



H. GREGORY FOWLER  
CHIEF JUDGE  
THE STATE COURT OF CHATHAM COUNTY  
430 CHATHAM COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
133 MONTGOMERY STREET  
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 31401-3239

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JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

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**TO:** Litigants, attorneys, and members of the public

**FROM:** H. Gregory Fowler, Chief Judge of State Court of Chatham County *H. Gregory Fowler*

**DATE:** April 10, 2020

**RE:** State Court Judicial Emergency Operations Protocol

**STATE COURT JUDICIAL EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PROTOCOL**

1. **GENERAL CONCERNS:** The provisions of this protocol shall remain in effect until the expiration of the current Statewide Judicial Emergency including any extension, or further order of the court, whichever shall occur first. All court dockets are cancelled. However, the courthouse remains open to the public and access is subject to orders of the Chief Judge of Superior Court.

2. **OFFICE OF THE CLERK:** The Clerk's Office is open, but the court would encourage limiting personal appearances in the office to emergency matters. All civil filings are required to be made electronically and pursuant to applicable law. Criminal filings can be made electronically at the filer's option. 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 Clerk's Office to file any Petitions, Answers to Petitions, Motions, or other Pleadings. In person payment of fines, whether on probation or not, is discouraged during the Judicial Emergency period.

**3. JURY TRIALS AND JURY SERVICE:** All jury trials and juries have been cancelled through Sunday, 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 to report after May 31, 2020, please call the jury line at (912) 652-7169 to find out if you are needed.

**4. CIVIL AND CRIMINAL GENERAL MATTERS.** All civil and criminal calendars have been cancelled during the Judicial Emergency. Do not contact the judicial offices to reschedule civil and criminal matters. You will receive new notices when court dates have been rescheduled. Consent orders and uncontested matters can be emailed to the office of the assigned judge through the judge's staff attorney. Miscellaneous matters may be heard by telephonic or video conference. Please contact the assigned judge's staff attorney if you have an exigent matter that you believe requires a conference. Keep in mind that all deadlines are suspended during the Judicial Emergency and the consent of all parties to proceed may be required.

**5. CRIMINAL BOND HEARINGS:** The Clerk's Office is authorized to release on subpoena any defendant arrested on a Failure To Appear warrant. The Clerk's Office will forward subpoenas to the Sheriff each morning. Further, a *Limited Standing Order For Probation Violation Own Recognizance Release* has been entered and is attached for reference. Therefore, State Court anticipates that bond petition needs should be greatly reduced. For other cases, the parties are encouraged to work out consent bonds to the extent possible. If there is still disagreement, the defense counsel should file a motion. A copy of the motion should be e-mailed to opposing counsel and also to the assigned judge through their staff attorney. Bond hearings can be scheduled for telephonic or video conference and will be coordinated by the judge's staff attorney.

**6. DUI COURT:** DUI Court is considered an essential function of the courts. With this in mind, DUI Court is continuing to provide services to all DUI Court participants. While the Judicial Emergency Order is in effect, there will be no regularly scheduled DUI Court sessions held in the courthouse. If there is a sanctioning issue, Judge Fowler will review this and determine whether a hearing is required. All questions regarding DUI Court should be emailed to [dwood@chathamcounty.org](mailto:dwood@chathamcounty.org).

**7. CONTACT WITH THE COURT:** You are encouraged to contact judicial offices as needed by email directed to the assigned judge's staff attorney or administrative assistant. Voicemail will be checked and telephone calls returned, but much of the Court staff will be working remotely. The rules prohibiting ex parte communication with judges remain in effect. Contact information for judicial offices:

**Chambers of Chief Judge H. Gregory Fowler**

Administrative Assistant Nell McCoy (912) 652-7565; [rnmccoy@chathamcounty.org](mailto:rnmccoy@chathamcounty.org)

Staff Attorney Mark Smith (912) 652-7527; [mesmith@chathamcounty.org](mailto:mesmith@chathamcounty.org)

**Chambers of Judge Hermann W. Coolidge, Jr.**

Administrative Assistant Patricia McCoy (912) 652-7495; [pmccoy@chathamcounty.org](mailto:pmccoy@chathamcounty.org)

Staff Attorney Alison Kennickell (912) 652-7496; askennickell@chathamcounty.org

**Chambers of Judge Gregory V. Sapp**

Administrative Assistant Sandra Kent (912) 652-7556; sckent@chathamcounty.org

Staff Attorney Lauren Blatt (912) 652-7528; lwblatt@chathamcounty.org

For **criminal cases** contact: Staff Attorney Lindsay Berman-Hansell (912) 652-7563;  
[lbhansell@chathamcounty.org](mailto:lbhansell@chathamcounty.org)

Additional information is available at the State Court website: <https://courts.chathamcountyga.gov/State>