



2014-2015 Officers

President:
Pamela Allen
Marietta

President Emeritus:
Sharon Wallace
Duluth

President Elect:
Cheston Roney
Sandy Springs

Vice President:
Nathaniel Mingo
Riverdale

Secretary:
Stephanie McFarlin
Stockbridge

Treasurer:
Mariza Abdeljawad
Suwanee

BOARD MEMBERS

Joy Williams, Norcross
Dawn Farris, Braselton
Essie West, Morrow
Trina Gallien, Johns Creek
Carolyn Sullins, Gainesville

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Sharon Wallace, President Emeritus

Greetings Fellow Clerks!

My term, as your President, came to an end at the end of June! I am truly grateful to have had the opportunity to be the President of such a great organization. Since its inception, the Georgia Municipal Court Clerks' Council has made great progress, and I am proud to have been a contributor to that progress. Getting a council off the ground is never an easy task, but thanks to dedicated clerks who have volunteered their time over the years, the foundation was laid, and we continue to build upon that foundation.

I am honored to have led such an amazing group of men and women who made-up the 2013-2014 executive board. I cannot, nor will I attempt to list everything we did throughout my term; however, I will

mention a few of our accomplishments: we held our first Strategic Planning Conference in August of 2013; we established a great relationship with ICJE, and we worked closely with them regarding the locations and the topics for your annual training; we created a Long Term Planning Committee; we established standard operating procedures for all committees; we tweaked the By-Laws, once again; and we are now in the process of becoming more automated with a variety of things, from which I know you will all benefit.

I want to reiterate that I had an amazing board supporting me. We all worked hard for this organization, and I could not have accomplished any of it without the assistance, the dedication, and the faith of Pam Allen, Cheston Roney, Lori Whorton-Spence, Trina

Gallien, Joy Williams, Mariza Abdeljawad, and Essie West. A special thank you goes out to Judge Cielinski and LaShawn Murphy, both of whom have given their support and dedication to GMCCC, and lastly, to Missy Tolbert and Cathy Adams of ICJE, who also continue to support our organization.

In closing, I want to say that each you are important. This career path that you have chosen is important. We are all making a difference. GMCCC is here for you. Get involved. You won't be sorry!

Thank you,

Your Past President, Sharon Wallace

ELECTION RESULTS ARE HERE!

GMCCC Board Members for 2014-2015
(July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015):

President:	Pamela Allen, Marietta
President Elect:	Cheston Roney, Sandy Springs
President Emeritus:	Sharon Wallace, Duluth
Vice President:	Nathaniel Mingo, Riverdale
Secretary:	Stephanie McFarlin, Stockbridge
Treasurer:	Mariza Abdeljawad, Suwanee
2 Year Board Member:	Essie West, Morrow
2 Year Board Member:	Trina Gallien, Johns Creek
2 Year Board Member:	Carolyn Sullins, Gainesville
1 Year Board Member:	Joy Williams, Norcross
1 Year Board Member:	Dawn Farris, Braselton



THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO VOTED!
WE HOPE TO SERVE YOU WELL!

GMCCC 2014 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

One of the first things the new Board did was to review the annual scholarship applications, and decide who the recipients would be. So without further ado, **CONGRATULATIONS** to the following clerks!!

For the August 27-28 2014 training to be held in Kennesaw the recipients are:
DeAnne Worthy, Chief Court Clerk, Bremen Municipal Court
Lorie Smith, Court Clerk, Douglasville Municipal Court

For the November 5-6 2014 training to be held in Athens the recipients are:
Janet Shelley, Court Clerk, Americus Municipal Court
Tina Duncan, Chief Court Clerk, Temple Municipal Court

CONGRATULATIONS!

Scholarship applications are available on the GMCCC website, and also emailed out at the beginning of the submission period. Four scholarships of up to \$500.00 are awarded each year to assist clerks in need with the costs associated with mandated ICJE training, including room reimbursement.

Scholarship Criteria:

- Must be a member of GMCCC in good standing;
- Amount of court funding available for the applicant's attendance;
- Number of employees in the applicant's office who attend GMCCC/ICJE annual training seminars;
- Nature of applicant's position;
- Whether any employees in the applicant's court has previously received a scholarship award.

These funds are designated for you as clerks, so take advantage! We have all experienced funding challenges, so if you could use the assistance, send in that application. It can't hurt, but it could certainly help!

GMCCC PORTFOLIO WINNERS

Congratulations to the following winners of the GMCCC Portfolio!

Statesboro Training Winners

Faye Brantley, Decatur
Mary Dowd, Hinesville
Alla "Jo" Smith, Adrian
Yolanda Walker, Griffin



Kennesaw Training Winners

Robert Mask, Fayetteville
Laura Cantrell, Euharlee



NEW GMCCC MEMBER PERKS!

The GMCCC Council has purchased the Select version of Survey Monkey to assist members with their survey needs! The Select version allows unlimited questions per survey, unlimited responses, and the data gleaned from the survey can be exported into Excel, giving members an invaluable tool to help with

their survey needs. Survey results will also be uploaded onto the Members Only section of the GMCCC website so members can access past survey results, rather than start from scratch. Please contact Board Member Dawn Farris at dfarris@braselton.net or 706-654-3007 for assistance in creating your Survey and accessing the results!

Many of you may have already received another perk, the new GMCCC memberships pins! Gorgeous pins with the new GMCCC seal, every member will receive their first one free. Replacements are only \$2.00 per pin thereafter. If you haven't received yours by the Athens training session, we will be mailing them out to you. Contact Nathaniel Mingo, Chair of the Membership Committee, at nmingo@riverdalega.gov or 770-909-5415 if you don't receive yours within the next month.

Another new membership benefit is the ability to manage your membership and pay your dues via credit card, or printing an invoice to mail with a check, using Wild Apricot! You can visit <https://georgiamunicipalcourtclerks39council.wildapricot.org/> if you haven't paid your 2014/2015 dues to take advantage of this perk now!



ICJE CLERKS' ATHENS TRAINING NEWS

(Mariza Abdeljawad)

GMCCC wishes to thank our Clerks' training sponsors coming to Athens, GA on November 5 and 6, 2014

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| · Aberdeen Enterprizes II | Collection Services |
| · CJT | Case Management System |
| · CourtView | Case Management System |
| · CourtWare Solutions | Case Management System |
| · EZCourtPay | Online Management System |
| · n-Court | Online/phone payment services |
| · New Dawn | Case Management System |
| · Syscon | Case Management System |
| · Tyler Technologies | Case Management System |
| · Judicial Corrections | Probation Services |
| · iCON | Case Management/online payments |
| · Infax, Inc | Digital Signage Solution |

Please, if you are attending the Clerks' training in Athens, stop by the booth of each of our sponsors for important information about their service and products.

There will also be a Hospitality suite at the Clerks' training in Athens, GA on Nov 5, 2014 open to all members attending the conference.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

O. C. G. A. 36-32-13(b)(1) mandates that new chief municipal court clerks receive 16 hours of specialized training within a year of assuming the job of chief municipal court clerk, and chief clerks receive 8 hours of continuing education each year thereafter. Tuition (a Yearly ICJE Support Fee) and travel expenses are to be borne by local government, as per O.C.G.A. 36-32-13. The primary focus of all creditable training should be court clerk responsibilities, duties and ethics.

For the Recertification courses, ICJE will be offering a 12-hour seminar format over a day and a half. While you are only required to attend 8 hours, the 12 hours will allow for tracks and additional course matter that would not normally be available in the 8-hour format. To sign up for an ICJE course, mail a \$225 check, for the Yearly ICJE Support Fee made payable to ICJE, with the completed sign-up form (same envelope) to: ICJE, University of Georgia, 1150 South Milledge Avenue, Athens, GA 30602-5025. Keep a copy of this letter and form for your records. Please be aware that a \$50 Failure to Appear invoice will be sent to any absent registrant, unless ICJE is notified in writing (emails accepted) of cancellation, at least 3 business days before the course.

The Municipal Courts Training Council may approve full or partial credit for classes sponsored by another agency such as the Georgia Crime Information Center or the Superior Court Clerks Cooperative Authority. Any clerk relying on this alternate training must attend ICJE sponsored municipal court clerk training the following year. All requests for credit hours, other than courses sponsored by ICJE, shall be submitted to ICJE after the course is completed. Each clerk attending ICJE sponsored training, or requesting credit for any alternate training, is obligated to pay ICJE the Yearly ICJE Support Fee before a verification of training letter will be issued by the Training Council. Notification of credit approval will be sent by the Municipal Courts Training Council.

DDS UPDATES AND HELPFUL INFO

The following changes became effective on July 1, 2014.

1. **HB 459** – Two new Offenses were added. These Offenses will result in 3 points being added to the customer's record. The Offenses are listed below:

40-6-184(a) – Speed Less than Minimum Moving Violation.

Eligible for nolo processing to avoid points.

40-6-184(c) – Impeding Traffic Flow Moving Violation.

Eligible for nolo processing to avoid points.

2. **HB 749** – One new offense has been added, it is listed below:

16-8-22 – Cargo Theft imposes a one year Commercial Disqualification: Not eligible for nolo processing to avoid points.

3. **HB 753** – Two new Offenses were added. These Offenses relate to Commercial Drivers who disobey/disregard any **State-of-Emergency** restrictions that are declared due to inclement weather. The Offenses are listed below:

40-6-51(a)(1) – Improper Use of Controlled Access Road Moving Violation: Eligible for nolo processing to avoid points.

40-6-51(a)(2) – Improper Use of Controlled Access Road Moving Violation: Eligible for nolo processing to avoid points.

4. **Any Person** convicted with a **Controlled Substance** violation that results in a **suspension in any level of court** (Magistrate, Recorder's, Probate, Municipal, State, or Superior court) **may obtain a limited permit** if the conviction did not directly relate to the operation of a motor vehicle, with a signed court order from a Judge. (*A sample Order from DDS is included at the end of the Newsletter!*)

DDS has two (2) system changes that have gone into production.

1. The first change will allow the court to resubmit an FTA (Failure to Appear) for a rescheduled court date if the defendant fails to appear at the rescheduled court date. Prior to this new change, the DDS could only accept one (1) FTA for a citation. Now, if the FTA has been cleared by rescheduling the defendant to a new court date, and the defendant fails to appear again, the FTA for the rescheduled court date can now be submitted to the DDS for possible license suspension.

2. The second change would return an error message to the court when an FTA release is received by the DDS that does not match the original FTA. The new error code is 2878 and will be returned to the court with the associated FTA release record when the FTA release that was received by the DDS does not exactly match the FTA that is on the driving record. In other words, if any changes are made to the FTA record (like changing the code section or violation) prior to sending the FTA release to the DDS, then the FTA release will be sent back to the court, and the FTA and any associated license suspension will remain on the record until the DDS receives an FTA release that matches the original FTA record sent.

If you have any questions regarding these new system changes, or any other GECPS issues, please feel free to give us a call at 678-413-8434.

Continued Next Page

DDS UPDATES AND HELPFUL INFO, CONTINUED

Add or Update Court Contact Information:

- Go to DDS Web Site – "dds.ga.gov".
- Select "Business Partners".
- Select "GECPS".
- Select "Update Court Contact Information". If the court does not have its login information, the NCIC # will need to be entered in the field where it says "USER ID AND PASSWORD UNKNOWN?"
ex: "GA123456J". Your USER ID is your "NCIC #".
- Login information "Password" will be e-mailed to the address provided when contact information was initially entered. If it's the e-mail address that needs to be updated, please contact GECPS Outreach or call Donna Staten at 678-413-8434.

When filling out any DDS form that asks for your NCIC #, please make sure you fill out the Court's correct NCIC # (example – GA123456J). Your Court's ORI # should be the same as your NCIC #. Always start with GA and end with J.

When ordering court forms, please fax all requests to 678-413-8773. You can contact Tona Harrell 678-413-8765 or e-mail her at tharrell@dds.ga.gov. If you do not have an order form, Tona can provide the form.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING AOC CASELOAD REPORTING

(Judge Michael Cielinski)

It is very important that caseload data be reported. It has a direct impact on funds approved by the Legislature. It is reviewed by the Governor's Office, the Department of Audits, and other agencies. It will have a direct impact on every branch of the judiciary. There are about 381 courts, and only about 303 reported their caseload data.

For your information, here is the reporting data for the year 2013.

Traffic	- 1,134,742
Ordinances	- 112,846
Drugs/Marijuana	- 16,693
Serious Traffic	- 37,955
Misdemeanors	- 84,800
Felony Bind-overs	- 23,374

The new forms for both Recorder's Courts and other Municipal Courts are included at the end of the Newsletter, as well as the reporting Guidelines.

CLERKS' LISTSERV Q&A'S

There have been several hot topics on the LISTSERV recently. Following is a summary of a few.

How does your court handle FTA fees?

There has been a lot of discussion about this, and as of yet there is no real consensus. The best course of action you can take is to consult with your Judge and City Attorney. Just keep in mind, any court costs, fees, etc., that you add on to a case need to be reviewed before you continue to assess them. If you don't have a clear directive for assessing them, get one!

I heard there is a new law regarding 17 year olds being under Juvenile Court jurisdiction?

Yes, there is a new law regarding juvenile traffic offenses being under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court for now. Any laws or ordinances involving 17 year olds operating a moving vehicle on the streets, highways, or waterways in the State should be sent to Juvenile Court for the time being with a few exceptions. According to Anne M. Kirkhope, Staff Attorney for the Council of Juvenile Court Judges, Municipal Courts only have jurisdiction over the following juvenile traffic offenses until the law is corrected:

- Aggressive driving 40-6-397
- Reckless driving 40-6-390
- Any 4+ pt speeding violation
- Homicide by vehicle 40-6-393
- Manslaughter resulting from the operation of a vehicle
- Any felony in the commission of which a motor vehicle is used
- Racing on highways and streets 40-6-186
- Using a motor vehicle in fleeing or attempting to elude an officer 40-6-395(a)
- Fraudulent or fictitious use of a drivers license 40-5-125
- Hit & Run/ leaving the scene of an accident 40-6-270
- DUI 40-6-391

Can anyone help me with Municipal Court retention procedures?

There is a link on the GMCCC website to the retention schedule for Municipal Court. You can also go to the Georgia Archives website http://www.georgiaarchives.org/records/retention_schedules for the most up to date information. The Archives can also support you in your efforts to become a "paperless" court!

DID YOU KNOW?

The LISTSERV has all emails archived for easy access. Simply go to the LISTSERV website at <http://mail.georgiacourts.org/scripts/wa.exe?A0=MUNICLERK&X=21D45515BD8F1CA6F1>, sign in, and all past emails are available at your fingertips! What an invaluable resource!!

GMCCC COMMITTEES

Committees are the building blocks of our organization and work with GMCCC Executive Committee to develop programs and ideas to enhance our Council and professional development of Municipal Court Clerks of Georgia. Each member of GMCCC brings experience and knowledge to our organization and we encourage you to join committees to share and explore with other members.

Awards Committee makes recommendations to the Executive Committee for award programs, scholarships, etc.

The Treasurer oversees the Budget Committee in recommending a budget to the Executive Committee and collection of membership fees. Additionally, this committee makes recommendations on possible investment of association funds.

The Education and Training Committee work with

The Georgia the Georgia Municipal Court Training Council.

This committee makes recommendations for meeting sites, plan and provide for the educational program at the Annual Meeting and other meetings/conferences. This committee also acts as a clearing house for information about educational opportunities and provides educational articles for the newsletter.

The Membership Committee solicits new members and distributes information about the association and our activities to new or prospective members.

The Nominating Committee is responsible for seeking members willing to serve on the GMCCC Board/Executive Committee.

The Publication Committee communicates with the membership through the newsletter and other forms of media as directed by the President.

AWARDS/SCHOLARSHIPS:

Cheston Roney, Chairperson
cronney@sandyspringsga.gov
 Nathaniel Mingo
 Dawn Farris

BUDGET:

Mariza Abdeljawad, Chairperson
mariza@suwanee.com
 Sharon Wallace
 Joy Williams

EDUCATION & TRAINING:

Joy Williams, Chairperson
joy.williams@norcrossga.net
 Essie West, Co-Chair
ewest@cityofmorrow.com
 Stephanie McFarlin
 Carolyn Sullins

MEMBERSHIP:

Nathaniel Mingo, Chairperson
nmingo@riverdalega.gov
 Mariza Abdeljawad
 Sharon Wallace
 Essie West

NOMINATING:

Cheston Roney, Chairperson
cronney@sandyspringsga.gov
 Nathaniel Mingo
 Trina Gallien

PUBLICATIONS:

Stephanie McFarlin, Chairperson
smcfarlin@cityofstockbridge-ga.gov
 Trina Gallien, Co-Chair
trina.gallien@johnscreekgga.gov
 Laura McManus
 Tabitha Fowler



GMCCC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Executive Committee conducts several meetings each year. The Committee last met in Braselton on September 5th. If you have ideas, suggestions or concerns you would like addressed by the Committee, please contact any member of the board shown at the bottom of this page.

A few notes from the September 5th meeting:

Judge Michael Cielinski, Legal Advisor to the Committee, made note of the letter dated August 12, 2014 regarding courts conducting an access and fairness survey addressed to the judges. The survey may either be self-administered or conducted by KSU to gather research and analysis data pertaining to access and fairness in the courts. *The full letter is included at the end of this Newsletter.*

The approved updated by-laws were published to the members via the Listserv.

LaShawn Murphy, AOC Representative to the Committee, noted that the AOC is in the early stages of redeveloping its website.

GMCCC and IJCE are looking into to a new training location, and continue to work on enhancing the training topics offered.

Look for GMCCC representatives at all training sessions. We will be there to answer your questions and distribute membership pins, etc.

2013—2014 BOARD MEMBERS

PRESIDENT
PRESIDENT EMERITUS
PRESIDENT ELECT
VICE PRESIDENT
TREASURER
SECRETARY
BOARD MEMBER
BOARD MEMBER
BOARD MEMBER
BOARD MEMBER
BOARD MEMBER

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 nmingo@riverdalega.gov
 mariza@suwanee.com
 smcfarlin@cityofstockbridge-ga.gov
 trina.gallien@johnscreekga.gov
 joy.williams@norcrossga.net
 ewest@cityofmorrow.com
 dfarris@braselton.net
 csullins@gainesville.org

DDS SAMPLE CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE LIMITED PERMIT ORDER

IN THE _____ COURT OF _____ COUNTY

STATE OF GEORGIA

STATE OF GEORGIA

*

Case No. _____

v.

*

Citation No. _____

_____,

*

Defendant

*

Lic. No. _____

ORDER

The Court having reviewed Defendants request for relief from the driver's license suspension imposed pursuant to O.C.G.A. §40-5-75 for his/her controlled substance conviction in the above-styled case, and the Court having determined that said controlled substance offense did not directly relate to the operation of a motor vehicle;

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the Department of Driver Services shall:

_____ Reinstates the Defendant's driver's license *instanter* upon his/her submission of a certificate of completion for a DUI Alcohol or Drug Use Risk Reduction Program completed after the date of the aforementioned incident and payment of a reinstatement fee in the amount required by O.C.G.A. §40-5-75.

_____ Reinstates the Defendant's driver's license *instanter* upon payment of a reinstatement fee in the amount of \$ _____ (not to exceed the fee normally imposed by O.C.G.A. §40-5-75).

_____ Issues a limited driving permit to the Defendant allowing him/her to drive for the purposes allowed in O.C.G.A. §40-5-64(c).

SO ORDERED, this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

Judge

2014 AOC CASELOAD REPORT FORMS, PG. 1 OF 3

CY 2014 Municipal Court Caseload Report
(January 1 – December 31, 2014)

City _____ Name, Title _____

Please enter the total numbers of filings by case type in the boxes below.

Court sessions per month:	_____	<i>(if your court meets less than once a month, enter 1)</i>
Reporting Caseload by:	Citations/Filings <input type="checkbox"/>	Defendants <input type="checkbox"/>

Criminal	Cases Open <i>(as of 12/31/14)</i>	Cases Filed/ Citations	Cases Disposed
Traffic <i>(Not DUI)</i>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Ordinances <i>(Includes Environmental, Business License, and Animal Control)</i>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Serious Traffic <i>(Includes DUI)</i>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Drugs/Marijuana <i>(Less than one ounce)</i>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Misdemeanors <i>(Not otherwise listed)</i>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Bindovers <i>(Cases transferred to another court)</i>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Self-represented Litigants (pro se)

Limited English Proficient Litigants (LEP)

2014 AOC CASELOAD REPORT FORMS, PG. 2 OF 3

CY 2014 Recorder's/Civil Court Caseload Report
(January 1 – December 31, 2014)

City _____ Name, Title _____

Please enter the total numbers of filings by case type in the boxes below.

Court sessions per month:	_____	<i>(if your court meets less than once a month, enter 1)</i>
Reporting Caseload by:	Citations/Filings <input type="checkbox"/>	Defendants <input type="checkbox"/>

Criminal	Cases Open <i>(as of 12/31/14)</i>	Cases Filed/ Citations	Cases Disposed
Traffic <i>(Not DUI)</i>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Ordinances <i>(Includes Environmental, Business License, and Animal Control)</i>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Serious Traffic <i>(Includes DUI)</i>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Drugs/Marijuana <i>(Less than one ounce)</i>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Misdemeanors <i>(Not otherwise listed)</i>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Bindovers <i>(Cases transferred to another court)</i>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Civil	Cases Open <i>(as of 12/31/14)</i>	Cases Filed/ Citations	Cases Disposed
Claims Cases	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Dispossesories and Distress Warrants	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Garnishments	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Foreclosures and Attachments	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Self-represented Litigants (*pro se*)

Limited English Proficient Litigants (*LEP*)

2014 AOC CASELOAD REPORT FORMS, PG. 3 OF 3***Reporting Guidelines***

Court Sessions per Month: A court session is any event that requires direct judge involvement such as arraignments and bond hearings.

Unit of Count: Each ticket/citation is one filing. If a citation has more than one charge it is still counted as one case and categorized under the most serious offense. For example, a driver charged with both DUI and speeding charges under the same citation number will only count as one serious traffic filing.

Criminal

Traffic (Not DUI): Any non-criminal misdemeanor traffic violations punishable by a maximum fine of \$1,000 or twelve months confinement. Examples: speeding, failure to obey stop sign, failure to use turn signal, and seat belt violations.

Ordinances: Violations of local regulations passed by county, city, or other local governing bodies. Examples: animal control violations, solid waste violations, solicitation without a permit, and zoning violations.

Serious Traffic: Any fingerprintable traffic violation. Examples: DUI, reckless driving, and operating a commercial vehicle without a CDL.

Drugs/Marijuana (Less than one ounce): Any drug-related misdemeanor criminal filings. Examples: possession of marijuana.

Misdemeanors (Not otherwise listed): Any criminal violations punishable by maximum fine of \$1,000 or twelve months confinement. Also includes any violations that do not fit any aforementioned categories. Examples: vandalism and shoplifting at value less than \$300.

Bindovers: Transfers (of a case or defendant) to another court after a finding of probable cause at a preliminary hearing.

Civil

Claims: Cases up to \$15,000, which is most common in contract and account actions.

Dispossessories and Distress Warrants: Proceedings involving landlords and tenants either for removal of the tenant from the property or for seizure of the property for non-payment of rent.

Garnishments: A proceeding in which the property or money in possession or control of another person are applied to pay a debt or judgment to a third person. This is most commonly an action in which a creditor garnishes a person's wages from the employer.

Foreclosures and Attachments: A means of enforcing payment of a debt by taking and selling the property upon which the debt is owed. Attachment is a process in which the court is asked to have property seized in order to satisfy a debt (to satisfy the court judgment in post-judgment actions).

Self-represented Litigants: A person (party) who advocates on his or her own behalf before a court, rather than being represented by an attorney. These litigants are also known as pro se or pro per litigants. A case with self-represented litigants should be counted as a single case, whether the case has one, two, or more self-represented litigants. A case should be counted at the point of disposition of the case.

Limited English Proficiency: Any case where one or more parties directly involved in the case requires the use of an interpreter.

LETTER REGARDING KSU ACCESS AND FAIRNESS SURVEY, PG. 1 OF 3



Judicial Council of Georgia
Administrative Office of the Courts

Chief Justice Hugh P. Thompson
Chair

Marla S. Moore
Director

Judicial Council of Georgia

Appellate Courts
Chief Justice Hugh P. Thompson
Presiding Justice P. Harris Hines
Chief Judge Herbert E. Phipps
Presiding Judge Sara L. Doyle

Trial Court Councils
Judge Mary Staley
Judge Brenda Weaver
Judge Charles Wynne
Judge Wayne M. Purdom
Judge J. Lane Bearden
Judge John Benjamin Sumner
Judge Chase Daughtrey
Judge Don Wilkes
Judge W. Allen Wigington
Judge Robert Turner
Judge E.R. Lanier
Judge Laslie Spornberger-Jones

Judicial Administrative Districts
Judge John E. Morse Jr.
Judge Harry J. Altman, II
Judge Edward D. Lukemire
Judge Gregory A. Adams
Judge Gail Tuson
Judge Matthew O. Simmons
Judge S. Lark Ingram
Judge Kathy Palmer
Judge Kathleen Gosselin
Judge J. Carlisle Overstreet

August 12, 2014

Dear Judges:

The Judicial Council's adoption of a 2014-2016 strategic plan and nine supporting initiatives in early 2013 identified the need to collect data on the perceptions of court users about access to and fairness in Georgia's courts. The Council has engaged a research group affiliated with Kennesaw State University (KSU) to lead the data collection in court facilities throughout the state. Through an analysis of demographics, your court facility has been selected as one of those locations.

The Judicial Council has selected the National Center for State Court's nationally validated Access and Fairness Survey to collect data. Since the survey tool is not restricted to researchers and is available for use by any court, we hope you will consider administering it with the assistance of local court personnel. If you choose not to conduct the survey, KSU employees or contractors will conduct the survey, in addition to tabulating and reporting statewide findings. The survey results will be shared with the Judicial Council to guide future conversations related to strategic planning initiatives.

If you choose to self-administer the Access and Fairness Survey (a link is provided on the following page for more information), KSU will provide the necessary forms and instructions for your local personnel to conduct the surveys on a single day between September 1 and October 31. The forms will be returned to KSU for analysis. Participating in the data collection effort will afford your location the benefit of a localized report in addition to compilation in the statewide summary to the Judicial Council.

In the coming days, Judicial Council and KSU personnel will be contacting one or more judges in your location for support and assistance with administering the survey. In the meantime, please feel free to contact the Council staff or committee members listed on the following page with questions or comments concerning the survey. Thank you for your thoughtful attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

Chief Justice Hugh P. Thompson
Supreme Court of Georgia
Chair, Judicial Council

Presiding Judge Sara L. Doyle
Court of Appeals of Georgia
Chair, Strategic Plan Implementation Committee

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LETTER REGARDING KSU ACCESS AND FAIRNESS SURVEY, PG. 2 OF 3

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
Section I: Access to the Court						
1. Finding the courthouse was easy.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
2. The forms I needed were clear and easy to understand.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
3. I felt safe in the courthouse.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
4. The court makes reasonable efforts to remove physical and language barriers to service.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
5. I was able to get my court business done in a reasonable amount of time.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
6. Court staff paid attention to my needs.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
7. I was treated with courtesy and respect.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
8. I easily found the courtroom or office I needed.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
9. The court's Web site was useful.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
10. The court's hours of operation made it easy for me to do my business.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

If you are a party to a legal matter and appeared before a judicial officer today, please complete the following additional questions:

Section II: Fairness

11. The way my case was handled was fair.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
12. The judge listened to my side of the story before he or she made a decision.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
13. The judge had the information necessary to make good decisions about my case.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
14. I was treated the same as everyone else.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
15. As I leave the court, I know what to do next about my case.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

Section III: Background Information

What did you do at the court today?

- Search court records/obtain documents
- File papers
- Make a payment
- Get information
- Appear as a witness
- Attorney representing a client
- Jury duty
- Attend a hearing or trial
- Law enforcement/probation/social services staff

How often are you typically in this courthouse? (Choose the closest estimate)

- First time in this courthouse
- Once a year or less
- Several times a year
- Regularly

How often are you typically in this courthouse? What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

What type of case brought you to the courthouse today?

- Traffic
- Criminal
- Civil matter
- Divorce, child custody or support
- Juvenile matter
- Probate
- Small Claims

How do you identify yourself?

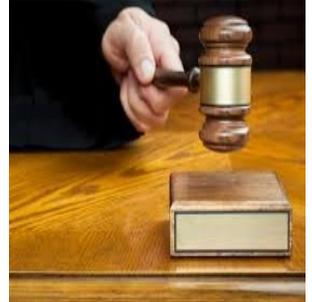
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Mixed Race
- Other: _____

CLERKS' CORNER

A new addition to the newsletter, Clerks' Corner, is the lighter side of our jobs. Please share your comical or unusual experiences in your day-to-day job. We all enjoy having a bit of humor in our day!

ORDER IN THE COURT!

FROM THE WEB: An 80 year old woman was arrested for shop-lifting. When she went before the judge, he asked her, "What did you steal?" She replied: a can of peaches. The judge asked her why she had stolen them and she replied that she was hungry. The judge then asked her how many peaches were in the can? She replied six. The judge then said, "I will give you six days in jail." Before the judge could actually pronounce the punishment, the woman's husband spoke up and asked the judge if he could say something. He said, "What is it?" The husband replied, "She also stole a can of peas!"



DIFFERENT SPEEDS:

Once we had a defendant appear in court being charged with speeding in a school zone. She began to explain to the Judge that it may have been possible that her front tires may have been going the speed she was charged with, but she knew without a shadow of a doubt that her back tires were not going that speed. That they were going the speed limit. We had to cover our faces with a folder in order that she did not see us laughing.



Find us on the web!
www.gmccc.gaaoc.us

FINAL THOUGHTS.....

This is our organization's publication. Please feel free to contact the Publication Committee Chairperson or board member if you would like to see something in our newsletter!

We welcome your comments, ideas and suggestions!