

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

JUN 16, 2020 10:17 AM

**IN RE: Declaration of Courthouse Safety Guidelines
Date: June 16, 2020**

20-1-000 
Rebecca Keaton, Clerk of Superior Court
Cobb County, Georgia

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**ORDER DECLARING COURTHOUSE SAFETY GUIDELINES
DURING THE JUDICIAL EMERGENCY**

On March 14, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Honorable Harold D. Melton, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia, issued an Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-61 (hereinafter "the Order"). Due to the continuing statewide emergency, the Order has now been extended through July 12, 2020.

WHEREAS, IT HAS BEEN DETERMINED that the Order applies to Cobb County, Georgia affecting all courts such that there is a serious health emergency pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-60(2)(D).

WHEREAS, IT HAS BEEN DETERMINED that the nature of this emergency and the risk of the continued transmission of Coronavirus/COVID-19 throughout Cobb County and the potential infection of those who are required to appear in our courts and interact with large groups due to jury service, including grand jury service, or other large, non-essential calendars requires courts to comply with "public health guidance" as outlined in the Order.

Accordingly, **IT IS THE ORDER** of this Court that the Cobb Judicial Circuit will continue to follow the **THIRD ORDER EXTENDING DECLARATION OF STATEWIDE JUDICIAL EMERGENCY** in all respects.

The Superior Court is issuing a Memorandum to provide comprehensive, written safety guidelines to protect the health of litigants, lawyers, judges, court personnel, and the public. This Memorandum is incorporated herein and made a part of this ORDER by reference.

IT IS ORDERED that the Sheriff of Cobb County shall post this Order on his public notification site and in the courthouses;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the undersigned shall immediately notify and serve the Administrative Office of the Courts at <https://georgiacourts.gov/covid-19-court-operating-guidelines-form/> to be posted at <https://georgiacourts.gov/covid-19-court-operating-guidelines/> so that it may be posted on the website and available to litigants, lawyers, and the public.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the undersigned shall immediately notify and serve a copy of the order on the judges and clerks of all courts sitting within the jurisdictions affected, such service to be accomplished through reasonable means to assure expeditious receipt; and

IS FURTHER ORDERED that the undersigned shall give notice of the issuance of this Order by public notice and other reasonable means.

This ORDER shall remain in effect during any continued statewide Judicial Emergency or until further order of this Court.

IT IS SO ORDERED this 16th day of June, 2020.



Reuben M. Green
Chief Superior Court Judge
Cobb Judicial Circuit



CHIEF JUDGE REUBEN M. GREEN

SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
COBB JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
70 HARNES STREET
MARIETTA, GEORGIA 30060
(770) 528-1860

MEMORANDUM

TO: All litigants, attorneys and members of the public
FROM: Chief Judge Reuben M. Green, Superior Court, Cobb Judicial Circuit *mg*
DATE: June 16, 2020

In accordance with the Chief Justice's **THIRD ORDER EXTENDING DECLARATION OF STATEWIDE JUDICIAL EMERGENCY**, Cobb County Courts will handle matters to the extent feasible and consistent with this Order, public health guidance and the United States and Georgia constitutions and applicable statutes and court rules, including the public's right of access to judicial proceedings and a criminal defendant's right to confrontation and open courtrooms. These procedures shall remain in effect while the Judicial Emergency is in place or until further Order of the Chief Judge of the Cobb Judicial Circuit.

Updated court information is posted on the Cobb County website at <https://www.cobbcounty.org/communications/info-center/covid-19-updates>

GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR COBB SUPERIOR COURT, STATE COURT, PROBATE COURT, JUVENILE COURT AND MAGISTRATE COURT

1. Where appropriate all parties, attorneys, and witnesses should appear via teleconference or videoconference.
2. The courthouse will remain open for the public, but they are encouraged to stay home. Only parties, attorneys and necessary witnesses should appear and only if the hearing cannot be handled via teleconferencing or videoconferencing.
3. Please leave all non-essential people at home. Avoid bringing children or family members, especially the elderly, to court.
4. No one should come to court if they are not feeling well or have a temperature above 100 degrees. Contact the Assigned Judge's office to be excused and to have your case rescheduled.
5. Before you come to the courthouse please answer the four questions below. If your answer to any of the four questions is YES, then you should not come to the courthouse. Instead, contact the Assigned Judge's office to be excused and to have your case rescheduled.
 - A. Have you had a recent onset of coughing?
 - B. Have you had any recent difficulty breathing?
 - C. Have you been around anyone who has been outside of the country in the last 14 days, or
 - D. Have you been around anyone who has been diagnosed with or is under investigation for potential COVID-19 infection?

6. Prior to entering the courthouse, you should answer the above questions again, and if your answer to any of the above questions is YES, then contact the Assigned Judge's office to be excused and to have your case rescheduled.
7. Mask or face covering required. Everyone coming to the courthouses shall have a mask or face covering on to enter the building. The mask or face covering shall remain on while in the courthouse, unless you are given permission to remove the mask or face covering by the judge or other court staff member.
8. Entering the courthouses. If you are entering the courthouse and there is a line, maintain social distance. Where there are markings on the ground establishing safe spacing, they are to be followed.
9. Temperature checks. As you enter the courthouse your temperature may be taken. If you have a fever and are turned away from the courthouse, contact the Assigned Judge's office to be excused and to have your case rescheduled.
10. You will then answer the above COVID-19 questions again, and if your answer to any of the above questions is YES, then contact the Assigned Judge's office to be excused and to have your case rescheduled.
11. The social distancing rules are in effect in and around all Cobb County courthouses. Everyone shall maintain at least six feet distance from anyone else.
12. Elevators and stairs. People entering the courthouses are encouraged to use the stairs. The elevators have the number of people that can safely use them marked, they are limited to 1 or 2 people at a time based on their size.
13. Hand sanitizer stations are on every floor by the restrooms. Everyone is encouraged to use it frequently.
14. Restrooms are located on every floor and everyone is encouraged to wash hands frequently.
15. Courtrooms. There are limits on the number of people who may safely enter a courtroom to comply with the social distancing requirements. If you anticipate that your case will require more people in attendance at your hearing than can safely fit into the courtroom, then notify the Assigned Judge's office sufficiently in advance of the hearing so that accommodations can be made for overflow.
16. In the courtrooms, observers may sit in the gallery on the marked "X" only. No one may approach the bench without the permission of the Assigned Judge. Everyone is encouraged to remain outside the courtroom until their case is called. Witnesses are encouraged to remain outside the courtroom until they are called. The witness will testify from the marked witness seat.
17. Exhibits should be made available in electronic format in advance of the hearing so that they are not passed back and forth between multiple people in the courtroom. Contact the Assigned Judge's office for instructions on exhibits.

Reuben M. Green
Chief Judge, Superior Court
Cobb Judicial Circuit