

IN THE STATE COURT OF COBB COUNTY  
STATE OF GEORGIA

ORDER REGARDING RESTRICTION OF IN PERSON PROCEEDINGS

WHEREAS, there has been a continuing increase in COVID 19 cases in Cobb County;  
and

WHEREAS, according to the Cobb Douglas Public Health (CDPH) surge alert issued December 15, 2020, the rate of community transmission of COVID-19 in Cobb County is now 6-7 times the rate of what is considered high transmission; and

WHEREAS, CDPH warns that Cobb County is experiencing substantial, uncontrolled community spread of COVID-19, and, due to the impending holidays, further uncontrolled community spread may occur; and

WHEREAS, due to the increased transmission and rising cases in the State of Georgia and in Cobb County, the Chief Judge of the Cobb Judicial Circuit, by order entered December 22, 2020, has ordered a halt to non-essential, in-person proceedings.

THEREFORE, the State Court of Cobb County, in the interests of public safety, health and welfare, hereby suspends non-essential in-person hearings effective Wednesday, December 23, 2020 subject to the exceptions and guidelines contained in this order.

- A) Essential matters which are permitted to be heard after December 23, 2020 include cases directly impacting the liberty of a Defendant in a criminal case or the safety of any person in any case. This includes the following:
1. Bond Hearings;
  2. Bond Revocation Hearings
  3. Probation Revocation Hearings
  4. Pleas of Guilty where a Defendant is going into or out of custody;
  5. A hearing where an accountability court sanction carries a likelihood of incarceration;

In these cases, the assigned judge has the discretion to compel the appearance of persons in such cases and any such party or witness so compelled shall appear as ordered.

B) With regard to matters currently scheduled and on an existing calendar between December 23, 2020 and January 15, 2021 ONLY, the State Court deems it essential that parties be permitted to appear. Any party scheduled to appear during this specific and limited time frame is not compelled to appear but may do so. Parties who opt not to appear during this specific and limited time frame are reminded of their obligation to keep the State Court Clerk apprised of their mailing address so that notice of a future court date can be mailed. A change of address form can be completed on the State Court Clerk's website.

FILED IN THIS OFFICE  
THIS 23 DAY OF Dec, 2020

  
Clerk State Court of Cobb County

C) If an attorney or party feels an essential matter needs to be addressed by the Court, such attorney or party is instructed to contact the office of the assigned judge for scheduling.

D) No in-person non-essential matters are to be scheduled until further order of this Court.

E) All matters may be conducted in a virtual format to the full extent permitted by law and/or applicable court rules.

SO ORDERED, This the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of December, 2020.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Carl W. Bowers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Carl" being particularly prominent.

Carl W. Bowers  
Chief Judge  
State Court of Cobb County