

CIVIL & MAGISTRATE COURT OF BIBB COUNTY

CURRENT OPERATING POLICY 7/14/2020

Pursuant to the increase and spread of COVID-19 and pursuant to Supreme Court Chief Justice Harold Melton's Fourth Judicial Emergency Order dated July 10, 2020, the following is the current operation policy for the Civil and Magistrate Court of Bibb County during this COVID-19 pandemic.

Pursuant to Justice Melton's June 12, 2020 order, all lawsuits filed after March 14 through July 13, 2020, the date to file **answers** begins on July 14, 2020. Dispossessory answers are due 7 days from July 14<sup>th</sup>. Answers to all other civil and magistrate lawsuits are due 30 days from July 14<sup>th</sup>. Answers for other civil and magistrate lawsuits filed on or after July 14<sup>th</sup> shall comply with normal applicable guidelines.

Due to a delayed order for personal protection equipment (PPE) for our deputies protection in facilitating eviction setouts, all dispossessories that had a writ of possession prior to March 14<sup>th</sup> and dispossessories that were filed and answered before March 14, 2020 and were recently heard in court and a writ was ordered will be delayed until the end of July. When we received our PPE, letters will be sent to tenants and landlords for the date and time when the set out will occur.

Dispossessory hearings will tentatively begin again on August 31, 2020. Hearings will be conducted according to the Department of Public Health and Centers for Disease Control guidelines and Justice Melton's emergency orders.

Service of process of all complaints will begin also when we receive our PPE.

Pursuant to Superior Court Chief Judge Howard Simms's Amended Local Order dated 7/13/2020, the Civil & Magistrate Court will not conduct any in person court hearings until the expiration of Chief Justice Melton's Fourth Judicial emergency order which is scheduled to expire August 12, 2020 or any subsequent order by Justice Melton or Judge Simms. If all parties agree to a video hearing in civil cases, excluding dispossessories, an electronic hearing may be held.

We are encouraging answers and lawsuits to be filed online or mailed to the office. The address is Civil & Magistrate Court of Bibb County, 601 Mulberry Street, Room 401, Bibb County Courthouse, Macon, GA 31201.

For the next few weeks, we will have limited staff available. We are encouraging all persons who have questions about a case to please access our website [maconbibb.us/civil-magistrate-court](http://maconbibb.us/civil-magistrate-court) to see if there are any updates to their case. Forms to file lawsuits are available on the Magistrate Council of Georgia website: [www.georgiamagistratecouncil.com](http://www.georgiamagistratecouncil.com). Please **call** our

office at 478-621-5801 **before** coming to the Bibb County Courthouse so that you may schedule an appointment.

Bonds and First Appearance Hearings will continue to be conducted by video conferencing. Magistrate Judges are available to sign warrants at the courthouse and are on call after hours.

Weddings are not being performed at this time due to Covid 19 concerns. We will advise when we will start performing weddings again.

This 14<sup>th</sup> day of July 2020.

/s/ Pamela Y. White-Colbert  
Pamela Y. White-Colbert  
Chief Magistrate & Civil Judge