

IN THE SUPERIOR AND STATE COURTS OF CHATHAM COUNTY
EASTERN JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
STATE OF GEORGIA

FILED IN OFFICE

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DEPT. CLK. SUPERIOR C
CHATHAM COUNTY, GA

IN RE SEALING OF JUROR QUESTIONNAIRES)
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STANDING ORDER SEALING JUROR QUESTIONNAIRES

The judges of the Eastern Judicial Circuit having considered the privacy interests of jurors and potential jurors and upon balancing the interests of the jurors in maintaining their privacy against the interest of the public in an open record of court proceedings, now enter the following findings of fact and conclusions of law:

Citizens of Chatham County are regularly summoned to serve as jurors in the courts of this county. They are required to attend under penalty of law and are further required by law to participate by answering questions on juror questionnaires on a standard form and on specially created forms for certain cases.

Many of the questions are personal in nature and inquire about jurors' family members as well as the jurors themselves. Jurors are not parties to the cases before them but are required to participate and cooperate in order to allow the criminal and civil justice systems to work effectively.

Juror questionnaires are copied and provided to the opposing parties, to the court and to the court staff. Those copies are destroyed after trial. However, one copy is filed of the record of the case being tried. The record is open to the public. Personal information about jurors is thus maintained in an open record.

The Court finds that juror privacy should be protected. There is no countervailing public

interest that outweighs the right and interest of jurors in protecting their personal information from unnecessary dissemination. Pursuant to Uniform Superior Court Rule 21.2, the Court finds that the potential harm resulting to jurors and their families by maintaining a copy of the questionnaires in the public record clearly outweighs any harm to the public's interest in viewing such questionnaires.

THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

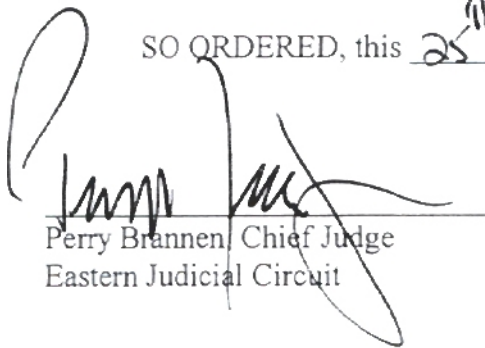
Copies of juror questionnaires should be supplied only to the parties, their counsel and court officials. Upon the conclusion of any trial or at such other time as the questionnaires are no longer of any use, all copies will be retrieved and destroyed by the deputy clerk or jury manager or by such other court official directed to do so.

The juror questionnaire shall not be filed of record until a verdict is returned or the trial is otherwise concluded. At such time, the deputy clerk shall place the juror questionnaire into an envelope, seal it and mark it as "Sealed Under Standing Order." Whenever a juror questionnaire is placed in the court record, it shall be filed under seal under the terms of this Order and shall not be released other than by order of the court.

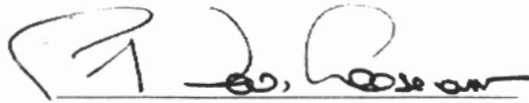
This Order shall **not** be construed to prevent inclusion of the juror questionnaires in the record on appeal where requested by either party.

This Order shall apply to all jurors in Superior and State Courts of Chatham County.

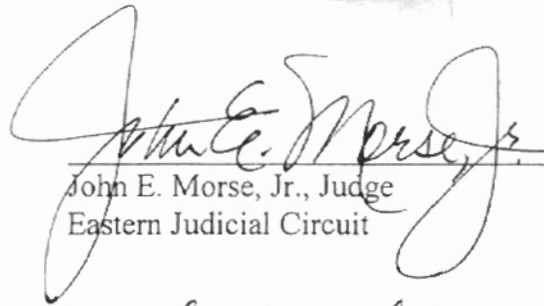
SO ORDERED, this 25th day of OCTOBER, 2007.


Perry Brannen, Chief Judge
Eastern Judicial Circuit

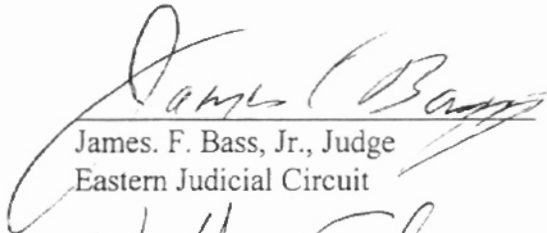

Michael I. Karpf, Administrative Judge
Eastern Judicial Circuit



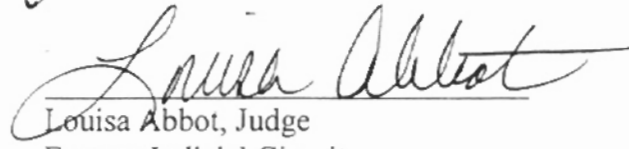
Penny H. Freeseemann, Judge
Eastern Judicial Circuit



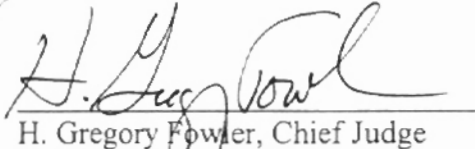
John E. Morse, Jr., Judge
Eastern Judicial Circuit



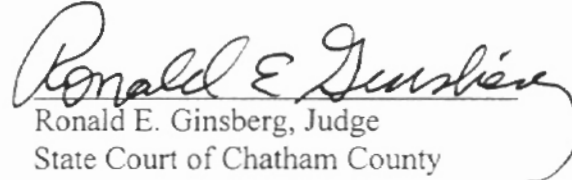
James F. Bass, Jr., Judge
Eastern Judicial Circuit



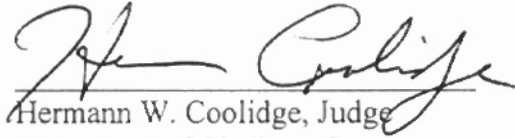
Louisa Abbot, Judge
Eastern Judicial Circuit



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



Ronald E. Ginsberg, Judge
State Court of Chatham County



Hermann W. Coolidge, Judge
State Court of Chatham County