSINESS**

On March 14, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Honorable Harold D. Melton, as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia, issued an Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency (“Order”) pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-61. That Order has been extended, with modifications, with the latest extension issued on April 8, 2021. Upon review of the Statewide Judicial Emergency Orders from the Supreme Court of Georgia and all relevant CDC guidelines and recommended practices, it is apparent that the holding of jury trials in Long County, Georgia, in the traditional location, the courthouse, cannot be done safely (due to the ongoing pandemic) while following the recommended guidelines from the CDC, Georgia Department of Public Health and the Judicial Emergency Order and extensions thereof. There is a reasonably accessible and appropriate location for such business to be conducted in Long County. The undersigned has determined that jury trial proceedings can be conducted safely and in compliance with the public health guidelines, albeit with proper protocols and an alternative location for such proceedings.

As an “authorized judicial official” as defined in O.C.G.A. § 38-3-60, and acting in accordance with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 38-3-60, *et seq.*, and U.S.C.R. 45, it is hereby declared that this Court is confronted with a judicial emergency. Therefore,

pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-61, the undersigned, Chief Judge of the Superior Courts of the Atlantic Judicial Circuit, DOES HEREBY REAFFIRM the existence of a Judicial Emergency in the Atlantic Judicial Circuit in Long County, Georgia. The nature of this emergency is the continued transmission of Coronavirus /COVID-19 throughout Long County and the potential for infection of those who are required to appear in our courts, who may be required to interact with large groups and those who work in our court facilities.

**WHEREFORE**, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-61(c) the Court finds that the circumstances underlying the judicial emergency makes access to the Long County Courthouse temporarily impossible or impractical for grand jury proceedings or jury trials. The Court hereby designates the following facility, which is reasonably accessible and appropriate, for the conduct of court business: Blakely Thornton Gymnasium, 468 S. McDonald St., Ludowici, Georgia 31316.

The alternate facility shall be accessible to the public pursuant to the Superior Court's Standing Administrative Order and during the hours required by O.C.G.A. § 15-6-93.

Unless otherwise ordered, this Order shall remain in effect until further order of this Court or until the Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency is rescinded or allowed to expire.

This Order shall not serve to alter, amend or in any way modify the earlier declarations and determinations referenced above.

**IT IS ORDERED** that the Sheriff of Long County shall post this Order in a public manner in the affected courthouse location and at each public entry point of the courthouse.

There shall be no interruption of normal filing services and electronic digital search capabilities in the affected courts to the extent they are otherwise normally available.

Moreover, the Long County Courthouse shall remain open for public access during regular business hours 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, less and except legal holidays.

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that the undersigned shall immediately notify and serve Chief Justice Harold D. Melton of the Supreme Court of Georgia with a copy of this Order, such service to be accomplished via e-mail to Tee Barnes, the Clerk of the Supreme Court of Georgia at [barnest@gasupreme.us](mailto:barnest@gasupreme.us);

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

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

**SO ORDERED**, this 3 day of May, 2021.

  
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**ROBERT L. RUSSELL, III**  
Chief Judge, Superior Courts  
Atlantic Judicial Circuit

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF EVANS COUNTY**

**STATE OF GEORGIA**

**IN RE: DECLARATION OF  
JUDICIAL EMERGENCY**

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**STANDING ORDER OF THE COURT**

**TEMPORARY DESIGNATION OF AN ALTERNATE  
FACILITY FOR THE CONDUCT OF JUDICIAL BUSINESS**

On March 14, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Honorable Harold D. Melton, as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia, issued an Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency (“Order”) pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-61. That Order has been extended, with modifications, with the latest extension issued on April 8, 2021. Upon review of the Statewide Judicial Emergency Orders from the Supreme Court of Georgia and all relevant CDC guidelines and recommended practices, it is apparent that the holding of grand jury and jury trials in Evans County, Georgia, in the traditional location, at the courthouse, cannot be done safely (due to the ongoing pandemic) while following the recommended guidelines from the CDC, Georgia Department of Public Health and the Judicial Emergency Order and extensions thereof. There is a reasonably accessible and appropriate location for such business to be conducted in Evans County. The undersigned has determined that grand jury and jury trial proceedings can be conducted safely and in compliance with the public health guidelines, albeit with proper protocols and an alternative location for such proceedings.

As an “authorized judicial official” as defined in O.C.G.A. § 38-3-60, and acting in accordance with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 38-3-60, *et seq.*, and U.S.C.R. 45, it is hereby declared that this Court is confronted with a judicial emergency. Therefore,

pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-61, the undersigned, Chief Judge of the Superior Courts of the Atlantic Judicial Circuit, DOES HEREBY REAFFIRM the existence of a Judicial Emergency in the Atlantic Judicial Circuit in Evans County, Georgia. The nature of this emergency is the continued transmission of Coronavirus /COVID-19 throughout Evans County and the potential for infection of those who are required to appear in our courts, who may be required to interact with large groups and those who work in our court facilities.

**WHEREFORE**, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-61(c) the Court finds that the circumstances underlying the judicial emergency makes access to the Evans County Courthouse temporarily impossible or impractical for grand jury proceedings or jury trials. The Court hereby designates the following facility, which is reasonably accessible and appropriate, for the conduct of court business: Veteran's Community Center, 818 W. Main St., Claxton, Georgia 30417.

The alternate facility shall be accessible to the public pursuant to the Superior Court's Standing Administrative Order and during the hours required by O.C.G.A. § 15-6-93.

Unless otherwise ordered, this Order shall remain in effect until further order of this Court or until the Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency is rescinded or allowed to expire.

This Order shall not serve to alter, amend or in any way modify the earlier declarations and determinations referenced above.

**IT IS ORDERED** that the Sheriff of Evans County shall post this Order in a public manner in the affected courthouse location and at each public entry point of the courthouse.

There shall be no interruption of normal electronic filing services and electronic digital search capabilities in the affected courts to the extent they are otherwise normally available.

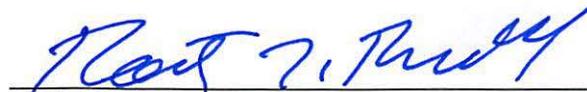
Moreover, the Evans County Courthouse shall remain open for public access during regular business hours 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, less and except legal holidays.

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that the undersigned shall immediately notify and serve Chief Justice Harold D. Melton of the Supreme Court of Georgia with a copy of this Order, such service to be accomplished via e-mail to Tee Barnes, the Clerk of the Supreme Court of Georgia at [barnest@gasupreme.us](mailto:barnest@gasupreme.us);

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

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

**SO ORDERED**, this 4 day of May, 2021.



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**ROBERT L. RUSSELL, III**  
Chief Judge, Superior Courts  
Atlantic Judicial Circuit