

**Judicial Council of Georgia  
Emergency Session**

**By Remote Conferencing**

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

**Friday, October 29, 2021**  
12:00 p.m.

- 1. Call to Order & Preliminary Remarks**  
(Chief Justice David E. Nahmias, Est. Time – 5 Min.)
- 2. Roll Call of Judicial Council Members**  
(Ms. Cynthia H. Clanton, Judicial Council Secretary & AOC Director, Est. Time – 2 Min.)
- 3. Update on American Rescue Plan Act funding**  
(Chief Justice David E. Nahmias & Presiding Justice Michael P. Boggs, Est. Time – 20 Min.)
- 4. Old/New Business**  
(Chief Justice David E. Nahmias, Est. Time – 5 Min.)
- 5. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment**  
(Chief Justice David E. Nahmias, Est. Time – 3 Min.)

**Next Judicial Council Meeting – General Session**

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

**Judicial Council General Session Meeting Calendar – CY 2022**

Friday, February 11, 2022	10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Zoom Conferencing
Friday, April 22, 2022	10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Nathan Deal Judicial Center / Atlanta, GA
Friday, August 12, 2022	10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Athens, GA
Friday, December 9, 2022	10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Zoom Conferencing



**For Immediate Release**

Thursday, October 28, 2021

## **Gov. Kemp Dedicating \$110M to Crack Down on Violent Crime, Address Judicial Case Backlog**

**Atlanta, GA** – Governor Brian P. Kemp today announced that he will dedicate up to \$110 million to combat violent crime and help support the Georgia judiciary's recovery from COVID-19.

“No one benefits when there is a delay in justice,” **said Governor Brian Kemp.** “My administration collaborated with leaders from the judicial branch and law enforcement to identify innovative solutions which will help crack down on violent crime in high-need areas, ensure our courts are operating efficiently, and help quickly reduce case backlogs caused by the pandemic. Keeping Georgia communities safe is my top priority, and we look forward to the positive impact this will have on our justice system.”

The State of Georgia will be utilizing funds made available by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to create this opportunity. In addition to other measures, Governor Kemp plans to establish a Violent Crime Task Force that will assist district attorneys' with their violent crime casework. Governor Kemp has placed an emphasis on ensuring the prosecution of serious violent felonies, including murder, armed robbery, kidnapping, rape, aggravated child molestation, aggravated sodomy, and aggravated sexual battery. Funds will also be used in the following ways:

- To provide additional, temporary court staff such as senior judges, bailiffs, court reporters, judicial officers, court staff, and other necessary persons to address the case backlog created by COVID-19.
- To contract with third party locations to conduct court proceedings in larger facilities.
- To pay for additional, temporary prosecutors, investigators, legal administrative positions, and contract legal services.
- To provide additional circuit and conflict attorneys for the Georgia Public Defenders Council.

“Georgia’s judges appreciate the Governor’s allocation of these funds so that our courts may hire additional staff and secure additional space to continue working through the case

backlogs caused by the pandemic,” **said Supreme Court of Georgia Chief Justice and Chair of the Judicial Council of Georgia David E. Nahmias.** “Courts in Georgia have worked hard to continue operating during the pandemic while adhering to public health guidelines. Still, many cases were unable to move forward in a safe manner, especially those that require a jury trial. These cases must be resolved as courts also handle new cases being filed.”

“The courts play an important role in public safety,” **said Supreme Court of Georgia Presiding Justice Michael P. Boggs.** “The Judicial Council’s Committee on ARPA Funding will work diligently to distribute these funds so that courts receive the necessary resources to help resolve cases involving serious violent felonies efficiently and expeditiously,”

The available grant funding for the judicial system and the prosecuting attorneys will be administered by the Judicial Council of Georgia and its Administrative Office of the Courts. The available grant funding for the Georgia Public Defenders Council will be administered through the Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget. For more information on grant requirements, application timelines, and contact information, please visit the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget or the Judicial Council of Georgia's Administrative Office of the Courts.

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## Press Contacts

Katie Byrd - Press Secretary  
Office of Governor Brian P. Kemp  
[katie.byrd@georgia.gov](mailto:katie.byrd@georgia.gov)

Emily Flower - Deputy Press Secretary  
Office of Governor Brian P. Kemp  
[emily.flower@georgia.gov](mailto:emily.flower@georgia.gov)



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## Judicial Council of Georgia Administrative Office of the Courts

**Chief Justice David E. Nahmias**  
*Chair*

**Cynthia H. Clanton**  
*Director*

### **PRESS RELEASE**

For more information:

Bruce Shaw

[bruce.shaw@georgiacourts.gov](mailto:bruce.shaw@georgiacourts.gov)

404-656-6783

**For Immediate Release:**

October 28, 2021

### **Georgia Courts to Receive American Rescue Plan Act Funds to Address Backlog of Cases, Focusing on Serious Violent Felonies**

Atlanta – Supreme Court of Georgia Chief Justice David E. Nahmias announced today that Gov. Brian P. Kemp has allocated up to \$110 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to address backlogs of court cases, particularly cases involving serious violent felonies.

“Most of our state’s government agencies and businesses slowed down or stopped during the COVID pandemic,” said Chief Justice Nahmias, who is also Chair of the Judicial Council of Georgia. “The meals that restaurants did not serve will never be served, and the airline flights that were canceled have not been rescheduled. But the court cases that could not be decided, particularly when jury trials could not be held safely, remain pending and must be resolved, along with all of the new cases being filed. So we greatly appreciate the Governor’s allocation of ARPA funds to help the judicial system work through the case backlogs and get the courts on which our citizens and businesses depend back on track.”

The Governor’s allocation for grants to eligible courts, prosecutors, and related agencies will come from the \$4.8 billion in ARPA funds apportioned to the State of Georgia to mitigate negative economic impacts caused by the COVID-19 public health emergency. Georgia’s judiciary operated under a Statewide Judicial Emergency Order from March 2020 through June 2021, and necessary limitations on court operations to protect the health of those working in and coming to courthouses during this time resulted in a significant backlog of criminal and civil cases, particularly those requiring jury trials to resolve. Since the judicial emergency order expired on June 30, 2021, courts have increased efforts to resolve cases, but the ongoing pandemic continues to limit the pace and scale of court operations as public health measures remain in place. This ARPA funding will provide an opportunity for eligible courts, prosecutors, and related agencies to hire additional staff and acquire temporary workspaces and courtroom facilities to address the backlog of cases. However, priority will be given to eliminating the backlog of serious violent felony cases in superior

courts around the state, given the impact of those cases on public safety and the significant burdens they place on the judicial system. Serious violent felonies include murder, armed robbery, kidnapping, rape, aggravated child molestation, aggravated sodomy, and aggravated sexual battery.

The Judicial Council of Georgia, which serves as the policymaking body for the judicial branch, has established the Ad Hoc Committee on American Rescue Plan Act Funding to oversee the application process for grants to eligible courts, prosecutors, and related agencies. Supreme Court of Georgia Presiding Justice Michael P. Boggs will serve as the Committee’s Chair, and the Judicial Council’s Administrative Office of the Courts will facilitate the grant application, awarding, compliance, and reporting processes. The funds must be spent by December 31, 2024.

“We look forward to distributing these funds as soon as possible to assist our courts in addressing the backlog of cases involving serious violent crimes, which will aid in improving public safety,” said Presiding Justice Boggs.

More information on grant requirements, application timelines, and contact information is forthcoming at <https://jcaoc.georgiacourts.gov/>.

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244 Washington Street SW • Suite 300 • Atlanta, GA 30334  
404-656-5171 • <https://jcaoc.georgiacourts.gov/judicial-council/>  
Twitter: @gacourts • Facebook: [www.facebook.com/gacourts](http://www.facebook.com/gacourts)



## Judicial Council of Georgia Administrative Office of the Courts

Chief Justice David E. Nahmias  
*Chair*

Cynthia H. Clanton  
*Director*

### Judicial Council Ad Hoc Committee on American Rescue Plan Act Funding

In accordance with the Bylaws of the Judicial Council of Georgia, ad hoc committees exist to address issues of limited scope and duration, and the Judicial Council Chair shall create and charge ad hoc committees as are necessary to conduct the business of the Judicial Council.

Therefore, I hereby establish the Ad Hoc Committee on American Rescue Plan Act Funding. The Committee is established for the purposes of reviewing and approving applications from eligible courts and judicial system stakeholders requesting the dissemination of federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (Pub. L. 117-2) funds allocated to the Judicial Branch for eligible expenditures aimed at addressing backlogs of court cases, particularly cases involving serious violent felonies.

The following members are hereby appointed to the Ad Hoc Committee on American Rescue Plan Act Funding:

- Presiding Justice Michael P. Boggs, Supreme Court of Georgia, Chair.
- One member chosen by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia.
- One member chosen by the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals of Georgia.
- The administrative judge of each judicial administrative district, as provided by OCGA § 15-5-4, or his or her designee.

Judicial Administrative District representative members will be responsible for understanding the needs of all classes of court and other judicial system stakeholders in their districts. Committee membership may include advisory members appointed, as needed, by the Committee Chair. Advisory members may be heard but shall not be entitled to vote.

The Ad Hoc Committee on American Rescue Plan Act Funding will exist from the date of this order until December 31, 2024, unless otherwise extended. The Administrative Office of the Courts shall provide staff support to this Committee, shall facilitate the grant application, awarding, compliance, and reporting processes, and shall notify the judiciary of the creation of the Committee.

So decided this 28 day of October, 2021.

  
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Chief Justice David E. Nahmias  
Chair, Judicial Council of Georgia