

Order Extending Emergency  
Order Declaring A Judicial Emergency  
In the Waycross Judicial Circuit

On August 29th, 2023, this Court declared a judicial emergency due to Hurricane Idalia and the accompanying projected path as reported by various news and weather channels. Hurricane Idalia came through the Waycross Judicial Circuit in the late morning and afternoon of August 30, 2023. Idalia caused damage to roads, homes, businesses and extensive power outages throughout the Circuit. Additionally, internet and cell services have been severely curtailed in many areas. In certain areas, travel is impeded due to downed trees.

Due to communication problems, the Court is unable to fully ascertain all of the impediments faced by lawyers, litigants, law enforcement, Clerks and staff and other courthouse personnel. Accordingly, the Court considers reports from Clerks with which it can communicate, courthouse closing decisions from County Commissions, decisions from the Board of Education regarding school closings, news reports and various other sources.

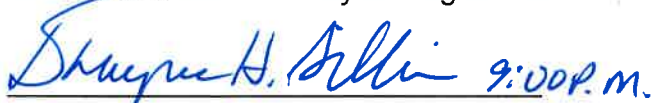
A substantial number of people in Ware County remain without power and the Court has been notified that Ware County Government buildings and the Courthouse will be closed on Friday, September 1, 2023. Next, the Clerk of Court in Pierce County reports having worked with County Officials into the late evening in order to determine if the Courthouse could open. The Pierce County Courthouse remains without power, internet or phone services.

The Court believes that in the exercise of caution and prudence, and based on the available information, that the Order of August 29, 2023 and the extension thereof dated August 30th, 2023, declaring a Judicial Emergency in the Waycross Judicial Circuit shall be extended through September 4, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. unless otherwise extended by the Court. The extension will cover Ware and Pierce Counties only.

All provisions and protections, rights, and privileges provided in the order of August 29th, 2023 shall remain in full force and effect in all counties covered by the present order.

The distribution of this Order will be via email, text, photograph and verbally, if necessary. The Georgia Supreme Court and Georgia Court of Appeals will be notified via email if service is available.

So ordered this 31st day of August 2023.

 9:00 p.m.

Dwayne H. Gillis

Chief Judge of the Waycross Judicial Circuit