

Judicial Council of Georgia
Emergency Session

By Remote Conferencing

Livestream at <https://www.youtube.com/judicialcouncilofgeorgia>

Tuesday, January 5, 2021
2:00 p.m.

- 1. Preliminary Remarks**
(Chief Justice Harold D. Melton, Est. Time – 2 Min.)
- 2. Swearing In of New Member**
(Chief Justice Harold D. Melton, Est. Time – 3 Min.)
- 3. Roll Call of Judicial Council Members**
(Cynthia H. Clanton, Judicial Council Secretary and AOC Director, Est. Time – 2 Min.)
- 4. Adoption of Minutes – December 22, 2020, Emergency Session**
(Chief Justice Harold D. Melton, Est. Time – 2 Min.)
- 5. Discussion of Statewide Judicial Emergency Orders and COVID-19 Update by Judicial Council Members**
(Chief Justice Harold D. Melton, Est. Time – 15 Min.)
 - A. Judicial COVID-19 Task Force Update
(Judge Shawn LaGrua, Est. Time – 5 Min.)
- 6. Reports from Courts, Councils, State Bar, and AOC (Est. Time – 20 min.)**
 - A. Supreme Court**
 - B. Court of Appeals**
 - C. Business Court**
 - D. Council of Superior Court Judges**
 - E. Council of State Court Judges**
 - F. Council of Juvenile Court Judges**
 - G. Council of Probate Court Judges**
 - H. Council of Magistrate Court Judges**
 - I. Council of Municipal Court Judges**

J. State Bar of Georgia

K. Administrative Office of the Courts

7. Reports from additional Judicial Branch Agencies (Est. Time – 10 Min.)

A. Council of Accountability Court Judges

B. Georgia Commission on Dispute Resolution

C. Council of Superior Court Clerks

D. Chief Justice’s Commission on Professionalism

E. Georgia Council of Court Administrators

F. Institute of Continuing Judicial Education

G. Judicial Qualifications Commission

8. Old/New Business

(Chief Justice Harold D. Melton, Est. Time – 5 Min.)

9. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

(Chief Justice Harold D. Melton, Est. Time – 5 Min.)

Next Judicial Council Meeting – General Session

Friday, February 12, 2021 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Zoom Conferencing

Judicial Council Meeting Calendar – 2021

Friday, April 23, 2021	10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	TBD
Friday, August 13, 2021	10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Columbus Convention & Trade Center/Columbus, GA
Friday, December 10, 2021	10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	The Carter Center/Atlanta, GA

Please continue to check www.georgiacourts.gov (the Judicial Gateway) for the latest updates and information. Thank you and continue to be safe!

Judicial Council of Georgia
Emergency Session
Conference Call
December 22, 2020 • 2 p.m.

Members Present

Chief Justice Harold D. Melton, Chair
Presiding Justice David E. Nahmias
Chief Judge Brian Amero
Chief Judge Jeffrey S. Bagley
Judge James G. Blanchard, Jr.
Chief Judge Christopher S. Brasher
Judge Walter W. Davis
Chief Judge Lori B. Duff
Chief Judge Asha Jackson
Ms. Dawn Jones
Judge Lisa C. Jones
Judge Quinn M. Kasper
Judge Jeffrey H. Kight
Judge Thomas Lakes
Chief Judge Christopher J. McFadden
Judge J. Wade Padgett
Judge Ralph Van Pelt, Jr.
Chief Judge C. Gregory Price
Chief Judge Bill Reinhardt (for Judge
Melanie Cross)
Vice Chief Judge Brian K. Rickman
Judge Fletcher Sams

Judge W. James Sizemore, Jr.
Chief Judge Sarah Wall
Judge Wesley B. Tailor
Chief Judge Willie C. Weaver, Sr.
Chief Judge Kelli L. Wolk
Judge Alvin T. Wong

Members Absent

Chief Judge T.J. Hudson

Staff Present

Ms. Cynthia Clanton, Director
Ms. Michelle Barclay
Ms. Stephanie Hines
Ms. Cheryl Karounos
Ms. Noelle Lagueux-Alvarez
Mr. Ben Luke
Ms. Tracy Mason
Ms. Lashawn Murphy
Ms. Tiffanie Robinson
Ms. Maleia Wilson

(Guests Appended)

Call to Order and Welcome

The meeting of the Judicial Council of Georgia (Council) was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chief Justice Melton. He informed the Council that the meeting will be recorded, livestreamed, and open to the press and public. Ms. Clanton called roll for Council members.

Discussion of Statewide Judicial Emergency Orders and COVID-19 Update by Judicial Council Members

Chief Justice Melton thanked Mr. Shannon Weathers and Ms. Emily Youngo for their contribution towards collecting feedback on the status of jury trial proceedings statewide. The Georgia Department of Public Health's (DPH) dashboard shows an increase of COVID-19 cases statewide, at unprecedented levels. Chief Justice Melton stated given the concern, he will modify the previous order issued to suspend jury trials for cases that are not already underway, to include jury selection processes, until at least mid-February. Chief Justice Melton noted this does not preclude

the issuance of jury summons and the order will be effective at midnight tomorrow. He stated local jurisdictions will continue to have authority over the continuation of non-essential functions and encouraged the Council to continue using remote technology as much as possible. He reminded the Council to continue following CDC guidelines and to be attentive to the local conditions to make any critical decisions. Chief Justice Melton reported the DPH Vaccine Rollout plan (available at <https://dph.georgia.gov/covid-19-vaccine-rollout-plan>) indicates the judiciary is expected to be included in Phase 1-B; there aren't additional details right now, but AOC staff are currently engaged with DPH and will provide an update when details are available. Chief Justice Melton asked the Council for any comments or concerns on the latest developments. Chief Judge Amero noted support of the Chief Justice's recommendations and expressed his gratitude for his leadership. Chief Judge Jackson requested clarification on Chief Justice Melton's stance for grand juries; he responded the authority remains with local jurisdictions.

Chief Judge Jackson inquired on a specific end date with regards to the jury trial suspension; the Chief Justice clarified the language in the order will be phrased "until further order" and the exact end date will be dependent on the situation. Presiding Justice Nahmias clarified the new order will be a modification of the existing order that expires January 8. Chief Justice Melton encouraged the Council to share any feedback. He recognized Judge LaGrua to report on the COVID-19 Task Force. Judge LaGrua reported the Task Force is presently working on guidance on discovery, expected to be published soon.

Old Business

No old business was offered.

New Business

No new business was offered.

Concluding Remarks

No closing remarks.

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Chief Justice Melton adjourned the meeting at 3:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Tiffanie Robinson
Executive Assistant, Judicial Council/AOC
For Cynthia H. Clanton, Director and Secretary

The above and foregoing minutes
were approved on the ___ day of
_____, 2021.

Harold D. Melton
Chief Justice

**Judicial Council of Georgia
Emergency Session
Conference Call
December 22, 2020 • 2 p.m.**

Guest Present

Mr. Joseph Baden, Third Judicial Administrative District
Mr. Josh Becker, Council of Accountability Court Judges
Mr. Tracy J. BeMent, Tenth Judicial Administrative District
Mr. Bob Bray, Council of State Court Judges
Mr. Charles “Chuck” Boring, Judicial Qualifications Commission
Chief Judge Geronda Carter, Superior Court of Clayton County
Ms. Jennifer Dalton, Georgia Department of Public Health
Mr. Richard Denney, First Judicial Administrative District
Mr. Steve Ferrell, Ninth Judicial Administrative District
Judge Robert Flournoy, III, Superior Court of Cobb County
Ms. Natalie K. Glaser, Georgia Public Defender Council
Chief Judge Donald W. Gillis, Superior Court of Laurens County
Ms. Karlise Grier, Chief Justice’s Commission on Professionalism
Mr. Christopher Hansard, Cobb Judicial Circuit
Ms. Lenora Hawkins-Ponzo, Fourth Judicial Administrative District
Ms. Christine B. Hayes, State Bar of Georgia
Mr. Kevin Holder, Council of Probate Court Judges
Mr. Eric John, Council of Juvenile Court Judges
Judge Shawn LaGrua, Superior Court of Fulton County
Chief Judge T. Russell McClelland, State Court of Forsyth County
Ms. Natasha MacDonald, Council of Superior Court Judges
Ms. Cathy McCumber, Fourth Judicial Administrative District
Mr. David Mixon, Second Judicial Administrative District
Mr. Bob Nadekow, Eighth Judicial Administrative District
Mr. Jody Overcash, Seventh Judicial Administrative District
Ms. Sharon Reiss, Council of Magistrate Court Judges
Ms. Robin Rooks, Georgia Council of Court Administrators
Mr. William T Simmons, Sixth Judicial Administrative District
Judge Arthur Lee Smith, Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit
Mr. Robert W. Smith, Jr., Prosecuting Attorneys’ Council of Georgia
Ms. Terry Stolow, Intern, Prosecuting Attorney’s Council of Georgia
Mr. David Summerlin, Fifth Judicial Administrative District
Ms. Courtney Veal, Judicial Qualifications Commission
Ms. Kristen Wallace, Council of Juvenile Court Judges
Mr. Shannon Weathers, Council of Superior Court Judges
Ms. Cindy Wang, Department of Juvenile Justice
Ms. Emily Youngo, Council of Superior Court Judges