

SUBO# 587 - 588

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF TATTNALL COUNTY

STATE OF GEORGIA

Filed In Open Court
This 13 day of October, 2020
Time: 11:25 AM
Sherry Beaud
Deputy Clerk

RE: Special Term of Grand Jury

On March 14, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Honorable Harold D. Melton, as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia, issued an Order Declaring a Statewide Judicial Emergency pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-61. That Order has been extended six times, with modifications, by orders issued on April 6, May 11, June 12, July 10, August 11, September 10 and October 10, 2020. During the Statewide Judicial Emergency, Courts in the Atlantic Judicial Circuit have continued to perform essential functions despite the pandemic.

The March 14, 2020, Statewide Judicial Emergency Order suspended, tolled or extended many of the deadlines imposed by law in civil and criminal cases. As of July 14, 2020, most of the deadlines on litigants have been reimposed. Subsequently, Chief Justice Melton through the September 10, 2020, extension to the Statewide Judicial Emergency, authorized the Chief Judge of each superior court, in his or her discretion after consultation with the District Attorney, to resume grand jury proceedings, if doing so could be done safely and in compliance with public health guidance based on local conditions.

On September 17, 2020, the judges of the superior courts of the Atlantic Judicial Circuit, held a meeting of the stake holders of the superior and state courts within the Atlantic Judicial Circuit. Invited to the meeting were representatives from the various sheriffs' offices, district attorney's office, public defender's office, clerks' offices, the state court judges, county governing authorities and representatives from the local bar. After the meeting, a plan to safely conduct grand jury proceedings was prepared and submitted to the Administrative Office of the Courts.

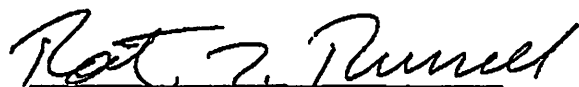
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After consultation with the District Attorney, and determining that resumption of grand jury proceedings may be done safely and in compliance with public health guidance based on local conditions, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

Pursuant to the authority granted to the undersigned by the Sixth Order Extending Declaration of Statewide Judicial Emergency, entered September 10, 2020, and the subsequent extension entered October, 10, 2020, a special term of the Tattnall County Grand Jury shall convene on December 3, 2020 and December 4, 2020, at 9:00 a.m. at the Tattnall County Judicial Annex. O.C.G.A. §15-6-20. The special term shall commence on said date and shall conclude on the date the October 2020 term of court would have concluded. It is recognized that there are substantial backlogs of unindicted cases. However, due to ongoing public health precautions, these proceedings should not occur at the scale or with the speed they occurred before the pandemic.

The Clerk of Superior Court of Tattnall County is hereby directed to file a copy of this order in the minutes of the Court and provide a copy of the same to the office of the District Attorney and Circuit Public Defender.

SO ORDERED, this 13 day of October, 2020.


ROBERT L. RUSSELL, III
Chief Judge, Superior Courts
Atlantic Judicial Circuit