

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURTS of HARALSON COUNTY and POLK COUNTY  
TALLAPOOSA JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
STATE OF GEORGIA**

**TO THE JUDGES AND CLERKS OF SUPERIOR COURT  
TO THE JUDGES AND CLERKS OF the MAGISTRATE COURTS  
TO THE JUDGES AND CLERKS OF the PROBATE COURTS  
TO THE JUDGES AND CLERKS OF the MUNICIPAL COURTS  
TO THE JUDGES AND CLERKS OF JUVENILE COURT**

STACIE M. BAINES, CLERK

2026 JAN 23 AM 9:26

FILED & RECORDED  
CLERK SUPERIOR COURT  
POLK COUNTY, GA.

**ORDER AND DECLARATION OF JUDICIAL EMERGENCY  
in the  
TALLAPOOSA JUDICIAL CIRCUIT**

**WHEREAS**, on January 22, 2026, Georgia Governor Brian Kemp issued an Executive Order pursuant to OCGA §§ 38-3-28 and 38-3-51 declaring a State of Emergency throughout Georgia for Winter Weather; and,

**WHEREAS**, the undersigned as chief Superior Court judge for the Tallapoosa Judicial circuit has determined that Governor Kemp's declaration creates a judicial emergency pursuant to OCGA § 38-3-60; and,

**WHEREAS**, the emergency substantially endangers or infringes upon the normal functioning of the judicial system, the ability of people to avail themselves of the judicial system, or the ability of litigants or others to have access to the courts or meet scheduled or time deadlines imposed by the court order or rule, statute of administrative rule or regulation;

**NOW, THEREFORE, it is ORDERED** as follows

1.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-61, Chief Judge Mark H. Murphy of the Superior Courts of Polk County and Haralson County, Georgia, which comprise the

**Tallapoosa Judicial Circuit DOES HEREBY DECLARE the existence of a Judicial Emergency in the Tallapoosa Judicial Circuit.**

**2.**

The jurisdictions affected by this Judicial Emergency include all courthouse operations in and at the **Polk County Courthouse in Cedartown, Georgia**, and all courthouse operations in and at the **Haralson County Courthouse** located in **Buchanan, Georgia**.

**3.**

The nature of the emergency necessitating this Order is the issuance by Governor Brian Kemp of Executive Order 01.22.26.01 pursuant to OCGA §§ 38-3-28 and 38-3-51 declaring a State of Emergency throughout Georgia for Winter Weather. A Winter Storm Watch for Polk County and Haralson County, in effect from Saturday afternoon through Monday morning, has been declared by the National Weather Service forecast issued at 12:43 PM EST on January 22, 2026. Although the storm elements are predicted to pass through the Tallapoosa Circuit and the greater Northwest Georgia area by Monday morning, widespread power outages and travel limitations are expected to linger for some time afterward, making judicial activities for those courts whose jurisdiction involves matters on 48- and 72-hour timelines difficult and potentially dangerous for citizens and court personnel, and rendering electronically dependent remote court services unavailable.

**4.**

The duration for this Judicial Emergency shall begin at **5:00 o'clock PM on Friday, January 23, 2026**, and shall end at **9:00 o'clock AM on Tuesday, January 27, 2026**.

**5.**

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-61, all courts of Polk County, Georgia, and Haralson County, Georgia, shall be closed from **5:00 o'clock PM on Friday, January 23, 2026**, until **9:00 o'clock AM on Tuesday, January 27, 2026**.

6.

Pursuant to OCGA § 38-3-61, in the event the circumstances underlying this judicial emergency make access to the office of a clerk of court or a courthouse impossible or impractical, the undersigned designates PeachCourt, Zoom, Webex, and any other on-line platforms used by the local courts as facilities reasonably accessible and appropriate for the conduct of court business; provided however, that accessibility of such facilities **does not** terminate the suspension, tolling, or extension of court deadlines, time schedules, or filing requirements that are suspended, tolled, or extended pursuant to the declaration of this judicial emergency.

*Other information relevant to the suspension or restoration of court operations:*

**(a) ALL judicial offices, clerk of court offices, and all other courthouse-based offices providing accountability court services, misdemeanor probation services, legal prosecution and defense representation, and courthouse security located at both the Polk County Courthouse and the Haralson County Courthouse are AUTHORIZED AND DIRECTED to CLOSE FOR BUSINESS during the period of this Judicial Emergency, provided, however, that courthouse security measures deemed necessary in the sole discretion of the Sheriffs of the counties named herein shall continue as directed by said Sheriff or his authorized designee.**

**(b) All such offices named above SHALL REOPEN TO THE PUBLIC at normal business hours on Tuesday, January 27, 2026, unless developing circumstances necessitate the extension of this judicial emergency, or a county government announces closing of the county courthouse at times after the expiration of the judicial emergency set forth herein.**

**(c) Any extension of this Judicial Emergency beyond the expiration set forth herein will be disseminated in the same manner as this Judicial Emergency declaration.**

**7.**

**Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-62, all court deadlines, time schedules or filing requirements are hereby suspended, tolled, or extended for the duration of the judicial emergency as noted above.**

**8.**

**Notice of this declaration of Judicial Emergency shall be disseminated in accordance with OCGA § 38-3-63. Accordingly,**

**(a) IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Sheriff of POLK County or his designee shall post a copy of this notice on the courthouse doors; and**

**(b) IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Sheriff of HARALSON County or his designee shall post a copy of this notice on the courthouse doors; and,**

**(c) IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of the Superior Court for POLK COUNTY, or her designee, shall immediately notify the Honorable NELS S.D. PETERSON, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and the Clerks of the Court of Appeals and of the Supreme Court by sending them a copy of this notice; and,**

**(d) IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of the Superior Court for HARALSON COUNTY, or her designee, shall immediately notify the Honorable NELS S.D. PETERSON, Chief**

Justice of the Supreme Court, and the Clerks of the Court of Appeals and Supreme Court by sending them a copy of this notice; and,

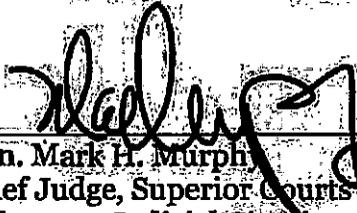
(e) IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that **POLK COUNTY Manager Matt Denton, or his designee**, shall post a copy of this notice and any subsequent modification or extension in accordance with O.C.G.A § 38-3-63 by posting it on the Polk County website or other appropriate public address system; and,

(f) IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the **HARALSON COUNTY Clerk Alison Palmer, or her designee**, shall post a copy of this notice and any subsequent modification or extension in accordance with O.C.G.A § 38-3-63 by posting it on the Haralson County website or other appropriate public address system.

9.

Let the clerks of all courts of record in the Tallapoosa Judicial Circuit spread this Order upon the minutes of their courts. Further, the Superior Court clerks shall cause this declaration to be emailed to the clerks' list of attorneys who commonly practice in this judicial circuit.

DONE and ORDERED this the 22 day of January 2026, at 10:25 o'clock AM/PM.

  
Hon. Mark H. Murphy  
Chief Judge, Superior Courts  
Tallapoosa Judicial Circuit

2026 JAN 23 AM 9:26  
STACIE H. JAMES, CLERK

FILED & RECORDED  
CLERK SUPERIOR COURT  
POLK COUNTY, GA.

-Haralson Office-  
Haralson County Courthouse  
4485 Georgia Highway 120  
Buchanan, GA 30113  
770.646.2025

-Polk Office-  
Polk County Courthouse  
100 Prior Street, Suite 105  
Cedartown, GA 30125  
770.749.2976

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

This is to certify that I have this day served a copy of the foregoing ORDER via STATUTORY ELECTRONIC SERVICE upon the following:

Lynn Ansley, DCA	7 <sup>th</sup> JAD
Matt Denton, County Manager	Polk County
Alison Palmer, County Clerk	Haralson County
Andrew B. Roper, Judge	Tallapoosa Judicial Circuit Superior Court
Stacie M. Baines, Clerk	Polk County Superior Court
Amy R. Muse, Clerk	Haralson County Superior & Juvenile Courts
Johnny Moates, Sheriff	Polk County
Stacy Williams, Sheriff	Haralson County
Christy Cook Garner, Judge	Polk County Magistrate Court
Jayne Eason, Clerk	Polk County Magistrate Court
Crystal Damiano, Judge	Haralson County Magistrate Court
Stephanie Tanner, Clerk	Haralson County Magistrate Court
Robert E. Brooks, Jr., Judge	Polk County Probate Court
Shayne Green, Chief Clerk	Polk County Probate Court
J. Edward Hulsey, Jr., Judge	Haralson County Probate Court
Susan Rosser, Clerk	Haralson County Probate Court
Timothy Taylor, Judge	Tallapoosa Judicial Circuit Juvenile Court
Brandi Norton, Clerk	Polk County Juvenile Court
Benjamin Burch, Judge	Cedartown Municipal Court
Robert E. Brooks, Jr., Judge	Aragon Municipal Court
J. Edward Hulsey, Jr., Judge	Rockmart Municipal Court
Anginene Tolbert, Clerk	Rockmart Municipal Court
J. Edward Hulsey, Jr., Judge	Buchanan Municipal Court
C. David Mecklin, Jr., Judge	Bremen Municipal Court
DeAnne Worthy, Clerk	Bremen Municipal Court
Timothy A. McCreary, Judge	Tallapoosa Municipal Court
Valerie McIntyre, Clerk	Tallapoosa Municipal Court

This 23<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 2026.

*Walter Priscott*  
Tallapoosa Judicial Circuit