

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE EASTERN JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
STATE OF GEORGIA

In Re:]
]]
Declaration of Judicial Emergency]

FILED IN OFFICE
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JESSE L. CLAY, CLERK
SUPERIOR COURT
CHATHAM COUNTY, GA

ORDER OF JUDICIAL EMERGENCY

The undersigned Chief Judge of Superior Court for the Eastern Judicial Circuit of Georgia does hereby declare the existence of a judicial emergency in this circuit. The nature of this emergency is due to Hurricane Idalia which is expected to affect this judicial circuit on August 30, 2023. The undersigned makes this declaration in conformance with the recommendation of the Chatham Emergency Management Agency, along with the decision of Chatham County to close all county offices for business on August 30, 2023 and the decision of the Savannah-Chatham County public school system to suspend in-person learning and shift to virtual learning on August 30, 2023 and August 31, 2023.

Accordingly, it is the order of the court that the Chatham County Courthouse be closed for business on August 30, 2023 and will reopen for business on August 31, 2023¹. For purposes of clarity, this Order also encompasses the Juvenile Court Courthouse.

During the period when the Chatham County Courthouse is closed the court hereby suspends, tolls, extends, and otherwise grants relief from all deadlines or other time schedules or filing requirements imposed by otherwise applicable statutes, rules, regulations, or court orders, whether in civil or criminal cases or administrative matters, including, but not limited to:

1. A statute of limitation;
2. The time within which to issue a warrant;

¹A later decision will be made as to whether it is also necessary to extend this Order beyond August 30, 2023.

3. The time within which to try a case for which a demand for speedy trial has been filed;
4. The time within which to hold a commitment hearing;
5. A deadline or other schedule regarding the detention of a juvenile;
6. The time within which to return a bill of indictment or an accusation or to bring a matter before a grand jury;
7. The time within which to file a writ of habeas corpus;
8. The time within which discovery or any aspect thereof is to be completed;
9. The time within which to serve a party;
10. The time within which to appeal or to seek the right to appeal any order, ruling or other determination; and
11. Such other legal proceedings as may be determined to be necessary.

Because of the uncertainty surrounding the nature of the impending emergency insofar as the severity and time period is concerned, the Court is unable to designate another facility for the transaction of court business at this time. Should the state of emergency extend beyond the period indicated above, the court will make a determination of an available, appropriate facility for the conduct of court business.

SO ORDERED this 29 day of August, 2023.



Penny Haas Freese, Chief Judge
Superior Court, Eastern Judicial Circuit of Georgia

cc: Chief Justice, Georgia Supreme Court
All Judges and Clerks of Court
District Attorney
Chief Public Defender
Chairman Chatham County Commission
News media