



**DEBRA DEBERRY**  
Clerk of Superior Court  
DeKalb County, Georgia

**CONTACT:**  
Donica Kennon  
Public Information Officer  
404.392.5124  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

APRIL 7, 2020

## **Emergency Judicial Order Extended to May 13, 2020**

**Decatur, GA** – The Supreme Court of Georgia has extended an Emergency Order to May 13, 2020 originally set to expire on April 13.

Chief and Administrative Superior Court Judge Asha Jackson has also issued an order extending her local order to May 13, 2020.

DeKalb County Clerk of Superior Court Debra DeBerry will continue to fulfill constitutional mandates in a primarily virtual environment just as the office has successfully operated since March 23.

Detailed instructions on Temporary Protective Orders and Ex parte Hearings during this statewide judicial emergency are available at [www.dksuperiorclerk.com/tpo](http://www.dksuperiorclerk.com/tpo). Customers can continue to electronically file criminal, civil, real estate documents, and submit all inquiries at [www.dksuperiorclerk.com](http://www.dksuperiorclerk.com).

Both orders are included in this release.

Non-emergency services, including passport applications, notary commissions, trade names and adoptions, will be available May 14.

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### **About the Clerk's Office**

Debra DeBerry has been the Clerk in DeKalb County, Georgia since March 2011. The Clerk of Superior Court is a constitutional office charged by the Georgia Constitution with the care, custody, and control of DeKalb County's records. Additionally, in Georgia, the Clerk of Superior Court is responsible for the Board of Equalization legislated to hear appeals on property values and other exemptions. Judicial and Real Estate documents are filed, docketed, recorded, maintained, and archived in an expeditious manner and always available for public access. The Clerk's Office archives same-day Real Estate recording, turnaround of judicial documents within minutes, and processes are in place to reduce fraud.



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SUPREME COURT OF GEORGIA



April 6, 2020

### ORDER EXTENDING DECLARATION OF STATEWIDE JUDICIAL EMERGENCY

Pursuant to OCGA § 38-3-61, and due to the continuing statewide emergency involving the transmission of Coronavirus/COVID-19, the Honorable Harold D. Melton, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia, does hereby extend the March 14, 2020 (amended) Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency, which would have expired on April 13, 2020 at 11:59 p.m., until Wednesday, May 13, 2020, at 11:59 p.m., unless otherwise further modified or extended. The Chief Justice will provide notice as to the expected termination of the Order at least one week in advance to allow courts to plan the transition to fuller operations.

With regard to matters not deemed essential functions under the Statewide Judicial Emergency Order, courts and litigants are encouraged to proceed to the extent feasible and consistent with public health guidance, for example through the use of teleconferences and videoconferences, to reduce backlogs when the judicial emergency ends.

With regard to all matters in this challenging time, all lawyers are reminded of their obligations of professionalism.

It is ordered, pursuant to OCGA § 38-3-63, that notice and service of a copy of this Order shall immediately be sent to the judges and clerks of all courts in this State and to the clerk of the Georgia Court of Appeals, such service to be accomplished through means to assure expeditious receipt, which include electronic means; and

It is further ordered that notice shall also be sent to the media, the State Bar of Georgia, and the officials and entities listed below and shall constitute sufficient notice of the issuance of this Order to the affected parties, counsel for the affected parties, and the public.

(MORE)



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IT IS SO ORDERED this 6<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2020.

  
Chief Justice Harold D. Melton  
Supreme Court of Georgia

cc:  
Governor Brian P. Kemp  
Lt. Governor Geoff Duncan  
Speaker David Ralston  
State Bar of Georgia  
Administrative Office of the Courts  
Judicial Council of Georgia  
Council of Superior Court Clerks of Georgia  
Department of Juvenile Justice  
Criminal Justice Coordinating Council  
Council of Accountability Court Judges  
Georgia Commission on Dispute Resolution  
Institute of Continuing Judicial Education of Georgia  
Georgia Council of Court Administrators  
Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism  
Judicial Qualifications Commission  
Association County Commissioners of Georgia  
Georgia Municipal Association  
Georgia Sheriffs' Association  
Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police  
Georgia Public Defender Council  
Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of Georgia  
Department of Corrections  
Department of Community Supervision  
Georgia Court Reporters Association  
Board of Court Reporting  
State Board of Pardons and Paroles  
Constitutional Officers Association of Georgia  
Council of Magistrate Court Clerks  
Council of Municipal Court Clerks

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA  
Clerk's Office, Atlanta

I certify that the above is a true extract from the  
minutes of the Supreme Court of Georgia.  
Witness my signature and the seal of said court hereto  
affixed the day and year last above written.

 , Clerk

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FILED 04/07/2020 11:12:59 AM Clerk of Superior Court DeKalb County  
**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF DEKALB COUNTY STONE  
MOUNTAIN JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
STATE OF GEORGIA**

**20AP1129**

IN RE: Declaration of Judicial Emergency \*

Date: April 6, 2020 \*

**ORDER DECLARING JUDICIAL EMERGENCY (EXTENDED  
THROUGH MAY 13, 2020 AT 11:59 PM)**

WHEREAS, IT HAS BEEN DETERMINED that a Judicial Emergency exists in DeKalb County, Georgia affecting ALL COURTS, including courts located in cities and municipalities within DeKalb County, such that there is a serious health emergency pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-60(2)(D). See O.C.G.A. § 38-3-60(2)(D) (providing that "Judicial Emergency" means "[s]uch other serious emergency").

WHEREAS, IT HAS BEEN DETERMINED that the Judicial Emergency substantially endangers or infringes upon the normal functioning of the judicial system as it relates to jury service, including grand jury service, and any non-essential matters, unless they can be conducted via video or teleconferencing.

Therefore, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-61, The Honorable Chief Judge Asha F. Jackson of the Superior Court of DeKalb County, Stone Mountain Judicial Circuit **DOES HEREBY ORDER AND DECLARE** the existence of a Judicial Emergency in the Stone Mountain Judicial Circuit. The nature of this emergency is the continued transmission of Coronavirus/COVID-19 throughout DeKalb County and the potential infection of those who are required to appear in our courts and interact with large groups due to

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jury service, including grand jury service, or other large, non-essential calendars.

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Thus, the undersigned hereby makes this declaration of a judicial emergency affecting all courts and clerk's offices in DeKalb County as it relates to jury service, including grand jury service, and any non-essential matters, unless they can be conducted via video or teleconferencing.

Accordingly, IT IS THE ORDER of the Court that:

- No jurors or grand jurors shall report and no jury trials shall occur from this date through May 13, 2020 at 11:59 pm; and
- Furthermore, no non-essential matters shall be heard by the courts from this date through May 13, 2020 at 11:59 pm, unless they can be conducted via video or teleconferencing. Parties and/or attorneys in any non-essential matters should directly contact the chambers of the judge assigned to their case if they have any questions and/or need to ensure their compliance with this Order.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-62, during the period of this Order, the Court hereby suspends, tolls, extends, and otherwise grants relief from all deadlines, including, but not limited to: (1) a statute of limitation; (2) the time within which to try a case for which a demand for speedy trial has been filed; (3) the time within which to hold a commitment hearing; (4) the time within which to return a bill of indictment or an accusation or to bring a matter before a grand jury; and/or (5) such other legal proceedings as determined to be necessary, including calendars involving large numbers of litigants, lawyers, or other persons.

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Should the state of emergency extend beyond the period indicated above or should the nature of the emergency otherwise require modification by the Court, the Court will make a determination of available alternative remedies for the conduct of court business, as necessary, and a corresponding Order will be entered and distributed in accordance with Georgia law.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-63:

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

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the undersigned shall immediately notify and serve Chief Justice Harold D. Melton of the Supreme Court with a copy of this Order, such service to be accomplished through reasonable means to assure expeditious receipt;

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 and on the clerks of the Georgia Court of Appeals and the Georgia Supreme Court, such service to be accomplished through reasonable means to assure expeditious receipt; and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the undersigned shall give notice of the issuance of this Order to the affected parties, counsel for the affected parties, and the public.

IT IS SO ORDERED this 6<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.

  
ASHA F. JACKSON (APR 1, 2020)

HON. ASHA F. JACKSON

(MORE)



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Chief and Administrative Judge  
DeKalb County Superior Court

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