

SEP 23, 2026 09:17 AM



Cecelia Taylor, Clerk of Superior Court
Cobb County, Georgia
26CV00012

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: ORDER APPROVING ALL ORDERS

The Council of Superior Court Judges for the Cobb Judicial Circuit (Council) **HEREBY ORDERS** and **APPROVES** the orders below as the orders are written on the 8th day of August, 2026. Each order, in the form it exists on the so-ordered date below, may be signed by the Chief Judge on behalf of the Council. Each order shall remain unmodified and effective until further order of the Council.

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All standing orders, except the Standing Order Regarding Case Assignment and the Standing Order Regarding Death Penalty Case Assignment, previously filed in this court that have not been re-adopted stand **VACATED**. The Court Administrator shall annually review all orders and make recommendations to the Council.

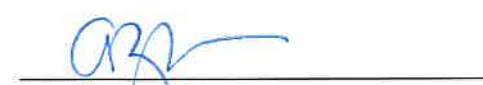
SO ORDERED this 23 day of September, 2026.



ROBERT D. LEONARD II



KIMBERLY A. CHILDS



ANGELA Z. BROWN



HENRY R. THOMPSON



JULIE ADAMS JACOBS



TYLER J. BROWNING



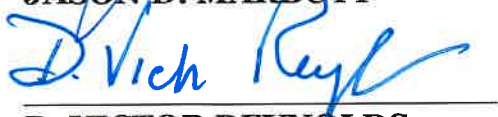
ANN B. HARRIS



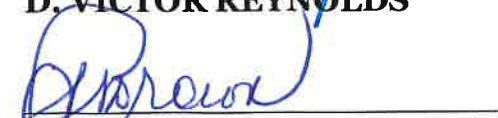
KELLIE S. HILL



JASON D. MARBUTT



D. VICTOR REYNOLDS



SONJA N. BROWN

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

**IN RE: ORDER ESTABLISHING OFFICE
OF COURT ADMINISTRATOR**

26CV00012

**1. STANDING ORDER ESTABLISHING THE OFFICE OF THE COURT
ADMINISTRATOR**

It is **HEREBY ORDERED** that, pursuant to Uniform Superior Court Rule (USCR) 37, there is created and continued the Office of Court Administrator for the Superior Court of Cobb County. The Court Administrator shall serve at the pleasure of the Council of Superior Court Judges.

SO ORDERED this 23 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: **ORDER CONCERNING
CASE REASSIGNMENT
FOLLOWING RECUSALS**

26CV00012

**2. STANDING ORDER REQUIRING NOTICE OF JUDICIAL
REASSIGNMENTS**

Whenever the Clerk of Superior Court reassigns a case following a recusal of any judge of the Superior Court, it is **HEREBY ORDERED** that the Clerk of Court shall immediately notify, in writing, the newly assigned judge, the Court Administrator, all counsel in the case, and any self-represented parties of the new judicial assignment. The Clerk shall assign the next case of the same category-type which would have been otherwise assigned to the transferee-judge (i.e., the receiving judge) to the transferor-judge (i.e., the recusing judge).

SO ORDERED this 23 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

**IN RE: CHANGE OF ADDRESS
PROCEDURE ORDER**

26CV00012

**3. STANDING ORDER REQUIRING EXPEDITIOUS PROCESSING OF ANY
FORMS CHANGING THE ADDRESS OF RECORD FOR ANY PARTY OR
ATTORNEY**

Receiving notice of a court date is at the very heart of the constitutional rights of all parties to be heard in court. Therefore, the Clerk of Superior Court is **HEREBY ORDERED** to file, enter, index, scan, and complete all other related processing needed to update (and make available for public viewing) case information data within **five (5) business days** of receiving any change of address form used by the Clerk's office or any other change of address notice from an attorney or party, however it may be titled.

Failure to comply with the time constraints in this Order will subject the Clerk of Court to the contempt powers of the Court.

SO ORDERED this 23 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

**IN RE: ENTRY OF APPEARANCE &
ATTORNEY APPOINTMENT NOTICES
PROCEDURE ORDER**

26CV00012

**4. STANDING ORDER REQUIRING EXPEDITIOUS PROCESSING OF
ENTRY OF APPEARANCE OF ATTORNEY AND/OR ATTORNEY
APPOINTMENT NOTICES FROM CIRCUIT DEFENDER OFFICE**

Receiving notice of a court date is at the very heart of the constitutional rights of all parties to be heard in court. Therefore, the Clerk of Superior Court is **HEREBY ORDERED** to file, enter, index, scan, and complete all other related processing needed to update (and make available for public viewing) case information data within **five (5) business days** of receiving any entry of appearance, notice of attorney-appointment, or their equivalent (such as the filing of motions or other pleadings).

Failure to comply with the time constraints in this Order will subject the Clerk of Court to the contempt powers of the Court.

SO ORDERED this 27 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: **ORDER LIMITING
ACCESS**

26CV00012

**5. STANDING ORDER LIMITING ELECTRONIC ACCESS TO CERTAIN
COURT RECORDS**

It appearing to the Council of Superior Court Judges for the Cobb Judicial Circuit that the Clerk of the Superior Court of Cobb County has implemented a system whereby the public may view images of any documents filed into any civil or criminal case via the internet, **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that the Clerk shall not allow the public to view, via the internet, images of the following types of documents:

- (1) Domestic Relations Financial Affidavits;
- (2) Guardian *Ad Litem* Reports;
- (3) Psychological Evaluations or any other kind of mental health or medical evaluation or report;
- (4) Income Deduction Orders;
- (5) Qualified Domestic Relation Orders;
- (6) Child Support Worksheets;
- (7) Discovery in criminal cases;
- (8) Juror Questionnaires;
- (9) Victim Impact Statements in criminal cases; or
- (10) All documents in Stalking, Family Violence, and Dating Violence Protective Order cases, consistent with O.C.G.A. § 9-11-7.1(f)(2).

SO ORDERED this 23 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: **EVIDENCE ORDER**

26CV00012

6. STANDING ORDER REGARDING EVIDENCE

The Council of Superior Court Judges for the Cobb Judicial Circuit **HEREBY ORDERS:**

1.

Unless otherwise ordered by this Court, all exhibits that have been admitted into evidence or which have otherwise been made a part of the record in a case shall be kept in the care, custody, and control of the Clerk of this Court and his or her duly authorized agents.

2.

In criminal cases, the Clerk shall safely keep all exhibits referred to in paragraph 1 until:

- a. Six months after the case has been terminated by a *nolle prosequi*;
- b. The case is dismissed;
- c. The defendant in the case has been discharged by a Verdict of Not Guilty;
- d. After a defendant, having been found guilty and sentenced, has served the full term of his or her sentence; or
- e. Upon a defendant's release from commitment where the verdict was Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity.

Upon the occurrence of one of the above listed events, the Clerk shall return all exhibits tendered by the State of Georgia to the District Attorney and shall return all exhibits tender by the defendant to the defendant's last counsel of record. If there was no counsel of record, then the Clerk shall return the evidence to the defendant, if the Clerk can determine the defendant's current residence. If the Clerk is unable to do so, then the Clerk may dispose of the evidence as provided in paragraph 5, below.

3.

In civil cases, the Clerk shall safely keep all exhibits referred to in paragraph 1 until the case is terminated by dismissal or by the entry of a final judgment. Upon the termination of a civil case, the Clerk shall return all exhibits tendered by a party to the party's last counsel of record. If there was no counsel of record, then the Clerk shall return the evidence to the party, if the Clerk can determine the party's current address or place of abode. If the Clerk is unable to return evidence to a party, then the Clerk may dispose of the evidence as provided in paragraph 5, below. Upon the consent of all parties to a civil

case, the Clerk shall immediately return all exhibits to each tendering party upon the parties executing a written receipt for the party's exhibits.

4.

The Clerk shall safely keep exhibits in a secure evidence room pursuant to procedures established by the Clerk and approved by the Council of Superior Court Judges; a copy of the procedures established by the Clerk is attached to this Order as Exhibit A.

5.

Pursuant to OCGA § 50-18-72(c)(1), exhibits tendered to the court as evidence in a criminal or civil trial shall not be open to public inspection without approval of the judge assigned to the case.

Pursuant to OCGA § 50-18-72(c)(2) in the event inspection of the exhibit is not approved by the court, members of the public shall have the following limited right of access to evidentiary exhibits in the custody of the Clerk:

- a. Members of the public may not physically examine original exhibits;
- b. Upon the request of a member of the public, the Clerk shall, at a secure location away from evidence room, create copies of any exhibits which the member of the public wants to inspect;
- c. A member of the public may then inspect the copies at no charge, but if the member of the public wants to keep the copies, then the Clerk may charge the member of the public for the copies in accordance with OCGA § 50-18-71.
- d. Any evidence used as an exhibit in a criminal or civil hearing or trial to show or support an alleged violation of OCGA § 16-12-100, et seq., or any evidence which is encompassed by the provisions of OCGA § 16-12-100, et seq., shall not be open to public inspection except by court order. If the judge approves inspection of such physical evidence, the judge shall designate in writing the facility owned or operated by an agency of the state or local government where such physical evidence may be inspected. If the judge permits inspection, such property or material shall not be photographed, copied, or reproduced by any means.

6.

The Clerk shall implement a procedure, in compliance with this Order and with all other requirements of Georgia law, which provides for notice, a reasonable waiting period, and the ultimate destruction (or other lawful disposition) of unclaimed evidence.

SO ORDERED this 23 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

Exhibit A:

This Court requires the Clerk to receive all exhibits that the Court has admitted into evidence for safe-keeping purposes. At the completion of the hearing or trial, the Courtroom Clerk shall file and scan the Evidence List. Once this is completed, the evidence is turned over to the Evidence Clerk. Both the Courtroom Clerk and the Evidence Clerk must sign the Evidence Transfer Log showing the transfer was completed and that the chain of custody was not broken.

The Evidence Clerk enters all exhibits into the Evidence List Maintenance Program which includes electronically indexing, scanning, and photographing all exhibits. A hard copy of the Index is also created for security purposes. The evidence is stored in a sealed container in one of the secured evidence rooms. The Clerk's office maintains separate evidence rooms for exhibits in civil cases and exhibits in criminal cases and has made provisions for the security of these exhibits.

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: **ELECTRONIC FILING**

26CV00012

**7. STANDING ORDER MANDATING AND GOVERNING ELECTRONIC
FILING FOR CIVIL CASES**

Pursuant to Uniform Superior Court Rule (USCR) 1.2 and the authority given to Superior Courts under OCGA § 15-6-11(b)(3)(B) to advance the effective date of the mandatory electronic filing provisions codified in OCGA § 15-6-11, it is **HEREBY ORDERED** that, on and after October 1, 2018, all pleadings and any other documents related thereto filed by an attorney to initiate a civil action, or in a civil action that was initiated on or after October 1, 2018, in the Superior Court of Cobb County, shall be filed by electronic means through the Court's electronic filing service provider in accordance with the rules governing electronic filing herein and pursuant to OCGA § 15-6-11.

Where this Order is, now or in the future, silent or in conflict with any operative law, including but not limited to the Uniform Superior Court Rules, the Judicial Council's Standards or the Georgia Code, this Order shall be superseded and shall be construed as intended to give full force and effect to the law.

1.

Designation of Cases Permitted for Electronic Filing

All documents in all civil cases must be electronically filed and electronically served pursuant to this Order and the rules contained herein, except documents filed in connection with adoption proceedings, documents filed under seal or presented to a court in camera or *ex parte*, documents filed in open court, or documents to which access is otherwise restricted by law or court order. Except as otherwise set out herein, the Clerk shall not accept or file any pleadings or documents in paper form except from self-represented individuals.

2.

Maintenance of Original Documents

Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, originals of all documents filed electronically, including original signatures, shall be maintained as required by law by the party filing the document and shall be made available, upon reasonable notice, for inspection by the other party or the Court.

3.

Definitions

For purposes of this Order, the following terms are defined as follows:

- a) *Case Management System*. The Court's official case management and records management system.
- b) *Case Party(ies)*. Individually, and collectively, each named or unnamed party to a case, including, but not limited to, each third-party, non-party, witness and other individual or entity that may have a legal interest in a case (whether such party is appearing *pro se* or is represented by counsel) along with each representative and agent of the foregoing acting in such capacity.
- c) *Clerk's Office*. The office of The Clerk of the Superior Court of Cobb County.
- d) *Court*. The Superior Court of Cobb County.
- e) *Document*. Any paper or electronic file of a document that has been scanned or converted to a graphical or image format (PDF), including but not limited to pleadings, petitions, complaints, motions, memoranda of law, orders or other written papers or instruments; "Documents" shall not include "Non-Conforming Materials."
- f) *Electronic Filing or E-Filing*. The electronic transmission of electronic documents to and from the Court via an electronic filing service provider.
- g) *Electronic Filing Service Provider (EFSP)*. The system or systems authorized to transmit, retrieve, serve and make available court filings electronically in The Superior Court of Cobb County. The current EFSP for the Court is PeachCourt (www.peachcourt.com) but may change or expand to additional EFSPs in the future.
- h) *Electronic Service or E-Service*. The electronic Notice of Service provided by PeachCourt to a set of one or more case parties as defined by the filer. This notice includes the details of the document(s) that were filed and provides the recipient with access to those documents at no additional cost.
- i) *Manual Filing or Conventional Filing*. The process of filing a paper document with the Clerk's Office.
- j) *Non-Conforming Materials*. All non-paper filings, including but not limited to videotapes, X-rays, CDs, audio recordings and tangible objects that cannot be readily converted to paper form or are illegible when scanned.
- k) *Party*. A person appearing in any case or proceeding, whether represented or appearing *pro se*, or an attorney of record for a party in a case or proceeding.
- l) *Public Access Terminal (PAT)*. One or more computers provided by the Clerk's Office for use by attorneys or the general public specific to electronic filing, electronic service and electronic access to court records during the Clerk's Office's normal hours of operation.
- m) *Registered User*. A party, attorney or public or other authorized user, including judges, clerks and other court personnel, registered with the EFSP to file, receive service of, or retrieve documents electronically.

- n) *Self-Represented Litigant* (sometimes referred to as a *pro se* litigant). A person appearing in a court or filing without representation by or the assistance of a licensed attorney.

4.

Authorized Users

The following users are authorized to register with the EFSP:

- a) Members of the Georgia Bar and their staff;
- b) *Pro hac vice* attorneys and their staff;
- c) Judges and their staff;
- d) Clerks of Court and their staff;
- e) Self-represented litigants; and
- f) Other public users, including media representatives.

5.

Unauthorized Access

No attorney shall knowingly authorize or permit his/her log-in credentials to be utilized by anyone other than authorized attorneys or employees of the attorney's law firm, or designated co-counsel, where it has been established in writing that designated counsel may file documents on behalf of the assigning counsel. An attorney who knowingly authorizes or permits his or her username and/or password to be utilized by his/her staff is fully responsible for all transmissions, communications and notifications through the EFSP.

6.

Public Access Terminal

- a) PATs will be located in the Clerk's office or any other designated locations at the respective courthouses. PATs will be connected to the EFSP and the Case Management System. Any person who wishes to view the Court's official record may do so via a PAT in the Clerk's office or via the Clerk's website (superiorcourtclerk.cobbcounty.gov) at no additional cost.
- b) The public may E-File, research, download, view or print electronically filed documents on a PAT.
- c) Registered Users shall not be required to pay E-Filing transaction fees when filing from a PAT. Registered Users shall be required to pay standard court fees when filing from a PAT.

7.

Self-Represented Litigants

- a) Self-represented litigants may but are not required to, E-File.
- b) The Court shall continue to accept filings from self-represented litigants via paper, whether delivered to the Court in person or through means such as the U.S. Mail, overnight delivery, etc.

8.

Document Format

- a) The filer of an electronic document shall, to the extent practicable, format the document in accordance with the applicable rules of the Georgia Rules of Civil Procedure governing formatting of paper pleadings and other documents, including page limits.
- b) The filer of an electronic document shall submit the document in the Portable Document Format (PDF). This includes primary documents such as complaints and petitions, supporting documents such as exhibits, and any other documents submitted to the Court through the EFSP.
- c) Exhibits to an electronic document may be attached to the main document and filed as a single PDF. In the event that the Registered User encounters a technical limitation that prevents exhibits and supporting materials to be attached to the main document as a single PDF, the Registered User may separate the materials into multiple PDFs for electronic filing. When separating a single document into multiple PDFs, the Registered User must insert a “Notice of Filing” as the first (cover) page for each PDF.
- d) The filer shall ensure that the resolution of each page of the electronic document is at least 200 dots-per-inch (DPI).
- e) The filer shall ensure that the electronic document is not password-protected or encrypted. The filer shall also ensure that the electronic document does not contain embedded files, scripts, tracking tags or executable files.
- f) To the extent practicable, the filer shall keep the upper right-hand corner of the first page of all pleadings clear of text so as to not interfere with the Court’s electronic file stamp.

9.

Electronic Signatures of Attorneys and Parties

- a) Every document electronically filed or served shall be deemed signed by signatures, where appropriate.
- b) Unless an original sworn or notarized signature is required, the following signatures are acceptable:
 - i. Handwritten signatures appearing on scanned documents.
 - ii. Conformed signatures.

1. A conformed signature constitutes an original signature of the person.
2. The correct format for the conformed signature of an attorney is as follows:

/s/ Jane Doe
JANE DOE
Georgia Bar No. 12345
Attorney for Plaintiff
Doe & Associates, LLC
678 Main Street
Atlanta, Georgia 30314
Phone: 123-456-7890
Email: jdoe@example.com

3. The correct format for the conformed signature of a non-attorney is as follows:

/s/ John Smith
JOHN SMITH
123 East Street
Plainville, Georgia 10292
Phone: 123-456-7890
Email: jsmith@example.com

- iii. Signatures captured using a digital interface (e.g., signature pad, tablet or stylus).
- c) Documents for which an original sworn or notarized signature is required must include an accurate representation of the original signature(s) of the declarant or notary public.
 - d) By electronically filing a document, the filer attests that the document and signature(s) are authentic.
 - e) Prior to the submission of a filing to the Court, the filer must confirm via an affirmative notation recorded by the EFSP that he/she has complied with OCGA § 9-11-7.1 and USCR 36.17 regarding the redaction of confidential information from the pleadings being submitted.

10.

Filing Date and Time of E-Filed Documents

- a) Following a review by the Clerk, accepted documents become an official document of record with the Court and receive an electronic stamp with the date and time at which the document was received by the EFSP.
- b) Following a review by the Clerk, rejected documents do not become an official document of record with the Court and do not receive an electronic stamp.

- c) If a document is rejected by the Clerk, the EFSP will notify the filer via email with the Clerk's reason for rejection. If the filing party wishes to dispute the rejection, they need to do so by filing a motion with the Court.
- d) Following the resubmission of a rejected filing and review by the Clerk, accepted documents become an official document of record with the Court and receive an electronic stamp. In the situation of a resubmission, the electronic stamp will reflect the date and time at which the document was resubmitted and received by the EFSP, not the date and time of the original submission.
- e) E-Filing a document does not alter any filing deadlines.
- f) The calculation of time for reply under Georgia law is neither expanded nor contracted by this section.

11.

E-Filing Protective Order Petitions

The following provisions govern the electronic filing of Stalking, Family Violence, and Dating Violence Protective Order petitions ("petitions") filed pursuant to O.C.G.A. §§ 16-5-94, 19-31-1, *et seq.*, and 19-13A-1, *et seq.*:

- a) No more than twice daily during weekday operating hours, petition(s) filed through the TPO Office may be electronically filed via the EFSP.
- b) If electronically filed, such petition(s) shall be e-filed no later than 30 minutes prior to any scheduled *ex parte* protective order hearing.
- c) Immediately following the electronic filing of said petition(s), a TPO Office representative shall notify the Clerk of Court of her/his designee of the electronic filing of the petition(s).
- d) Following such notification, the Clerk's Office shall immediately, and in no case later than 30 minutes after notice, review the petition(s) for acceptance and so accept or reject *instantly* consistent with the provision of this Order.

12.

Filing and Service of Executed Orders by Attorneys

Attorneys of record may submit executed orders through the EFSP if permitted to do so by the judge assigned to the case.

13.

Electronic Service

Parties are responsible for electronic service on all other parties in the case, subject to the following rules:

- a) All parties shall make service upon other parties of Original Petitions and Original Complaints conventionally (i.e., personal service or other means acceptable by the Civil Practice Act of Georgia). If, during the filing of an Original Petition or Original Complaint through the EFSP, a party chooses “Sheriff’s Service Coordinated by Clerk” as the method of service, the EFSP shall charge and collect on behalf of the Clerk \$0.25 per page for each page contained in the service packet that Clerk prints on the filer’s behalf.
- b) Except as otherwise set forth in this Order, all parties shall make electronic service upon other parties of subsequent electronic Documents through the EFSP. The EFSP shall be the vehicle through which all parties, or their designated counsel, shall receive all E-Filed and E-Served Documents.
- c) The electronic service of an electronic document through the EFSP shall be considered as valid and effective service and shall have the legal effect as an original paper document sent via conventional means, U.S. mail and/or hand delivery. Recipients of electronic service shall receive an email notification of service, which contains an electronic image of the served electronic document or a hyperlink to the electronic image of the served E-document.

14.

Time to Respond or Act

- a) E-Service shall be deemed complete when the transmission to the EFSP is completed as reflected by the authorized date and time appearing on the electronic transmittal. Effective with the commencement date of E-Filing, any period of notice or any right or duty to do any act or make any response within any period or date is prescribed by statute or rule of court, shall be strictly governed by the Georgia Civil Practice Act.
- b) For the purpose of computing time to respond to documents received via E-Service, any document served on a day or at a time when the Court is not open for business shall be deemed served at the time of next day the Court is open for business.
- c) Parties who register with the EFSP consent to receive E-Service of documents, other than service of subpoenas or summons.
- d) Any Registered User consents to accept e-mail notifications of a hearing or trial as valid notice required by USCR 8.3.
- e) An electronic service address is presumed valid for a party if the party files electronic documents with the Court from that address and has not filed and served notice that the address is no longer valid.

15.

Courtesy Copies to the Court

Parties may elect to electronically deliver courtesy copies of documents to the judge assigned to the case or may be required to do so in the judge's discretion.

16.

Access to Court Documents

The Clerk's office shall make available for viewing by attorneys, judges and self-represented litigants copies of electronically filed documents that are not sealed, privileged or otherwise restricted by the Court for access. The Clerk of Court may elect to make electronic documents available online or at the courthouse for the general public in the Clerk's discretion.

17.

Time for Filing and Effect of Use of E-File

- a) Filers may submit filings through the EFSP 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- b) Pursuant to USCR 36.16(D), any pleading filed electronically shall be considered filed when it is received by the EFSP. Any document filed after 11:59 PM EST shall be deemed filed on the next court day.
- c) Pursuant to USCR 36.16(F), "system filing errors," if electronic filing or service is prevented or delayed because of a failure of the electronic filing system, a court will enter appropriate relief such as the allowance of filings *nunc pro tunc* or the provision of extensions to respond. A filer wishing to seek relief related to a system filing error may do so by filing motion for appropriate relief with the Court at the earliest available opportunity.

18.

Payment of Filing Fees

- a) Registered Users shall pay statutory filing fees for E-Filed documents electronically to the Court through the EFSP. Filing fees are due and payable at the time of filing.
- b) With respect to cases initiated **AFTER October 1, 2018**, the EFSP may charge a fee which shall be a recoverable court cost and include the following:
 - i. A one-time per-party transaction fee of \$30.00 for electronically filing on behalf of a case party for the first time from a non-PAT computer.
 - ii. A volume E-Filing transaction fee of \$5.00 per transaction for each E-File Transaction after the tenth filing on behalf of a given case party in a given case.
 - iii. A convenience fee for credit card and bank drafting services, which shall not exceed 3.5 percent plus 30¢ per transaction.

- c) As used in this subsection, the term “per transaction” means a single upload to the EFSP for filing:
 - i. A pleading or document within an individual case; or
 - ii. Multiple pleadings or documents within an individual case so long as they are filed concurrently.

19.

Electronic Filing and Service of Orders and Other Papers

The Court may issue, file, and serve notices, orders and other documents electronically, subject to the provisions of this Order. An order or other Court-issued document bearing the signature of a judge filed electronically and entered by a Judge, Clerk of Court, Deputy Clerk, or Court personnel per the order of a judge shall have the same force and effect as if the document contained the handwritten signature of the judge.

20.

Official Record

The OFFICIAL RECORD and/or OFFICIAL COURT DOCKET is held and maintained by the Superior Court Clerk only. It is maintained within the Clerk’s Office at 70 Haynes Street, Marietta, GA 30060. The official record is also available via the Clerk’s website.

The EFSP maintains a record of its own which does NOT represent the official court record or docket.

21.

Non-Exclusivity

In compliance with O.C.G.A. 15-1-22., this Order does not prohibit or limit Cobb County Superior Court’s authority to enter into multiple agreements with additional electronic filing service providers.

SO ORDERED this 23 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

**IN RE: JURY MANAGEMENT IN
THE COBB JUDICIAL CIRCUIT**

26CV00012

**8. STANDING ORDER REGARDING JURY MANAGEMENT
IN THE COBB JUDICIAL CIRCUIT**

1.

Statutes, court rules, and case law authorize and direct that the Superior Court adopt orders regulating the management of jurors. Therefore, pursuant to OCGA § 15-12-11(a) and § 15-12-12(a), it is **HEREBY ORDERED** that Wendy M. Portwood is appointed to the position of Jury Clerk for the Cobb Judicial Circuit.

2.

Pursuant to OCGA § 15-12-40.1, *Ricks v. State*, 301 Ga. 171 (800 S.E.2d 307) (2017), and provision 5 of the Georgia Supreme Court Jury Composition Rule entered June 6, 2018 (and amended April 11, 2019), it is **FURTHER ORDERED** that the Jury Clerk manage additions, deferrals, excusals, and inactivations to the County Master Jury List for the Cobb Judicial Circuit as provided for by the Jury Composition Rule. The Superior Court Administrator, or State Court Administrator as to State Court cases, may oversee the Jury Clerk's authority to manage additions, deferrals, excusals, and inactivations to the County Master Jury List, and the Court Administrator or Jury Clerk may delegate to members of court administration to assist.

3.

It is **FURTHER ORDERED** that Appendix A establishes the guidelines governing deferrals, excuses, exemptions, and inactivations pursuant to OCGA § 15-12-1.1 (a) (1).

4.

It is **FURTHER ORDERED** that the Chief Judge shall annually receive the Certificate of Inclusiveness for the most recent County Master Jury List and, upon finding that the List contains sufficient jurors for the Court's operations, file an order pursuant to OCGA § 15-12-40.1(h) directing the Jury Clerk and other staff designated by the Court Administrator or Jury Clerk to draw jurors from the most recent County Master Jury List by a date certain.

SO ORDERED this 23 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

Appendix A

1.

Definitions

Pursuant to Provision 5 of the Georgia Supreme Court Jury Composition Rule, these words are defined below.

1. “Clerk” shall mean the appointed jury clerk.
2. “Defer” or “deferral” shall mean a temporary postponement of a person’s jury service until a specific date within the current or next succeeding term of court or as provided for by court order.
3. “Excuse” or “excusal” shall mean the grant of a person’s request for a temporary exemption from jury service without rescheduling the juror’s appearance. An excusal shall only be effective until the next county master jury list is certified.
4. “Exemption” shall mean a statutory reason that a prospective juror may be granted a deferral or excusal pursuant to OCGA § 15-12-1.1.
5. “Inactivate” or “inactivation” shall mean permanently removing a person’s name and identifying information who has been identified on the county master jury list as a person who is permanently prevent from being chosen as a trial or grand juror because such person is statutorily ineligible or incompetent to serve as a juror or is deceased.

2.

Statutorily Required Excusals and Deferrals

1. The Jury Clerk shall excuse jurors pursuant to OCGA § 15-12-4 (a).
2. The Jury Clerk shall, upon receipt of a permanent resident card, valid work visa, or a non-citizen affidavit provided by the Jury Clerk, excuse jurors pursuant to OCGA § 15-12-4 (b).
3. The Jury Clerk shall, upon receipt of a convicted felon affidavit provided by the Jury Clerk, excuse jurors pursuant to OCGA § 15-12-40.
4. Pursuant to OCGA § 15-12-1.1 (a) (2), (3), (4), (5), and OCGA § 15-12-1.1 (c) (2), the individuals listed therein may request and shall be excused or deferred from jury duty upon receipt of the following:
 - a. Verification of full-time enrollment from the schools’ registrar or admission’s office or a copy of current class enrollment that includes their name, current semester enrolled and total hours for OCGA § 15-12-1.1 (2).
 - b. Affidavit of childcare provided by the Jury Clerk for OCGA § 15-12-1.1 (3).

- c. Affidavit of homeschooling as provided by the Jury Clerk for OCGA § 15-12-1.1 (4).
- d. Affidavit of sole caretaker and a statement of a physician or other medical providers supporting the affidavit's statements related to the medical condition of the person with physical or cognitive limitations as provided by the Jury Clerk for OCGA § 15-12-1.1 (5).
- e. Verification of enrollment from any service school, verification from a commanding officer, an active military order, a valid military identification card, or an affidavit of active military duty or active military spouse as provided by the Jury Clerk for OCGA § 15-12-1.1 (c) (2).

3.

Authorized Excuses and Deferrals

1. Pursuant to OCGA § 15-12-1.1 (a) (1), a person may request and may be excused or deferred from jury duty for work necessary to the public health, safety, or good order or for other good cause shown.
 - a. Upon receipt of a medical affidavit, as provided by the Jury Clerk, a doctor's letter, a Social Security disability award letter, or a document attesting to the juror's work in public health or safety, the Jury Clerk shall excuse or defer a juror pursuant to OCGA § 15-12-1.1 (a) (1).
 - b. For requests made pursuant to good cause shown, the Jury Clerk may only defer service. All deferments are granted or denied under the discretion of the Jury Clerk according to the needs of the court and a juror's previous requests.
 - c. Upon a second request for a good cause shown deferral, the Jury Clerk shall require documentation of the cause.
 - d. If the court's business no longer requires a juror or a judge request that a juror be excused or deferred, then the Jury Clerk shall excuse or defer a juror as appropriate.
2. Pursuant to Provision 5 of the Georgia Supreme Court Jury Composition Rule, the Jury Clerk may excuse or defer jurors with undeliverable addresses. If, after the return of undeliverable mail, the Jury Clerk believes, based on information from the Postal Service, that further attempts to contact the juror will be unsuccessful, the Jury Clerk may excuse the juror. Otherwise, the Jury Clerk shall defer and summon the juror again.
3. Pursuant to Provision 5 of the Georgia Supreme Court Jury Composition Rule, a juror who is not a resident of Cobb County may be excused upon demonstration of a non-Cobb address in the form of a valid driver's license, utility bill, mortgage

statement, lease agreement, voter registration card, or non-resident affidavit provided by the Jury Clerk.

4.

Inactivations

1. Pursuant to OCGA § 15-12-1.1 (a) (1), a person who is permanently mentally or physically disabled may request and shall be inactivated from jury duty upon receipt of an official letter from a doctor stating that the medical conditions are permanent, and that the juror should not be considered for jury duty or a medical affidavit provided by the Jury Clerk.
2. Pursuant to OCGA § 15-12-1.1 (b), a person who is 70 years of age and older listed therein may request and shall be inactivated from jury duty upon receipt of a request in writing.
3. Pursuant to Provision 5 of the Georgia Supreme Court Jury Composition Rule, if the Jury Clerk is informed that a juror is deceased, the Jury Clerk shall inactive the juror upon receiving a copy of a Death Certificate. The Jury Clerk may request a written statement including the juror's full name, date of birth, and date of the juror's death to aid in retrieving the Death Certificate.
4. Pursuant to OCGA § 15-12-40, a person who has been judicially determined to be mentally incompetent shall not be eligible to serve as a juror, and pursuant to Provision 5 of the Georgia Supreme Court Jury Composition Rule, such persons may be inactivated upon receipt of the court order declaring the incompetency.

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: **ELECTION DAY ORDER**

26CV00012

**9. STANDING ORDER REGARDING ELECTION DAY DUTIES AND
ASSIGNMENT**

It is the duty of the Cobb Judicial Circuit to carry out the mandates set forth in OCGA § 21-2-412 to ensure free and fair elections. Therefore,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED as follows:

Pursuant to OCGA § 21-2-412:

At least one judge of the superior court of each judicial circuit shall be available in his or her circuit on the day of each primary or election from 7:00 A.M. eastern standard time or eastern daylight time, whichever is applicable, until 10:00 P.M. eastern standard time or eastern daylight time, whichever is applicable, and so long thereafter as it may appear that the process of such court will be necessary to secure a free, fair, and correct computation and canvass of votes cast at such primary or election. During such period the court shall issue process, if necessary, to enforce and secure compliance with the primary or election laws and shall decide such other matters pertaining to the primary or election as may be necessary to carry out the intent of this chapter.

1.

Assignment of Election Judge

The Election Superior Court Judge (“Election Judge”) shall be the judge who is next in line to be the Chief Judge of the Cobb Judicial Circuit. The Chief Judge shall notify the Election Judge, and his or her staff, of the duties and responsibilities prior to the election. If the next in line to be Chief Judge is set to stand for election on the ballot during that election, then the Chief Judge will notify the next most senior judge that does not appear on the ballot, and that judge will serve as Election Judge. If for any reason, the Election Judge becomes unavailable to fulfill his or her duties, it is the Election Judge’s responsibility to arrange for another Superior Court Judge to be available to cover the election duties.

2.

Regular Business Hours on Election Day

In addition to the Election Judge—during regular business hours when the courthouse is open—any election-related matter may be brought to the attention of the Presiding Judge for adjudication.

3.

Contact Information for the Election Night Judge

Between the hours of 7:00 A.M and 10:00 P.M. on the date of the election, the Election Judge may be contacted by email at CobbElectionJudge@cobbcounty.gov regarding any issues related to the election, including requests for hearing. Courtesy copies of all motions, complaints, or other filings related to the election shall be emailed to the Election Judge using this email address. The Election Judge is authorized to accept the filing of a complaint or other pleading after 5:00 pm without a Clerk of Court pursuant to OCGA § 9-11-5(e). The Election Judge or a member of his or her staff shall ensure this email address is checked frequently between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 10:00 P.M. on the date of the election and any email communications forwarded to the appropriate parties, including the Presiding Judge, if the communication is received during regular courthouse business hours.

Prior to the election, this email address and the name of the Election Judge shall be distributed to the Clerk of Superior Court, the Cobb County Sheriff, the County Attorney, and the Director of Cobb County Elections & Registration. The Election Judge may also provide their personal cell phone number in addition to the email address provided herein.

4.

Courthouse Accessibility and Staffing After Hours on Election Day

The Election Judge and his or her staff, including a court reporter, shall be ready and available to conduct a hearing after 5:00 P.M. on the date of the election, if a hearing is required.

The Cobb County Sheriff shall ensure the Superior Court of Cobb County remains open and accessible to the public on the date of election between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 10:00 P.M. or later at the direction of the Election Judge. Further, the Sheriff shall have an adequate number of deputies present at the courthouse after 5:00 P.M. on election day and be ready and available to open a courtroom for a hearing. The Sheriff or his lawful deputies shall also issue process, if necessary, at the direction of the Election Judge.

Furthermore, the Clerk of Court shall ensure that his or her staff are ready and available on short notice should the Election Judge need to conduct a hearing after 5:00 P.M. on the date of the election.

Prior to the date of the election, the Sheriff and the Clerk of Court shall provide the Election Judge and his or her staff a list of cell phone numbers for all personnel needed if the Election Judge is required to convene a hearing after 5:00 P.M. on the date of

the election. The Election Judge and his or her staff shall notify all necessary personnel via phone call or text message that a hearing will be convened.

5.

Limitations on Scope of this Order

This Order does not apply to election-related matters filed before or after election day. Those matters shall be filed and assigned in the regular course of business.

SO ORDERED this 23 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: **ORDER ESTABLISHING
THE PRESIDING JUDGE
OF THE JUVENILE COURT
OF COBB COUNTY**

26CV00012

**10. STANDING ORDER ESTABLISHING THE PRESIDING JUDGE
OF THE JUVENILE COURT OF COBB COUNTY**

Pursuant to OCGA § 15-11-50 (g), one judge of a multi-judge Juvenile Court shall be designated as presiding judge. Therefore, **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that the Juvenile Court Judges shall, amongst themselves, allocate the work to be performed by each judge and have full authority to determine the manner of calling dockets, fixing calendars, setting schedules, and hearing business in the Juvenile Court.

1.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court of Cobb County shall be designated as follows.

- (1) The Juvenile Court Judge serving as Presiding Judge on October 4, 2022, shall be the Presiding Judge through December 31, 2022.
- (2) Before January 1, 2023, and before the first day of every odd-numbered calendar year thereafter, the Juvenile Court Judges shall decide upon a Presiding Judge for the next two calendar years. In the event of a tie, the most senior Juvenile Court Judge shall become the Presiding Judge.
- (3) In the event that the Presiding Judge position becomes vacant, the Juvenile Court Judges shall decide upon a Presiding Judge to serve the remainder of the current term.

2.

After deciding upon a Presiding Judge, the Juvenile Court shall notify the Superior Court and its court administrator and file a designation order with the Clerks of

the Superior and Juvenile Court.

3.

The Juvenile Court Judges shall resolve any disagreement about any particular allocation by majority vote. If the vote is a tie, then the Presiding Judge shall decide the issue.

4.

All **ORDERS** and **PARTS OF ORDERS** in conflict with this **ORDER** are hereby repealed.

SO ORDERED this 27 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: **ORDER: FULL BENCH RECUSAL**

26CV00012

11. ORDER REGARDING FULL BENCH RECUSAL

The judges of the Superior Court of Cobb County having found it necessary to protect lawyers and litigants from undue and potentially prejudicial delay associated with case re-assignment arising from recusal motions whose grounds may implicate the entire bench, it is **HEREBY ORDERED** as follows:

1.

Upon a first, second and then a third judge issuing a recusal order in a given case, whether voluntary or in response to a motion of one of the parties, the third judge shall notify the Chief Judge that multiple judges have recused themselves. The Chief Judge shall review the recusal orders and any motions which prompted the orders and shall determine whether it is likely that the remaining superior court judges would also recuse.

2.

If the Chief Judge determines it is likely that the remaining judges would also recuse, then the Chief Judge shall separately inquire of those remaining judges whether they would voluntarily recuse pursuant to Uniform Superior Court Rule (USCR) 25 and the Code of Judicial Conduct.

3.

If all remaining judges indicate they would recuse, the Chief Judge shall enter an order recusing the entire superior court bench and refer the matter to the 7th District Administrative Judge for assignment. If less than all remaining superior court judges indicate they will recuse, the Chief Judge will notify the Clerk of Superior Court, who will then resume assignment of the case randomly and in compliance with this Court's Case Assignment Order.

4.

While the above procedure is ongoing, all judges will comply with USCR 25.3 and take no action on the merits of the case until it is assigned to a non-recusing judge.

SO ORDERED this 23 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: **LAW LIBRARY FEES**

26CV00012

20. STANDING ORDER ESTABLISHING LAW LIBRARY FEES

The Council of Superior Court Judges for the Cobb Judicial Circuit hereby orders that the filing fee for each case filed in any court of this county or circuit (except for cases filed in any municipal court) shall, pursuant to OCGA § 36-15-9, include a library fee of \$5.00 per case to fund the Cobb County Law Library.

SO ORDERED this 22 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: **ADOPTION INVESTIGATOR**

26CV00012

**21. STANDING ORDER ESTABLISHING ADOPTION INVESTIGATOR
FEES**

The Court is required to appoint an agent to conduct an investigation, including a home study, and to prepare a written report in adoptions filed pursuant to OCGA § 19-8-5.

The Court is authorized but not required to appoint an agent to conduct an investigation and prepare a written report in adoptions filed pursuant to OCGA §§ 19-8-6 and 19-8-7.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 19-8-16(e), the agent appointed by the Court is to be reimbursed for conducting the investigation and preparing the report, at a cost of \$250.00, unless specifically increased by the authority of the Court.

1.

Therefore, **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** as follows:

1. A petitioner or his or her attorney may move to waive the appointment of an investigator in adoptions filed pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 19-8-6 or OCGA § 19-8-7.
2. The Court shall require the petitioner to reimburse the investigator appointed by the Court for the full cost of conducting the investigation and preparing its report.
3. The Court sets the fee to be charged, as authorized by law, at \$500.00.
4. The Court shall furnish the petitioner or his or her attorney with written notice of the name of the investigator and fee being charged.
5. The petitioner or his or her attorney shall be given the option to pay the fee of the appointed investigator or present an alternate investigator, qualified to conduct the investigation and render the required report, and the cost of their services.
6. Upon the Court finding that the alternate investigator is qualified, said individual shall be appointed to conduct the investigation and render the report to the Court at the lowest cost to the petitioner.

2.

The Chief Judge shall from time-to-time and annually no later than January 1 inform the Clerk of Superior Court and Court Administrator of the individuals appointed to be Adoption Investigators. Such individuals shall be qualified to conduct adoption investigations at the discretion of the Chief Judge and render reports as may be required or authorized.

SO ORDERED this 23 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: **PARTIAL PAYMENT PRIORITY LIST**

26CV00012

**22. STANDING ORDER REGARDING PAYMENT PRIORITY
PURSUANT TO OCGA § 15-21A-7**

In accordance with OCGA § 15-21A-7, the Georgia Superior Court Clerk's Cooperative Authority (GSCCCA) Board of Directors adopted partial payment priority distribution lists effective for the distributions of fines and fees for courts. The GSCCCA Board of Directors adopted a separate priority list for Superior Courts and State Courts.

Therefore, the Clerk of Superior Court is **HEREBY ORDERED** to utilize the lists currently found at (<https://www.courttrax.org/PartialPayments>), or wherever the GSCCCA may locate them, when distributing payments.

The Clerk is **FURTHER ORDERED** to fully satisfy any restitution before the above priority list takes effect.

The Clerk is **FURTHER ORDERED** to monitor any restitution ordered to be paid jointly and severally, so as to avoid overpayment, and to allocate and remit any overpayments among the paying parties accordingly.

SO ORDERED this 23 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: **ARRAIGNMENTS**

26CV00012

30. STANDING ORDER REGARDING ARRAIGNMENT PROCEDURE

Pursuant to Uniform Superior Court Rule (USCR) 30.1, it is **HEREBY ORDERED** as follows:

1.

Immediately upon the filing and assignment of an indictment or accusation, the Clerk of this Court shall schedule the arraignment for said indictment or accusation on the assigned judge's next available arraignment calendar as published by the Court Administrator's Office or judge's chambers. If the assigned judge has set a cap on the number of cases that may be placed on an arraignment calendar, then the Clerk shall place it on the assigned judge's following arraignment calendar.

Cases in which the Grand Jury of Cobb County has issued the initial warrant for the Defendant's arrest (i.e., no-arrest cases) shall not be scheduled for arraignment unless and until the Defendant has been arrested.

2.

The Clerk of this Court shall give notice of the date, time, and place of the arraignment to all defendants, attorneys of record, and bondsmen via United States Mail by depositing such notice with the U.S. mail, with sufficient postage, at least two (2) weeks prior to the date set for arraignment.

3.

Under no circumstance shall the Clerk of Superior Court schedule any case for an Arraignment date that has been NO BILLED by the Grand Jury.

SO ORDERED this 27 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: **PROCEDURES FOR THE
EXECUTION OF PROBATION
VIOLATION WARRANTS AND
PETITIONS FOR REVOCATION**

26CV00012

**31. STANDING ORDER REGARDING PROCEDURES FOR THE
EXECUTION OF
PROBATION VIOLATION WARRANTS AND PETITIONS FOR
REVOCATION**

It is **HEREBY ORDERED** that the following shall be the Standard Operation Procedure used to issue Probation Violation Warrants and hold Probation Revocation Hearings in Superior Court:

1.

A Department of Community Supervision (DCS) community supervision officer (CSO) seeking a probation warrant for alleged violation of probation conditions, shall, using the electronic warrant system (EWI), submit the warrant to the Superior Court judge assigned to the case for the signature of said judge on the warrant. The complete original case number must be included on the warrant to identify the Superior Court judge assigned to the case. The case type shall also be included on the upper right-hand corner of the front page of the warrant as either "Technical," "Misdemeanor," or "Felony."

2.

The probation warrant shall be reviewed for approval in EWI by the assigned Superior Court judge or by another judge designated by the assigned judge for that purpose. EWI will automatically identify if a judge is signing on behalf of another judge.

3.

After the judge has signed the probation warrant, EWI will electronically transmit the warrant to the Cobb County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) Records Management System for intake by the sergeant at the Warrant Desk.

4.

CCSO shall execute the probation warrant by arresting the probationer, and upon the probationer's booking in the Cobb County Adult Detention Center (CCADC), a deputy sheriff shall serve the probationer with a paper copy of the probation warrant with a rule

nisi date inserted on the reverse side for the hearing to be held before the assigned judge. The deputy sheriff making such service shall indicate entry of service on the reverse side of the probation warrant. The probationer shall sign the back of a scanned copy of the probation warrant as an acknowledgment of the rule *nisi* court date. The sergeant at the Warrant Desk shall stamp “ORIGINAL SIGNATURE” and shall join the scanned copy to the original warrant.

5.

Each Superior Court judge determines how the alleged probation violation cases assigned to them shall be heard. Superior Court judges should inform CCSO’s Court Scheduling section at 770-499-4775 or via email at CCSOInmateSchedule@cobbcounty.gov and the DCS of the violations which are to be heard by the assigned judge and which may be heard by a senior judge. Unless otherwise notified by the Superior Court Administrator or a designee, senior judges hold probation violation hearings every Tuesday at 2:30 PM via video conference.

Each Superior Court judge should notify the CCADC no fewer than forty-five (45) days in advance of their revocation hearing dates so that appropriate rule *nisi* dates may be given. Unless the assigned judge does not have a date available, all probationers should appear before the judge within thirty (30) days of being taken into custody at the CCADC on the probation warrant.

6.

Original probation warrants with the entries of service attached and copies of the original probation warrant bearing the stamp “ORIGINAL SIGNATURE” and signature of the probationer shall be delivered daily to a Superior Court deputy clerk assigned by the Clerk of Superior Court for this purpose. The Clerk of Superior Court shall notify the CCADC and the Superior Court Administrator of the designee. Probation warrants may be returned to the Sheriff’s Office if no hearing date is present.

7.

The deputy clerk designated to handle probation warrants shall create three (3) complete paper copies of each of the above-referenced items and then deliver the copies to the deputy clerk corresponding to the assigned judge on the probation warrant. The assigned deputy clerk shall file the probation warrant and then forward one (1) copy of each of the above-referenced items to DCS, to the District Attorney’s Office, and to the assigned judge within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt. The probation warrant shall be printed on white paper and stamped “ORIGINAL” and the stamp “BLUE VOP” to help distinguish them from other types of arrest warrants.

All copies of probation warrants must be stamped "COPY." Filed warrants shall be entered, scanned, indexed and available for viewing in the case management system within three (3) business days.

8.

If additional violations are identified after a probation warrant has been signed by the assigned judge but before apprehension of the probationer, DCS shall request the warrant be dismissed and shall file a new probation warrant. The Sheriff's Office shall return all dismissed probation warrants to DCS for destruction.

SO ORDERED this 23 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

**IN RE: ALCOHOL AND DRUG TESTING
CRIMINAL HISTORY/DRIVING HISTORY
ELECTRONIC MONITORING**

26CV00012

**32. STANDING ORDER ESTABLISHING FEES CHARGED BY
MISDEMEANOR PROBATION SUPERVISION PROVIDER**

Georgia Probation Management, Inc. (GPM) may be required pursuant to a court order to administer drug and alcohol testing to probationers, and/or monitoring devices. The cost of such services should be the full responsibility of the probationer and should be paid accordingly.

Therefore, it is **HEREBY ORDERED** that GPM or its affiliated subcontractor provide services as required pursuant to a court order in the course of probation supervision.

It is **FURTHER ORDERED** that the costs of such services, if applicable, be borne in full by the probationer, and he/she will pay GPM or its affiliated subcontractor the cost of said services at the following rates:

On-site multi-panel drug screen	\$25.00
On-site EtG test	\$25.00
Additional lab confirmation test	\$10.00
Electronic Monitoring:	\$75.00 (installation fee)
RF house arrest (daily fee)	\$ 6.00
Active GPS (daily fee)	\$10.00
SCRAM - remote breath (daily fee)	\$ 7.25
SCRAM – w/ landline (daily fee)	\$10.00
SCRAM for alcohol – w/ cellphone (daily)	\$12.00
SCRAM for alcohol & house arrest (daily)	\$15.00

It is **FURTHER ORDERED** that GPM provide the Superior Court Administrator with an update, no later than January 1 of each year, of their fee schedule for drug and alcohol testing, monitoring services and other such services.

SO ORDERED this 27 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: **OVERPAYMENT ORDER**

26CV00012

33. STANDING ORDER CONCERNING OVERPAYMENT OF MONIES

Georgia Probation Management, Inc., (GPM) is required pursuant to a court order to collect fines, costs, and/or fees, and it is the responsibility of the defendant to pay such fines, costs and/or fees accordingly.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, pursuant to OCGA § 44-12-190, that in any case where the probationer has overpaid such monies, and the probationer cannot be located and after a diligent effort has been made, and the whereabouts of the probationer remain unknown, that upon a period of two years from the date of collection of such monies, any overpaid amounts are be remitted to the Cobb County Board of Commissioners.

SO ORDERED this 23 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: **ORDER CONCERNING
TERMINATION OF PROBATION
PROCEDURES**

26CV00012

**34. STANDING ORDER CONCERNING TERMINATION OF PROBATION
PROCEDURES**

Pursuant to OCGA § 17-10-1(a)(1)(B), the Department of Community Supervision (DCS) is required to review cases that are eligible for early termination of probation supervision and submit a petition for early termination, along with a report of the probationer's performance on probation and a proposed order to the assigned Superior Court Judge and the District Attorney. The District Attorney can consent and inform the Court that they are not seeking continuation of supervision. The District Attorney may also object and request a hearing. Therefore, it is **HEREBY ORDERED** as follows:

1.

When the District Attorney Consents

When the District Attorney is not seeking a continuation of probation supervision, the assigned Superior Court Judge may sign the Order submitted with the request to terminate probation supervision, which will be returned to DCS for filing with the Clerk of Court.

2.

**When the District Attorney Objects and Requests a Hearing
or the Court Sua Sponte Sets the Case for a Hearing**

When the District Attorney objects and requests a hearing, or the assigned Superior Court Judge sua sponte determines a hearing should be held, the following shall occur:

1. DCS shall file the Petition for Termination with the Clerk of Superior Court and include on the first page of the Petition the last known address of the probationer.
2. The Clerk of Superior Court (or the assigned judge) shall schedule the case on one of the assigned judge's probation revocation calendars and shall send notice of the hearing to the last known address of the probationer as provided by the DCS, as well as any other address the Clerk of Superior Court is aware of where the probationer may be found (e.g., a change of address form submitted by the probationer to the Clerk's Office).

3. The District Attorney shall notify any crime victims that are necessary for the case.

SO ORDERED this 23 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

**IN RE; FILING INTO RESTRICTED &
SEALED CASES**

26CV00012

**35. ORDER AUTHORIZING COURT REPORTER TO FILE
TRANSCRIPT INTO FIRST OFFENDER AND CONDITIONAL
DISCHARGE RESTRICTED OR "SEALED" CASES**

Official court reporters routinely experience difficulties filing transcripts into cases resolved under the First Offender Act or the Conditional Discharge statute. Once these cases have been restricted or sealed, court reporters have been unable to e-file because they cannot view the case in Peach Court; nor have they been permitted to directly file at the Clerk's front counter, absent a court order to unseal the file.

To the extent the Court orders such cases "sealed" pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 42-8-62.1(b)(1)(B) (for First Offenders) or O.C.G.A. § 16-13-2(d)(1)(2)(A)(ii) (for Conditional Discharges), it is to comply with the statutory requirement to preclude public access to documents in the custody of the Clerk of Superior Court, absent permission from the Court. "Sealing" orders do not prohibit filing documents or records in these cases in the future; nor do they require court authorization to do so.

The Clerk's requirement that the Court issue two orders in every First Offender or Conditional Discharge case which has been restricted or sealed – one order to unseal and permit filing and a second order to reseat – creates an unnecessary and undue burden on the court reporter and the Court, and it impedes the orderly, timely administration of justice.

Therefore, the Clerk of Superior Court is **HEREBY ORDERED** to electronically accept and file documents, including transcripts from an official court reporter, in any case which has been restricted or sealed pursuant to the First Offender Act or Conditional Discharge statute. It is **FURTHER ORDERED** that no additional court order shall be required to e-file or directly file documents, including transcripts from an official court reporter, in any such case.

This Order shall not relieve the Clerk of Superior Court from its obligation to preclude public access to any such restricted or sealed case.

SO ORDERED this 23 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: **CIRCUIT DEFENDER**

26CV00012

36. STANDING ORDER REGARDING THE CIRCUIT DEFENDER

This Court having established by Order effective July 1, 1985, an Advisory Panel (Tripartite Committee) that acted in various capacities in conjunction with Cobb County Circuit Defender's Office; and said order having been reviewed and partially reinstated in 2010; and this Court having found it is appropriate to reconstitute the panel and define certain parameters for the Circuit Defender; it is **HEREBY ORDERED** that the Advisory Panel be re-established as follows, and it is **FURTHER ORDERED** that the Circuit Defender, in conjunction with the Advisory Panel, have the following duties and responsibilities:

1.

The members shall be a designee of the majority of the Superior Court who has experience in the practice of criminal law and who is not currently on any Circuit Defender panel, a designee of the Chairperson of the Cobb County Commission who is not an attorney accepting appointed cases by the Circuit Defender, and the Circuit Defender.

The terms of the two designees shall be three (3) years on a rotating basis, that is, that the first designee of the Commission will serve an initial term of only two (2) years. All future designees will serve three-year terms.

2.

The Circuit Defender shall, with the advice of the Advisory Panel, ensure compliance of the Circuit Defender with O.C.G.A. § 17-12-36.

The Circuit Defender shall, with the advice of the Advisory Panel establish standards for appointed lawyers and the rates of compensation.

3.

The Circuit Defender shall, in its discretion and with the advice of the Advisory Panel, enter into memoranda of understanding (MOU) or other contracts with lawyers to staff positions that are not amenable to appointment or to improve the efficiency of the court. All current contract attorneys or attorneys operating under a memorandum of understanding shall be grandfathered in for the remainder of their contracts.

The Circuit Defender shall identify all contract attorneys whose contracts were grandfathered under the Court's 2010 Order or any subsequent orders. If a current contract attorney was previously grandfathered in, that attorney shall enter a new MOU

establishing that it was renewed after this Order. For all other purposes, current contract attorneys shall be grandfathered for the remainder of their contracts or MOU; except that all contracts or MOU's entered after the date of this Order shall be for a term not to exceed thirty (30) months but may be renewed any time.

4.

The Circuit Defender shall, with the advice of the Advisory Panel, determine the qualifications for all panel attorneys, including but not limited to establishing and maintaining standards of required continuing training for the attorneys, and shall publish them accordingly.

The Circuit Defender shall, with the advice of the Advisory Panel, establish and maintain policies and procedures necessary to ensure compliance with its standards.

5.

The Circuit Defender shall, with the advice or at the request of the Advisory Panel, remove any attorney from the panel who is found by the Panel to be ineffective. Such removal may happen instant and the attorney shall be notified in writing as well as by their preferred method of communication with the Circuit Defender. Any attorney so removed may appeal the removal to the Advisory Panel in writing. Any attorney so removed may re-apply to the Advisory Panel for readmission to the Panel after a period of twelve months, with a showing that the attorney has addressed the prior causes for the Advisory Panel's determination that they were ineffective.

6.

The Circuit Defender shall, with the advice of the Advisory Panel, set standards for attorney billing including recommending rates of pay; establish standards for non-hourly billing, including what is and is not billable. This paragraph shall not affect any agreements governed by paragraph "3" within.

The Circuit Defender shall, with the advice of the Advisory Panel, reduce any bills it deems excessive. The Circuit Defender may warn an attorney whose bills are deemed excessive. If a bill is reduced, the reason for the reduction shall be provided in writing upon request. Any lawyer whose bill has been reduced may appeal such reduction to the Advisory Panel. In the event a lawyer appeals a reduction to The Advisory Panel, it may override a deduction by the Circuit Defender, by a majority vote.

7.

The Circuit Defender shall review caseloads and assignments and may make reassignments when necessary to maintain the effectiveness of the Circuit Defender or of a particular attorney. This includes but is not limited to modifying the assignments or responsibilities of MOU attorneys. An attorney wishing to appeal such modification may do so in writing to the Advisory Panel.

8.

The Circuit Defender shall hear complaints by attorneys as well as complaints by parties represented by appointment. Complaints by attorneys shall be made in writing and upon request may be heard by the Advisory Panel.

All requests to the Advisory Panel by any panel attorney shall receive a response within forty-five (45) days of receipt unless it is deemed an emergency.

9.

The Panel shall meet no less than twice annually on or around the beginning of the March term of court and the September term of court; however, the panel shall meet upon the request of any panel member or if so requested by a majority of the Superior Court bench or by the Superior Court Administrator. The Panel shall furnish a report of all meetings to the Superior Court Administrator.

10.

The Cobb County Circuit Defender's Office shall continue under the authority of this Court and the Superior Court Administrator for administrative purposes.

SO ORDERED this 23 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: **PRE-TRIAL COURT SERVICES**

26CV00012

**37. STANDING ORDER ASSIGNING PRE-TRIAL SERVICES TO THE
MAGISTRATE COURT OF COBB COUNTY**

The Council of Superior Court Judges of the Cobb Judicial Circuit transferred the supervision and administration of Pretrial Court Services from the Office of the Court Administrator to the Magistrate Court of Cobb County in 1985, with the agreement of the Chief Magistrate and the Director of Pretrial Court Services. This arrangement was reaffirmed by the Council and the Chief Magistrate in 2003, and the Supreme Court of Georgia has authorized this supervisory structure.

Therefore, it is **HEREBY ORDERED** that the Magistrate Court of Cobb County retains the authority to supervise Pretrial Court Services, its director, and employees.

SO ORDERED this 27 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

**IN RE: PROHIBITING CHARGES TO
INDIGENT DEFENDANTS AND THEIR
ATTORNEYS BY THE CLERK**

26CV00012

**38. PROHIBITING CHARGES TO INDIGENT DEFENDANTS AND THEIR ATTORNEYS BY
THE CLERK**

1.

Owing to the unique nature of Cobb County's alternative delivery system for indigent defense (*see* OCGA § 17-12-36) and based on long-standing practices and standards in the County, the Court **HEREBY ORDERS** the following.

2.

In all criminal cases in Superior Court in which the defendant has been certified as indigent by the Circuit Defender or the Court, the defendant shall be treated in the same manner as in civil cases filed by indigent persons and governed by OCGA § 15-6-77. A certification of indigency shall serve as a pauper's affidavit, thereby eliminating any costs associated with the services of the Clerk of Superior Court, including services association with post-conviction matters.

3.

All attorneys in good standing on the Circuit Defender's panel shall have identical access to the Clerk's electronic case management system as the District Attorney's office. No attorney in good standing on the Circuit Defender's panel shall be charged any cost for access to documents filed into the Clerk's electronic case management system in appointed cases.

SO ORDERED this 27 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

**IN RE: DIVORCING PARENTS
SEMINAR**

26CV00012

50. STANDING ORDER ESTABLISHING THE CO-PARENTING SEMINAR

Pursuant to Uniform Superior Court Rule (USCR) 24.8, the Council of Superior Court Judges for the Cobb Judicial Circuit **HEREBY ORDERS:**

1.

All parties in all domestic relations actions¹ involving the interests of minor children, except for domestic violence and contempt actions, shall successfully complete the "Co-Parenting Seminar" (the "Seminar"). This Court shall notify plaintiffs/petitioners of this requirement when they file their case and shall notify defendants/respondents of this requirement at the time of service.

2.

The Parties shall complete the Seminar within a reasonable time after the service of the complaint upon the original defendant. All parties shall complete the Seminar before the action is finalized, or shall be ordered to complete it within 30 days of entry of the final judgment or order; however, a non-moving or responding party's failure to complete the Seminar shall not delay the action.

For good cause shown, the assigned judge may waive the requirement of completion of the Seminar in individual cases.

At the discretion of the assigned judge, in lieu of attending the Seminar, a party may attend a program of similar educational value. If a party wishes to attend a program other than the Seminar, then the party must provide written verification, satisfactory to the Court Administrator or his designee, showing that the specific Seminar content outlined above was addressed in a different forum (e.g., through professional counseling, religious counseling, mediation, or similar educational program).

3.

If a party fails to successfully complete the Seminar, the assigned judge may take appropriate action as permitted by USCR 24.8. If a party's failure to successfully complete the Seminar is willful, then the assigned judge may hold that party in contempt.

4.

¹ Domestic relations actions include but are not limited to divorce, separate maintenance, legitimation, paternity, and change of custody or visitation actions.

The Court Administrator, through the Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) Office, shall administer the Seminar.

5.

Prior to attending the Seminar, each Seminar participant shall pay a fee of \$50.00 to cover the costs of the Seminar.

A participant may request that the fee be waived by submitting to the ADR Office (1) an application for a fee waiver and (2) sufficient documentation to show that the party's income falls under the Federal Poverty Guidelines or that circumstances are such that the fee, in the ADR Office's discretion, should be waived. If the application for a fee waiver is denied, then the party may appeal that denial to the assigned judge.

6.

The Seminar shall be an educational workshop lasting not more than four hours, to be conducted virtually via electronic means as determined by the Court Administrator. Participants may contact the Court or the ADR office for specific instructions.

The Seminar shall be offered three times per month or more or less frequently at the direction of the Court Administrator. Participants may contact the Court for specific dates and times.

7.

Participants needing to attend the Seminar shall register prior to the Seminar occurring in order to ensure that there are adequate resources for all participants. Participants shall check in with court staff before the Seminar begins.

8.

The Seminar shall be conducted by qualified counselors, trainers, and educators, or determined by the Court Administrator.

9.

The Seminar shall focus on the developmental needs of children, with emphasis on fostering the children's emotional health during periods of stress. The program is informative and supportive and directs participants who want additional information or assistance to appropriate resources.

The Seminar content shall include information on (1) the developmental stages of childhood; (2) the needs of children at different ages; (3) stress indicators in children; (4) age-appropriate expectations of children; (5) separation/divorce as a growth stage; (6) reducing children's stress in dealing with separation/divorce; (7) changing parental and marital roles; (8) visitation recommendations to enhance the children's relationships with both parents; (9) the financial obligations of childrearing; and (10) conflict management and dispute resolution.

10.

At the conclusion of the Seminar, each participant shall complete an evaluation of the Seminar. The Court Administrator shall create the evaluation and maintain participants' completed evaluations.

11.

After paying for and successfully completing the Seminar, each participant shall receive a Certificate of Completion. The ADR Office shall file a copy of the Certificate with the Clerk of Superior Court.

12.

If a Party has any questions about this Order, the party should contact the ADR Office.

SO ORDERED this 23 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

**IN RE: STANDING ORDER IN
DOMESTIC ACTIONS**

26CV00012

**51. STANDING ORDER DIRECTING THE CLERK OF COURT TO ISSUE THE
DOMESTIC RELATIONS STANDING ORDER ON ALL DOMESTIC CASES**

The Clerk of Superior Court is **HEREBY ORDERED** to issue the most recent *Domestic Relations Standing Order* in **ALL** newly-filed DOMESTIC actions in the Cobb Judicial Circuit. This includes actions for Divorce, Legitimation, Separate Maintenance, Modifications of Custody/Parenting Time/Visitation, Third-Party Custody, Grandparent Visitation, and Equitable Caregiver.

The Domestic Relations Standing Order does not need to be issued in cases that are solely Contempt actions.

The attached *Domestic Relations Standing Order* shall be used until it is updated by the Council.

SO ORDERED this 27 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA

Plaintiff

v.

Defendant

:
:
:
:
:
:
:

Civil Action
File Number _____

DOMESTIC RELATIONS STANDING ORDER

The Parties to this action, as well as their agents, employees and all other persons acting in concert with the Parties are subject to the following provisions:

1. If this case involves a question of child custody (excluding contempt actions), except by agreement of the parties or Court Order, you shall not cause or permit the minor child(ren) to be removed from the State of Georgia. However, this provision does not preclude the parties from taking the minor child(ren) on a vacation or family trip, not exceeding fourteen (14) days, inside the United States, so long as the opposing party is provided with thirty (30) days advanced notice and a travel itinerary that includes where the child(ren) will be spending the night. Customary activities/events such as camp attendance, sporting events and other extracurricular activities involving the child(ren) shall also serve as exceptions to the restraints concerning removal of the children from the State of Georgia.
2. If this case involves a question of child custody, parenting time, or visitation, no party shall cause the minor school-aged child(ren) to be moved outside of their present K-12 school district without notice to and the consent of the other party; or an Order from this court.
3. You shall not do, attempt to do, or threaten to do any act which injures, maltreats, vilifies, molests, or harasses or which may, upon judicial determination, constitute threats, harassment, or stalking of the adverse Party or the child(ren) of the Parties or any act which constitutes a violation of other civil or criminal laws of this state.
4. You shall not sell, encumber, trade, contract to sell, or otherwise dispose of or remove from the jurisdiction of the court, without the permission of the Court, any of the property belonging to the Parties except in the ordinary course of business or except in an emergency which has been created by the other Party to the action.
5. You shall not disconnect or cause to be disconnected any utility-providing service to the home of the other Party. You shall not change, cause to change, cancel, or cause the cancellation of any insurance presently in effect which protects the Parties or any of their children or property. You shall not interfere with the other Party's mail.
6. You must attend the Co-Parenting Seminar. If you would like more information about the Seminar, please see this Court's Standing Order Establishing Co-Parenting Seminar for or contact the Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) Office at 770-528-1812.
7. If you are a self-represented litigant or become self-represented and do not have counsel, you must attend the Family Law Workshop within 45 days. Contact the ADR Office at 770-528-1812 to make arrangements to attend.
8. If a Guardian Ad Litem has been appointed, then counsel for the parties to the action, and anyone acting in concert with counsel, shall not communicate with or meet with the parties' minor children regarding the pending litigation without first securing the written consent of the Guardian Ad Litem.
9. You must provide the following documentation to this Court by filing it with the Clerk:
 - a) If this case involves financial issues such as child support, alimony, division of property, allocation of debt, or contempt of a court order addressing these issues, then you must file your Financial Affidavit/Statement as required by Uniform Superior Court Rule 24.2 with the Clerk at least 5 days before the scheduled hearing, mediation or other alternative dispute resolution proceeding.
 - b) If this case involves child support or child custody, then you must file your Child Support Worksheet and the schedules thereto as required by Uniform Superior Court Rule 24.2 with the Clerk at least 5 days before the scheduled hearing, mediation or other alternative dispute resolution proceeding.
 - c) If this case involves an action for contempt of a previous court order or an action for modification of custody, visitation, child support, or alimony, then you must attach copies of all prior orders which you seek to enforce or modify to your initial pleadings.
 - d) If there has been a change in your income, employment, debts, assets, or other relevant financial circumstances since you filed a previous Financial Affidavit/Statement or Child Support Worksheet, then you must file with the Clerk and serve upon the opposing Party updated versions of either or both of those documents at least 5 days before the next scheduled hearing, mediation or other alternative dispute resolution proceeding.
10. You must bring the following documents to each hearing in this case:
 - a) Documents reflecting your current income, including but not limited to a copy of your most recent paystub as well as state and federal income tax returns, W-2 forms, and 1099 forms from the last three years.
 - b) If this case involves child support, documents from your employer or insurance company showing how much you pay for health, dental, and vision insurance for the children at issue and health insurance cards for yourself and the children at issue. If possible, these documents should show how much you pay for insurance for each child.
 - c) **IMPORTANT NOTICE** - If any documents that you plan to file or bring to court contain social security numbers, taxpayer identification numbers or financial account numbers, you must redact those numbers by marking out all but the last four digits. Additionally, any documents containing a date of birth must be redacted so that only the year of birth is visible.
11. If you fail to comply with the provisions of this Order, then you may be sanctioned by or held in contempt of this Court.
12. This serves to put the parties on notice that the Court may rely on evidence introduced at any temporary hearing in making its final custody determination. Peace v. Peace, 287 Ga. 899 (2010).
13. ADR must be completed before any final hearing or trial in contested matters unless otherwise exempted by the judge assigned to your case.

SO ORDERED THIS 27 DAY OF September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

Revised 11.19.25

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: **ADR ORDER**

26CV00012

**52. STANDING ORDER REGARDING ADR IN THE COBB JUDICIAL
CIRCUIT**

The Cobb County Superior Court Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Program offers parties alternative options for dispute resolution which may result in quicker, more economical, and beneficial outcomes than litigation. This Order supersedes and replaces all previous local ADR Orders and shall remain in effect until further Order of the Court. This Order is modeled substantially after the Georgia Supreme Court's Alternative Dispute Resolution Rules, including Appendices A, B, and D (Supreme Court ADR Rules). Except as may be inconsistent with the below, the Court hereby incorporates the Supreme Court ADR Rules as if fully set forth herein.

Accordingly, it is **HEREBY ORDERED** as follows:

1.

DEFINITIONS

- A. **Alternative Dispute Resolution.** The term "alternative dispute resolution" (ADR) refers to any method other than litigation for resolution of disputes.
- B. **Case Evaluation or Early Neutral Evaluation.** The terms "case evaluation" or "early neutral evaluation" mean a process in which a lawyer with expertise in the subject matter of the litigation acts as a neutral evaluator of the case. Each side presents a summary of its legal theories and evidence. The evaluator assesses the strength of each side's case and assists the parties in narrowing the legal and factual issues in the case. This conference occurs early in the discovery process and is designed to streamline discovery and other pretrial aspects of the case. Case evaluation can also occur towards the end of a case, shortly before it goes to trial when each party's positions have been fully developed through discovery. It is similar to mediation, except that in a "late case evaluation," the neutral gives feedback to the parties and lawyers involved. The early neutral evaluation of the case may also provide a basis for settlement discussions. As used in this paragraph, the term "streamline" means to make the process more efficient and effective by employing faster or simpler working methods.
- C. **Court ADR Program.** The term "court ADR program" or "court program" refers to the Cobb County Superior Court ADR Program.

- D. **Mediation.** The term "mediation" means a process in which a neutral facilitates settlement discussions between parties. The neutral has no authority to make a decision or impose a settlement upon the parties. The neutral attempts to focus the attention of the parties upon their needs and interests rather than upon rights and positions. Although in the court program the parties may be ordered to attend a mediation session, any settlement is entirely voluntary. In the absence of settlement, the parties lose none of their rights to a bench or jury trial.
- E. **Neutral.** The term "neutral" refers to an impartial person who facilitates discussions and dispute resolution between parties in mediation, case evaluation or early neutral evaluation. Mediators and case evaluators are neutrals.
- F. **ADR Conference.** The terms "ADR conference" refers to the meeting between the parties, counsel, and neutral for mediation or case evaluation.

2.

REFERRAL TO ADR

- A. Except as hereinafter provided, any contested civil matter filed in Cobb County Superior Court shall be referred to the court ADR program. Compliance shall not require that the parties reach a settlement. Cases shall be screened by the court ADR program staff to determine the following:
1. Whether the case is appropriate for ADR;
 2. All domestic cases shall be screened by the ADR program staff according to the procedures outlined in the Georgia Supreme Court ADR Rules for Mediation in Cases Involving Issues of Domestic Violence, Appendix D, to determine whether ADR is appropriate;
 3. Whether the party requesting a fee waiver is eligible under the applicable guidelines;
 4. Whether a need for emergency relief makes referral inappropriate until the request for relief is heard by the Court.
- B. The following civil case types shall be exempt from ADR: petitions filed under the Family Violence Act, civil forfeiture cases, habeas corpus cases, bond validations, and Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA) cases.
- C. The scheduling of a case for an ADR conference shall not remove the case from assignment to a judge or interfere with discovery. A matter may be referred to the court ADR program before any court appearance or hearing.

- D. Referral of a case to Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) does not limit any party's ability to file motions with the Court in their case. If a motion listed in Rule 3 E is pending, the requirement to complete the ADR process will pause unless the court orders otherwise. If the ADR process is suspended for any reason, the deadline for completing the ADR process will pause during the suspension.
- E. Civil cases shall be referred for an ADR conference on a case-by-case basis or as a result of this Order. The court ADR program shall notify the parties that their case has been referred to the court program and that an ADR conference type (either mediation or early/late case evaluation) and neutral must be selected. Upon agreement or order of the Court, the case may be transferred to another form of dispute resolution. The ADR process will default to mediation if the parties do not notify the ADR office of an agreed upon selection.
- F. Unless otherwise approved by the assigned judge, participation in an ADR conference shall be a prerequisite to a final trial.
- G. In actions brought by state agencies seeking to enjoin activities injurious to the public interest, the agency may within ten days of service of the action make a showing to the assigned judge that referral to ADR would adversely affect the public interest. Upon a showing of reasonable probability of such adverse effect, the Court may proceed with emergency measures provided by law. Later referral to an ADR process may be appropriate if the emergency measures do not bring the case to conclusion.

3.

TIMING OF ADR AND SELECTION OF NEUTRALS

- A. Unless otherwise ordered by the Court or by consent of all parties, all civil cases shall be referred to the court ADR program 30 days following good service of process or upon the filing of an answer. In multi-party cases, the case shall not be referred to the court ADR program until the time for an answer by all parties has expired.
- B. Parties shall complete the ADR conference within 90 days from the initial referral, unless otherwise agreed to by all parties or ordered by the Court.
- C. Cancellations and rescheduling will only be permitted with consent of both sides or in compliance with Uniform Superior Court Rule (USCR) 17.1(B). It is the responsibility of the party or attorney requesting a cancellation or rescheduling to obtain consent from the opposing party/counsel. Once an ADR conference is scheduled, absent an order or a pending motion pursuant to Rule 3E, no unilateral cancellation or rescheduling is permitted. The court ADR program must be immediately notified of any cancellation or

rescheduling attempts. The court ADR program must immediately notify the assigned neutral of any cancellation or rescheduling attempts.

- D. The parties may change the date and time of the ADR conference provided that it is by consent of both parties and that they notify the neutral at least 72 hours in advance of the scheduled ADR conference. Absent consent of all parties, rescheduling may only occur with approval of the assigned judge.
- E. The ADR Process, through the court ADR program, shall be put on hold upon the filing of any of the following motions: motion for summary judgement, motion for partial summary judgement, motion to enforce an agreement or prenuptial agreement, motion to enforce jurisdiction or venue, motion for judgment on the pleadings, notice of bankruptcy, suggestions of death, motion to dismiss, or a motion to continue mediation. The time for completing ADR shall be tolled while such motion is pending.

4.

EXEMPTION FROM ADR

Any party to a dispute may file a motion to have the party's case removed from the court ADR program. The assigned judge shall have discretion to remove the case from the court ADR program as they deem appropriate.

5.

SELECTION OF NEUTRALS

- A. The parties shall mutually select a neutral in accordance with the process set forth herein. Within 30 calendar days after receipt of notice that the case is referred to ADR, the parties will inform the court ADR program staff of the name of the neutral and the date and time selected.
 - 1. Parties may select a neutral from the registered neutral list maintained by the court ADR program.
 - 2. Agreements between the parties to use a qualified neutral not on the registered neutral list maintained by the court ADR program will be honored, provided that the selected alternate neutral is registered with the Georgia Office of Dispute Resolution in the appropriate categories as outlined in Rule 6 and the neutral submits the required administrative fee and ADR conference paperwork to the court ADR program at the conclusion of the ADR conference.
- B. Absent agreement on the selection of a neutral by the parties, the neutral will be appointed from a list of registered neutrals maintained by the court ADR program. Appointments will be performed on a rotational basis based on the

type of case and the neutral's experience, unless otherwise directed by the Court.

1. Any party may request that the court ADR program appoint a different neutral on the ground that the neutral selected by the program is disqualified because of a conflict, lack of expertise in the relevant subject area, or because the party believes that the objectivity of the neutral is in question.

6.

QUALIFICATIONS OF NEUTRALS

- A. The Council of Superior Court Judges for the Cobb Judicial Circuit has determined the qualifications required for neutrals to be included on the court ADR program's list of approved neutrals.
 1. The neutral must satisfy the qualification and training requirements set forth in Appendix B of the Georgia Supreme Court Rules.
 2. In addition to the requirements in Appendix B, to serve as a neutral for any domestic case, registration with GODR in the Specialized Domestic Violence category is required.
- B. The court ADR program will maintain a roster of qualified neutrals. Neutrals will be added and removed from the roster at the discretion of the Council of Superior Court Judges for the Cobb Judicial Circuit or its designee.
- C. Neutrals serving in the program will be evaluated by the court ADR program on an ongoing basis as set forth in Rule 14.
- D. All neutrals may be required to provide pro bono hours to parties who have qualified to have their fees waived.
- E. A neutral must attend an orientation program on court procedures given by the ADR program.

7.

COMPENSATION OF NEUTRALS

- A. Neutrals shall file their fee schedules with the court ADR program, and the parties may examine any neutral's fee schedule at any time. The parties shall immediately pay the neutral their full fee at the conclusion of the ADR conference. Unless otherwise ordered by the Court or agreed upon in writing by the parties and the neutral, the compensation shall be split equally between the parties.

- B. When the neutral completes a court-referred matter for which the neutral shall be compensated by one or both parties, the neutral shall immediately pay the \$25.00 administrative fee to the court ADR program.
- C. If a party contends that they cannot afford to pay the neutral's fee, that party shall notify the court ADR program within 10 days of being notified of the referral. The party shall complete a financial waiver application (to be provided by the court ADR program) and other required financial information to support the party's contention of inability to pay. If said party fails to submit documentation, the party will be responsible for their share of the ADR conference costs. Fees may also be waived by the assigned judge at their discretion.
- D. If a party is approved for a waiver of fees, then the neutral shall waive that party's hourly portion. If all parties qualify for fee waivers, then a neutral shall mediate the case pro bono and will not be required to submit the \$25 administrative fee.
- E. Neutrals who do not receive timely payment for their services may file a motion for the Court to enforce payment.

8.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND IMMUNITY

- A. Any statement made during a court program ADR conference or as part of intake by program staff or neutral in preparation for an ADR conference shall:
 - 1. Be confidential;
 - 2. Not be subject to disclosure;
 - 3. Not be disclosed by the neutral or program staff; and
 - 4. Not be used as evidence in any subsequent administrative or judicial proceeding.
- B. Any document or other evidence generated in connection with the ADR conference is confidential and not subject to discovery except for a written and executed agreement or memorandum of agreement. Further, a written and executed agreement or memorandum of agreement resulting from an ADR conference shall be discoverable unless the parties agree otherwise in writing. Otherwise, discoverable material shall not be rendered immune from discovery solely because such material was used in an ADR conference.
- C. Neither the neutral nor any observer present with permission of the parties in an ADR conference may be subpoenaed or otherwise required to testify in any subsequent administrative or judicial proceeding concerning a

mediation, case evaluation or early neutral evaluation conference. A neutral's notes or records shall not be subject to discovery. Notes and records of a court ADR program shall not be subject to discovery to the extent that such notes or records pertain to cases and parties ordered or referred by the Court to the program.

- D. The scope of the confidentiality of ADR proceedings shall be governed by the ADR Rules of the Supreme Court of Georgia and the Commission on Dispute Resolution's Advisory Opinions and Ethics Opinions.
- E. No ADR program staff member, neutral, or court personnel may be held liable for civil damages for any statement, action, omission, or decision made in the course of carrying out any of the activities described in these rules or in any ADR conference.

9.

EXCEPTIONS TO CONFIDENTIALITY

- A. Confidentiality on the part of court ADR program staff or the neutral shall not extend to the issue of appearance.
- B. Confidentiality shall not extend to situations in which:
 - 1. There are threats of imminent violence to self or others;
 - 2. A neutral believes that a child is being abused;
 - 3. The safety of any party or third person is in danger; or
 - 4. A party that asserts that their capacity to conduct good-faith negotiations and to make informed decisions for themselves was impaired during the ADR conference. *See Wilson v. Wilson*, 282 Ga. 728 (2007).
- C. Confidentiality shall not extend to documents or communications relevant to legal claims or disciplinary complaints brought against a neutral or court ADR program and arising out of an ADR conference, regardless of whether such claim or complaint is brought before the Georgia Commission on Dispute Resolution, made as a motion, sent to a court program's local complaint process, or raised in some other manner. Documentation of communications relevant to such claims or complaints may be revealed only to the extent necessary to protect the neutral or court ADR program. Nothing in this rule shall negate any statutory duty of a neutral to report information.
- D. Parties should be informed of limitations on confidentiality at the beginning of each conference.

- E. The collection of information necessary to monitor the quality of a court ADR program shall not be considered a breach of confidentiality.

10.

APPEARANCE AT AN ADR CONFERENCE

- A. The appearance of all parties shall be required at any ADR conference scheduled pursuant to this Order and coordinated by the court ADR program. The requirement that a party appear at an ADR conference shall be satisfied if the following persons are present:
1. The party, the party's representative, or both the party and the party's representative. A party's representative must have full authority to settle without further consultation and have a full understanding of the dispute and full knowledge of the facts. In domestic relations cases, all parties must appear for ADR, physically or electronically, and may not send an agent or representative in their place.
 2. A representative of the insurance carrier for any insured party, if any. An insurance carrier's representative must have full authority to settle without further consultation.
- B. All attorneys for the parties should attend an ADR conference. An attorney shall not be excluded by the Court or the neutral from an ADR conference. However, unless ordered by the Court, an attorney shall be required to attend an ADR conference. If the attorney and client agree that the attorney shall not attend, written notice must be submitted to the court ADR program and to the assigned judge prior to the scheduled ADR conference.
- C. Parties, attorneys, and any representatives may have the option to appear remotely by videoconference or telephone. For remote appearances, payment arrangements must be made with the neutral prior to beginning of the session.

11.

SANCTIONS FOR FAILURE TO APPEAR

- A. If a party fails to appear at a duly noticed ADR conference without showing good cause, the court program shall notify the judge to whom the case is assigned. The assigned judge may find the party in contempt of this Order and impose appropriate sanctions in the judge's discretion.
- B. The court ADR program staff or the neutral shall dismiss an ADR conference 30 minutes after the scheduled start time for failure to appear unless all parties consent to wait.

- C. The neutral must be notified at least 72 business hours before the ADR conference of any rescheduling or cancellations unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the parties, counsel and the neutral. If the parties/attorneys fail to adhere to the cancellation policy, then the neutral may charge their cancellation fee as set forth on their fee schedule. That fee shall be divided equally between those parties who were responsible for cancelling or rescheduling the conference.

12.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE COURT

- A. To preserve the objectivity of the Court and the neutrality of the neutral, there should be no unnecessary communication between the neutral and the Court. If any communication between the Court and a neutral is necessary, the communication shall be in writing and shall be made through the court program. Copies of any written communication with the Court shall be given to each party and the party's attorney.
- B. Once an ADR conference is scheduled in a given case, contact between the court ADR program and the Court concerning that case shall be limited to the following:
1. The failure of a party to attend;
 2. Procedural action on the part of the Court which might facilitate the ADR process;
 3. The program's or neutral's assessment that the case is inappropriate for a ADR;
 4. Any request for additional time to complete an ADR conference;
 5. Information that the case has settled or has not settled and whether agreement has been reached as to any issues in the case; or
 6. The contents of a written and executed agreement or memorandum of agreement unless the parties agree in writing that such agreement should not be disclosed, and any discovery, pending motions, or action of any party which, if resolved or completed, would facilitate the possibility of settlement.

13.

COMPLETION OF ADR

- A. Parties shall complete the ADR conference within 90 days from the initial referral, unless otherwise agreed to by all parties or ordered by the Court.

- B. ADR shall be completed prior to any scheduled final hearing, trial or stipulation to any pre-trial calendar, and within the time frames specified at Rule 3 above, whichever is sooner, unless extended or otherwise authorized by order of the Court.
- C. The duration of an ADR conference will vary. A neutral may adjourn an ADR conference at any time and may set times for reconvening the adjourned conference. Failure to set a date for a second session within 45 days or failure to participate in scheduled second session shall result in an impasse.
- D. If an agreement is reached, it shall be reduced to writing, if possible, at the end of the ADR conference or within a limited and specified time frame following the conference. The neutral should draft such agreement unless all parties agree otherwise.
- E. If a party is represented by counsel who is present at the conference, an agreement should be drafted by the neutral and signed by all present at the end of the ADR conference.
- F. If a partial agreement is reached, it shall be reduced to writing and signed by all present in the same manner as a full agreement as provided in this rule.
- G. If parties do not reach an agreement as a result of the ADR conference, the neutral shall report the lack of an agreement to the court program. The court program shall notify the assigned judge of the lack of agreement.
- H. Written and executed agreements or memoranda of agreement reached as a result of a court ADR conference are enforceable to the same extent as any other written agreement. Oral agreements shall not be enforceable.
- I. At the conclusion of each ADR conference, the neutral shall submit the following documents to the ADR Program: guidelines signed by all parties present at the session (including observers), a disposition report, Tier I and Tier II screening forms (if not completed prior to the session), and a \$25.00 administration fee. Failure to submit the required documents within the deadline may result in reporting the neutral's non-compliance to the Court, and the neutral may be required to appear in court before the assigned judge and provide the disposition report information.

14.

EVALUATION

A. Evaluation of the Program:

- 1. Data shall be collected on an ongoing basis to ensure the quality of the program and provided to GODR in a timely fashion when requested. Such data may include evaluation by parties and attorneys of the ADR

conference as applied to their case, the performance of the neutral in the case, and ways to improve the effectiveness of the ADR program.

2. Data concerning settlement rate shall not be used as the sole basis for program funding or program evaluation.

B. Evaluation of Neutrals:

1. The performance of neutrals shall be monitored on an ongoing basis. Settlement rates shall not be used as the sole basis for the evaluation of a neutral.
2. Incompetent, ineffective, or unethical neutrals will be removed from the roster. Removals of such neutrals shall be reported to GODR so that a neutral's registration may be reconsidered.

15.

JUDICIALLY HOSTED SETTLEMENT CONFERENCE

As an alternative to an ADR conference through the court program, the Court may *sua sponte* or upon motion by a party order the parties to participate in a judicially hosted settlement conference. In a judicially hosted settlement conference, the hosting judge may assess the strengths and weaknesses of each party's case, as well as assist the parties in narrowing the legal and factual issues in the case.

The process for a judicially hosted settlement conference is the same as any other ADR conference except:

1. The hosting judge shall be a former or retired judge selected by the assigned judge;
2. The assigned judge shall set the timing for the conference(s);
3. The hosting judge shall receive compensation unless otherwise disqualified by law or by the rules of the Supreme Court of Georgia; and
4. The hosting judge may not engage in *ex parte* communications with the parties or counsel during the conference.

16.

FUNDING AND ADMINISTRATION

When any civil matter is filed for docketing upon the official docket of the Cobb County Magistrate Court, the clerk of such court shall collect \$7.50 at the time of filing, and when any estate case is filed in the Cobb County Probate Court, the clerk of such court shall collect \$5.00 at the time of filing. When any civil matter is filed in the Cobb County Superior Court, the clerk of such court shall collect \$10.00 at the time of filing. The collected money shall be used by the Board of Trustees of the Cobb

County Fund for the Administration of Alternative Dispute Resolution program. The Treasurer of the Fund is responsible for overseeing the collection and disbursement of these funds from the clerks of the aforementioned courts.

The ADR Office shall be directly supervised by the Court Administrator for Cobb County Superior Court. The Court Administrator shall establish and implement policies and procedures to ensure that the ADR Office and the court ADR program operate in conformity with the provisions of this Order.

SO ORDERED this 27 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges

**THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE: **DESIGNATION OF LIVESAFE
RESOURCES, INC. AS AN
AUTHORIZED SOCIAL SERVICE
AGENCY TO ADVISE PETITIONERS
IN FAMILY VIOLENCE, STALKING,
AND DATING VIOLENCE CASES**

26CV00012

**53. STANDING ORDER DESIGNATING LIVESAFE RESOURCES
AS SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCY AUTHORIZED TO ADVISE PETITIONERS**

Pursuant to OCGA §§ 19-13-3(d), 16-5-94(e), and 19-13A-3, the Superior Court is authorized to designate a social service agency to advise petitioners seeking family violence, stalking, and/or dating violence temporary protective orders on the procedures for filling out and filing all forms and pleadings necessary for such relief;

LiveSafe Resources, Inc. ("LiveSafe") is a domestic nonprofit corporation licensed to do business in Georgia with a long-term record of service in Cobb County that provides services at no cost to survivors of domestic violence, including emergency shelter, counseling, and legal advocacy; and,

LiveSafe has agreed to advise petitioners as authorized by OCGA §§ 19-13-3(d), 16-5-94(e), and 19-13A-3.;

In consideration of the foregoing, it is **HEREBY ORDERED** that LiveSafe be designated by the Court as a social service agency authorized but not required to perform the functions delineated in O.C.G.A. §§ 19-13-3(d), 16-5-94(e), and 19-13A-3.

SO ORDERED this 27 day of September, 2026.



Ann B. Harris
Chief Judge, Superior Court of Cobb County
On behalf of the Council of Superior Court Judges