

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF WARE COUNTY
WAYCROSS JUDICIAL CIRCUIT and WARE COUNTY MAGISTRATE COURT
STATE OF GEORGIA**

**TO THE JUDGES AND CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT
TO THE JUDGE(S) AND CLERK OF MAGISTRATE COURT
TO THE JUDGE(S) AND CLERK OF PROBATE COURT
TO THE JUDGE(S) AND CLERK OF JUVENILE COURT
TO THE SHERIFF OF WARE COUNTY
TO ALL ATTORNEYS AND LITIGANTS**

ORDER-DECLARING A JUDICIAL EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, it has been determined that a judicial emergency exists in this county in the Ware County Magistrate Court;

WHEREAS, it has come to the attention of the undersigned, that persons working regularly in the Ware County Magistrate Court have tested positive for COVID-19 and are experiencing symptoms.

WHEREAS, despite the implementation of and adherence to designated public health and safety guidelines, the Magistrate Court Judge of Ware County and staff and others have tested positive for Covid-19 and/or have been exposed thereto. Pursuant to the CDC and Department of Public Health rules and after consultation with the DPH it has been determined that those who have COVID-19 should quarantine for 5 days after their last symptom and wear masks for another 5 days upon return to work. This requirement has resulted in the Judge and several Staff members of the Magistrate Court being in self-quarantine. The Judge and his staff work extremely close together and the chance of exposure is high. Based upon the foregoing, the Ware County Magistrate Judge made the decision to limit the operations of the Ware County Magistrate Court as of 12:00 (noon) on December 29, 2021. On December 29, 2021 the Ware County Magistrate Judge advised the Court of his decision and requested a Declaration of Judicial Emergency for the Ware County Magistrate Court. This Court finds that said request is reasonable and prudent and is in the best interest of the public and all courthouse personnel.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-61, the Magistrate Court of Ware County, Georgia shall conduct limited operations and services beginning Wednesday, December 29, 2021 at noon for a period of fifteen (15) days or until further order of the Court. Provided this order is not extended or otherwise modified, the Magistrate Court will re-open for normal operations on Friday, January 13, 2022 at 12:00 p.m.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that upon the reopening of the Magistrate Court, social distancing and the wearing of masks shall be strictly enforced and the use of appropriate sanitizers by all occupants of the Court or the general public entering the Court shall be strictly enforced.

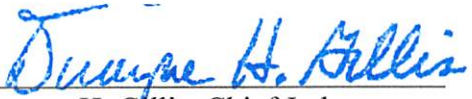
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-62, all civil court deadlines, time schedules or filing requirements are hereby suspended, tolled, or extended for the duration of the judicial emergency as noted above. At this time, no criminal related deadlines are affected by this order, and the Chief Magistrate has made arrangements to continue the services and operations of the Ware County Magistrate Court by maintaining a drop box out front that will be checked regularly, by posting emergency contact numbers, and by scheduling appointments for the public and legal community on an as needed basis to limit the spread of COVID-19;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Sheriff or his/her designee shall post a copy of this notice on the courthouse doors, and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of the Superior Court, or her designee, shall immediately notify the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and Clerks of the Court of Appeals and Supreme Court by sending them a copy of this notice and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, the County Manager, or his designee, shall post a copy of this notice and any subsequent modification or extension in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 38-3-63 by posting it on the county website or other appropriate public address system.

SO ORDERED this 29th day of December, 2021.



Dwayne H. Gillis, Chief Judge
Superior Court of Ware County