



THE SUPERIOR COURT
EASTERN JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

422 CHATHAM COUNTY COURTHOUSE
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PENNY HAAS FREESEMANN
CHIEF JUDGE
MARY ANN BOYD
JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

MEMORANDUM (AMENDED 04.09.2020)

TO: All litigants, attorneys, and members of the public

FROM: Chief Judge Penny Haas Freeseemann, Superior Court, Eastern Judicial Circuit

DATE: April 9, 2020

On March 14, 2020, the Chief Justice of the Georgia Supreme Court issued an Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency. This Order has now been extended until Wednesday, May 13, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. In keeping with this Order and to ensure continued operations of the Eastern Judicial Circuit (Chatham County), the court schedules will continue to be reduced and modified to lessen the risk to staff, attorneys, parties, and the public.

Gatherings of more than 10 people are prohibited. As long as there is a Judicial Emergency, the following will occur in Chatham County Superior Court:

1. GENERAL CONCERNS.

- a. No one should come to court if they are exhibiting any signs of illness. Please notify the office of the On-Site Judge (see below) if you will be unable to appear.
- b. If you are attending a court appearance, please leave all non-essential people at home. Avoid bringing children or family members, especially the elderly, to court.
- c. The courthouse will remain open to the public, but the general public is encouraged to stay home. Only parties, attorneys, and necessary witnesses should appear for hearings going forward. Pursuant to the dictates of the Chief Justice's Judicial Emergency Order, only essential matters will be heard or handled.
- d. All deadlines have been suspended during the Judicial Emergency, and the public is encouraged to wait until the Emergency has been lifted before coming to the Superior Court Clerk's Office to file any Petitions, Answers to Petitions, Motions, or other Pleadings.

2. **JURY SERVICE.** All juries are cancelled through May 31, 2020. If you have received a jury summons for that period of time, you will not be needed, and you do not need to come to the courthouse. If you have received a jury notice for a date after May 31, 2020, please call the jury line (912-652-7169) to find out if you are needed. This is especially important since the time period of the Judicial Emergency may need to be further extended.

3. **CIVIL AND DOMESTIC MATTERS.** All civil and domestic calendars except as listed below are cancelled through May 31, 2020. Please do not contact the judges' offices to reschedule any cancelled hearing until after the Judicial Emergency, as new dates are not yet available.
During the Judicial Emergency:
 - a. Consent orders and proposed orders on uncontested matters can be emailed to the office of the on-site judge. If you have any questions about finalizing these Orders/Uncontested Matters, please call or email the on-site judge's office. There is no need to come to the courthouse for this purpose.
 - b. The Court is continuing to hear cases such as family violence temporary protective orders, restraining orders, emergency civil motions, and the like. Such matters should be filed electronically other than in cases of family violence or civil temporary restraining orders. The Court has made arrangements for hearing Family Violence and Stalking cases with maximum physical distancing.
 - c. Ex Parte emergency matters will be heard by the on-site judge or, in his/her discretion, by video and/or audio conference call with another of the Superior Court judges. Any emergency matters that need an evidentiary hearing, such as the 12 Month Protective Order hearing, will be heard by the on-site judge in Courtroom 4B.
 - d. All other emergency matters, including general civil temporary restraining orders and other emergency domestic/civil matters, should be filed with the Clerk, with a copy emailed to the assigned judge's administrative assistant. With the exception of civil temporary restraining orders and family violence temporary protective orders, emergency domestic/civil matters must be electronically filed through eFileGA. You will be notified if the matter will be heard and, if so, if it will be heard remotely or in the courtroom.

4. **CRIMINAL MATTERS.**
 - a. All criminal calendars except as listed below remain cancelled through May 31, 2020. Please do not contact the judges' offices to reschedule any cancelled hearing until after the Judicial Emergency, as new dates are not yet available.
 - b. **Bond Hearings.** Bond hearings will continue to be scheduled, and will be handled by conference call. The parties are encouraged to work out consent bond hearings on every case possible, for both new bonds and reconsideration requests. If there is still disagreement, the defense counsel should file a motion. Conference call hearings will be scheduled on a random assignment basis to hearing slots set before the Judges of this Court. In the event a Motion for Reconsideration is filed regarding a bond decision made during this judicial emergency, the Judge who originally made the decision will hear the

reconsideration. Hearings will be scheduled within 48 hours or as soon thereafter as possible.

- c. **Calendar Calls.** No further calendar calls will be scheduled. The lawyers of the Public Defender's Office are appointed for all individuals arrested and held at the Chatham County Detention Center, except in those situations where private counsel enters an appearance. To assist in this matter, private counsel should notify the Public Defender of their representation immediately upon being retained.
- d. **Motion hearings.** Criminal motions calendars are cancelled through May 31, 2020. However any emergency matters will be heard via conference call with the assigned judge or, if an evidentiary hearing is needed, by the on-site judge in Courtroom 4B.
- e. **Search Warrants.** Ongoing search warrant matters will be handled via video or phone conference by the judge already handling the matter. New search warrants will be heard by the on-site judge, or as may be scheduled from time to time by the other judges of the Circuit.
- f. **Revocations.** All probation revocation calendars are cancelled through May 31, 2020. However, attorneys and probation officers are encouraged to work out consent revocations and present them to the assigned judge or the on-site judge.

5. **SUPERIOR COURT ACCOUNTABILITY COURTS.** The Superior Court's Drug, Mental Health, and Veterans Courts will be managed at the discretion of the Presiding Judge of each accountability court. However, the participants are excused from reporting to courtroom proceedings during this Judicial Emergency, unless specifically instructed to do so by their court coordinator, probation officer, or case manager. For Drug and Veterans Courts, please contact Patricia Pinkney at 912-652-7144. For Mental Health Court please contact Steve Brown at 912-652-7167.

6. **ON-SITE JUDGE.** Each day there will be an On-Site Judge who will be in Courtroom 4B. The On-Site Judge's name and office phone number shall be posted on the door of Courtroom 4B in the event the courtroom is closed. Any dockets for the On-Site Judge will be posted on the Chatham County Superior Court's webpage, in a conspicuous place at or near the front door of the courthouse, on the monitors located throughout the courthouse, and on the door of Courtroom 4B. The On-Site Judge shall hear all essential matters that need to be heard that day in keeping with the Chief Justice's Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency. The On-Site Judge will transfer matters to the other Judges as needed throughout the days and weeks of this Emergency. The Schedule will be as follows:

WEEK OF April 13:	Judge Abbot
WEEK OF APRIL 20:	Judge Freesemann
WEEK OF APRIL 27:	Judge Karpf
WEEK OF MAY 4:	Judge Morse
WEEK OF MAY 11:	Judge Walmsley

This schedule will be amended to include additional on-site judges should the judicial emergency extend beyond May 13, 2020.

The phones and emails of all Superior Court Judges' offices and Superior Court Administrator's Office will be monitored during business hours, with calls returned as soon as possible. The office numbers and phone numbers are:

JUDGE ABBOT

Administrative Assistant: Angela Hollinger - 912-652-7162
arholli@chathamcounty.org

Staff Attorney: Letta Sneed - 912-652-7165

Case Manager: Jessica Easley - 912-652-7135

JUDGE BASS

Administrative Assistant: Gloria Frazier - 912-652-7154
gfrazier@chathamcounty.org

Staff Attorney: Ann Searcy - 912-652-7157

Case Manager: Shana Frye - 912-652-7137

CHIEF JUDGE FREESEMAN

Administrative Assistant: Mary Ann Boyd - 912-652-7252
maboym@chathamcounty.org

Staff Attorney: Mandy Roberts - 912-652-7153

Case Manager: Porche Kelley - 912-652-7138

JUDGE KARP

Administrative Assistant: Tamara Bennett-Thompson - 912-652-7460
tbthompson@chathamcounty.org

Staff Attorney: Kara Mobley - 912-652-7569

Case Manager: Porche Kelley - 912-652-7138

JUDGE MORSE

Administrative Assistant: Yvette Taylor - 912-652-7236
ytaylor@chathamcounty.org

Staff Attorney: Lynsay Simons - 912-652-7237

Case Manager: Jessica Easley - 912-652-7135

JUDGE WALMSLEY

Administrative Assistant: Debbie Carney - 912-652-7158
dcarney@chathamcounty.org

Staff Attorney: Samantha Glaudel-Smith - 912-652-7161

Case Manager: Shana Frye - 912-652-7137

COURT ADMINISTRATION

Crystal Cooper, Superior Court Administrator - 912-652-7129

Casey Martinez, Deputy Court Administrator III/ADR Director - 912-652-7128