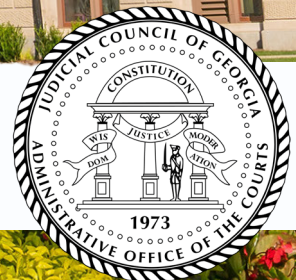


# Summary of Enacted Legislation **2026**



Prepared by the Judicial Council/  
Administrative Office of the Courts  
Office of Governmental Affairs and Trial Court Liaison



Published by the Office of Governmental Affairs and Trial  
Court Liaison of the Judicial Council of Georgia/  
Administrative Office of the Courts.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword.....	4
Summary .....	5
Budget .....	6
Compensation/Retirement.....	7
Criminal.....	8
Civil.....	10
Courts .....	11
Local.....	14
Public Safety & Traffic.....	20
Domestic Relations .....	22
Study Committees .....	23
Staff Contacts .....	25

## FOREWARD

This report provides summaries of bills and resolutions that are relevant to the judiciary passed by the 159th Georgia General Assembly during the 2026 Regular Session. Intended to be a convenient reference guide, this publication organizes the summaries in numerical order based on subject matter. Bill summaries found in this guide should not be used as the definitive legal interpretation. For more detailed information, please review the act in its entirety at the link provided in the bill summary.

# SUMMARY

The 2026 Session of the 159<sup>th</sup> Georgia General Assembly convened on January 12, 2026, and adjourned Sine Die on April 2, 2026. This was the second year of the two-year biennium, so any legislation that did not pass will not be eligible for passage in 2027.

During the session, the legislature passed legislation reaffirming a commitment to independent, efficient, and safe courts in Georgia. The General Assembly passed needed modernizing legislation in [HB 530](#), which authorizes e-filing in probate court proceedings. The passage of [HR 251](#) provides for the nonpartisan election of probate court judges. Continuing the efforts of the previous two years, the judicial security procedures started in [SB 508](#) (2024) and continued in [HB 199](#) (2025), were further enhanced with the passage of [HB 1344](#). Aside from these judicial branch initiatives, this summary report highlights all the bills and resolutions from the 2026 Legislative Session relevant to the judiciary.

To view the summaries of all bills tracked by the Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts, please visit the [IC/AOC Legislative Tracking Website](#).

To view all bills introduced during the Georgia General Assembly's 2026 session, please visit [www.legis.ga.gov/](http://www.legis.ga.gov/). To view the bills signed by the Governor in 2026, visit <https://gov.georgia.gov/executive-action/legislation/signed-legislation/2026>.

# BUDGET

[HB 973](#) – Supplemental appropriations; State Fiscal Year July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

HB 973, the Amended Fiscal Year 2026 budget, is set by a revenue estimate of \$43.6 billion. This is a 15.6 percent increase, or \$5.9 billion, over the original Fiscal Year 2026 budget. The bill and tracking sheet may be found on the House Budget and Evaluation Office [website](#).

[HB 974](#) – General appropriations; State Fiscal year July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027

HB 974, the Fiscal Year 2027 budget, is set by a revenue estimate of \$38.5 billion. This is a 1.95 percent increase, or \$738 million, over the Fiscal Year 2026 budget. The bill and tracking sheet may be found on the House Budget and Evaluation Office [website](#).

# COMPENSATION/RETIREMENT

[HB 1020 - Judicial Retirement System; payment of monthly retirement benefits for creditable service as a district attorney at the age of 65 years; provide](#)

(Includes language from [SB 606](#))

**House Author:** Rep. Matt Reeves (R – Duluth)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Bo Hatchett (R – Cornelia)

This bill includes the District Attorney Compensation Reform Act. This establishes that each district attorney in office on July 1, 2026, shall have the option to receive the state’s annual salary plus any locality pay in lieu of his or her compensation in effect on June 30, 2026. District attorneys must exercise this option by January 1, 2030, and all decisions are final and irrevocable. Additionally, this bill clarifies that any member of the Georgia Judicial Retirement System from July 1, 2026, and prior, has a right to receive such benefits after obtaining ten years of credible service and attaining 60 years of age. Calculations for retirement benefits are included within the bill.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[SB 143 - Georgia Firefighter’s Pension Fund; certain members to retire at age 50; provide](#)

(Includes substitute language from [HB 818](#))

**Senate Author:** Sen. John Albers (R – Roswell)

**House Sponsor:** Rep. Lauren McDonald III (R – Cumming)

Pertaining to the Georgia Firefighter’s Pension Fund, this bill outlines certain members that can continue working while receiving retirement benefits and certain members who have retired and reentered employment to accrue creditable service without a seven-year minimum. Further, this bill provides Georgia Judicial Retirement System membership to all full-time judges of the Georgia Tax Court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[SB 216 - Georgia Judicial Retirement System; membership in the system for individuals employed as the director of the Prosecuting Attorneys Qualifications Commission; provide](#)

**Senate Author:** Sen. Randy Robertson (R – Cataula)

**House Sponsor:** Rep. Joseph Gullett (R – Dallas)

This bill provides that the director of the Prosecuting Attorneys Qualifications Commission and future directors shall be a member of the Georgia Judicial Retirement System. Such individuals who were employed before June 30, 2026, may apply to have their retirement system switched to the Georgia Judicial Retirement System.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[SB 261 - Magistrates Retirement Fund; early retirement benefit; provide](#)

**Senate Author:** Sen. Marty Harbin (R – Tyrone)

**House Sponsor:** Rep. John Carson (R – Marietta)

This bill alters the composition of the Board of Commissioners of the Magistrates Retirement Fund of Georgia. The Board shall consist of the Governor or their designee, an appointee of the Governor who is not the Attorney General, four chief magistrates who are members of the fund, and one retired chief magistrate who is a member of the fund. Additionally, this bill outlines that each member shall pay dues equal to 4 percent of the member’s average final monthly compensation.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026, only if it is determined to have been concurrently funded as provided in Chapter 20 of Title 47 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, the “Public Retirement Systems Standards Law”; otherwise, this Act shall not become effective and shall be automatically repealed in its entirety on July 1, 2026, as required by subsection (a) of Code Section 47-20-50.

# CRIMINAL

[HB 162 - Georgia Bureau of Investigation; restriction and seal of First Offender Act sentences until such status is revoked; provide](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Leesa Hagan (R – Lyons)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Bill Cowsert (R – Athens)

This bill modifies the First Offender Act by mandating the sealing of court and law enforcement records after a first offender completes their probation sentence but has not been exonerated and discharged without a court adjudication of guilt or court order. The restriction and sealing may be removed if a court of competent jurisdiction adjudicates the defendant guilty of the underlying First Offender Act offense. Further, an individual who has been exonerated of guilt and discharged without court adjudication of guilt or pursuant to a court order prior to July 1, 2026, may petition the court to seal the relevant records.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[HB 447 - Crimes and offenses; crimes of gift card theft, gift card forgery, and gift card fraud; provide](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Joseph Gullett (R – Dallas)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Randy Robertson (R – Cataula)

This bill establishes the crimes of gift card theft, gift card forgery, and gift card fraud. Any person who is convicted of these crimes shall be punished by imprisonment for one to ten years and a fine not to exceed \$5,000.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[HB 483 - Crimes and offenses; protections for inspectors of code enforcement; provide](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Brian Prince (D – Augusta)

**Senate Sponsor:** Max Burns (R – Sylvania)

This bill provides for enhanced penalties for simple assault, aggravated assault, simple battery, battery, and aggravated battery committed upon inspectors of code enforcement officers.

**Effective Date:** May 6, 2026

[HB 535 - Penal institutions; credit for time served regarding probation revocation sentencing; provide](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Tyler Paul Smith (R – Bremen)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Bill Cowsert (R – Athens)

This bill revises schedules, offenses, and penalties relating to the trafficking of certain substances, including fentanyl. Additionally, this bill establishes that if a defendant's probation is revoked, the probation time served shall be deducted and considered a part of the time they were originally sentenced to serve. This bill further clarifies that a person facing a carceral sentence imposed pursuant to a revocation of probation shall be given full credit for the time served in confinement since the date of the violation.

**Effective Date:** May 6, 2026

[HB 668 - Crimes and offenses; change references to assistance and guide dogs to service dogs](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Brad Thomas (R – Holly Springs)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Kay Kirkpatrick (R – Marietta)

This bill updates provisional references from “assistance” and “guide” dogs to “service dogs.” It also establishes a criminal penalty for a person who interferes with or physically harms a service dog. Additionally, this bill provides for a penalty for individuals who misrepresent the need for a service dog.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[HB 1075 - Sexual offenses; modify penalty for offenders previously convicted of the offense of trafficking of persons for labor or sexual servitude](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Johnny Chastain (R – Blue Ridge)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Timothy Bearden (R – Carrollton)

This bill provides for an individual to be guilty of a felony if they are convicted of four or more qualifying misdemeanor offenses within a ten-year period.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

## CRIMINAL *continued*

[HB 1131 - Criminal procedure; personal service of process for notice of a warrant application hearing; provide](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Soo Hong (R – Lawrenceville)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Randy Robertson (R – Cataula)

This bill establishes that a warrant application hearing can only be conducted after attempting to notify the person whose arrest is sought by personal service or by any other means approved by the judge or other appropriate officer. There are emergency and public safety exceptions which grant judges and other officers the ability to immediately issue a warrant under specific circumstances.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[SB 547 - Offenses of Pimping and Pandering; modify the penalties](#)

**Senate Author:** Sen. Brian Strickland (R – McDonough)

**House Sponsor:** Rep. Tyler Paul Smith (R – Bremen)

This bill modifies the penalties for the offenses of pimping and pandering from a misdemeanor to a felony. The punishment is amended to a term of imprisonment of one to ten years.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026.

[SB 594 - Internet and E-mail Fraud; the criminal offense of digital identity fraud; establish](#)

**Senate Author:** Sen. Timothy Bearden (R – Carrollton)

**House Sponsor:** Rep. Tyler Paul Smith (R – Bremen)

This bill establishes the criminal offenses of fraudulent election interference, the solicitation of such, and digital identity fraud. Additionally, this bill requires certain disclaimers on campaign advertisements that use AI-generated media. Lastly, this bill prohibits distribution of computer-generated obscene materials depicting a child.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

# CIVIL

[HB 295 - Local government; procedures for real property owners to make claims for compensation for loss of property value or expenses incurred; provisions](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Houston Gaines (R – Athens)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Clint Dixon (R – Gwinnett)

This bill establishes procedures for real property owners to make claims for compensation from local governments for loss of property value or expenses incurred due to the local government's failure to comply with or nonenforcement of certain laws, ordinances, and resolutions or due to the local government maintaining a public nuisance. Such a claim shall be presented to a local government within the tax year in which the claim occurred, and the local government shall consider and act on this claim within 30 days from presentation. If the local government accepts the claim, it shall pay the appropriate compensation within 30 days of acceptance. If the local government rejects or does not respond to the claim within 30 days of its presentation, the owner may bring an action against the local government in the respective superior court. In such an action, the local government shall bear the burden of proof in demonstrating that its actions are lawful, that the amount of the claim is unreasonable, or that the local government took reasonable steps to mitigate the alleged public nuisance. The running of any applicable statute of limitations shall be suspended during the time that such a claim is pending before the local government without action on their part. Owners may enter into settlement agreements with local governments and may also file subsequent claims for the same parcel of property for which prior claims were unsuccessful.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[HB 1181 - Motor vehicles; application for certificate of title; provisions](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Bethany Ballard (R – Warner Robins)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Steven McNeel (R – Macon)

This bill addresses applications for a first certificate of title that refer to a vehicle previously registered in another state in the name of a decedent owner when the applicant is receiving the vehicle of such decedent upon inheritance, devise, or bequest, such application. Such an application shall contain the last certificate for title for such vehicle issued by the other state to the decedent owner and any other information required by pursuant to subsections (d) or (e) of OCGA 40-3-21. Further, this bill clarifies that for the commissioner to issue the certificate of title in the event of transfer upon inheritance, devise, or bequest, the last certificate of title issued to the decedent is required.

**Effective Date:** May 6, 2026

[HB 1208 - Civil practice; require depositions to be taken before certified court reporters](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Stan Gunter (R – Blairsville)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Bo Hatchett (R – Cornelia)

This bill requires depositions in Georgia to be taken before certified court reporters. All verbiage requiring recording by stenographic means is removed.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026.

# COURTS

[HR 251 - Local government; probate judges shall be elected in nonpartisan elections; provide – CA](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Kimberly New (R – Villa Rica)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Brian Strickland (R – McDonough)

This bill proposes an amendment to the Constitution to provide that all probate judges shall be elected in nonpartisan elections.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[HB 295 - Local government; procedures for real property owners to make claims for compensation for loss of property value or expenses incurred; provisions](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Houston Gaines (R – Athens)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Clint Dixon (R – Gwinnett)

This bill establishes procedures for real property owners to make claims for compensation from local governments for loss of property value or expenses incurred due to the local government's failure to comply with or nonenforcement of certain laws, ordinances, and resolutions or due to the local government maintaining a public nuisance.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[HB 530 - Courts; authorization for electronic filing of pleadings in probate court; provide](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Rob Leverett (R – Elberton)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Brian Strickland (R – McDonough)

This bill provides for electronic filing of all pleadings and any other documents related to a civil matter in probate courts as well as the acceptance of payments and remittances by electronic means.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[HB 999 - Magistrate courts; collecting sums and fees authorized by law; revise provisions](#)

*(Includes substitute language from [HB 792](#))*

**House Author:** Rep. Rob Leverett (R – Elberton)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Bo Hatchett (R – Cornelia)

This bill revises the provisions related to magistrate courts collecting sums and fees. Specifically, it establishes that fees provided for in OCGA § 15-10-80 (filing fees, service of process costs, writ of fieri facias fees, and costs taxed to losing party) shall be in addition to sums collected under OCGA § 15-23-7 and all other sums required by law. Additionally, fees provided for under this article shall not affect the collection of other sums or fees required by law. This bill also corrects the scrivener's error in the Act to provide for nonpartisan elections of magistrates. This bill revises the Act's automatic repeal to apply only to the section providing for the non-partisan election of probate court judges if the relevant constitutional amendment (provided by HR 251) is not ratified. Further, this bill raises the jurisdictional threshold for magistrate court claims from \$15,000 to \$25,000.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026 (*Section 3 - January 1, 2027*)

[HB 1185 - Courts; certain shareholder claims to be brought before the Georgia State-wide Business Court; provide](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Chuck Efstrotation (R – Mulberry)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Bo Hatchett (R – Cornelia)

This bill allows certain shareholder and internal entity claims to be heard exclusively in the Georgia State-wide Business Court. It permits corporations and other entities to mandate this venue in their governing documents, establishes procedures for transferring or removing cases, and clarifies rules on attorney's fees, inspection rights, and derivative actions.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

## COURTS *continued*

### [HB 1187 - Trey's Law; enact](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Soo Hong (R – Lawrenceville)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Kay Kirkpatrick (R – Marietta)

This bill establishes that any nondisclosure or confidentiality agreement or provision that prohibits a person from disclosing an act of, or facts surrounding, childhood sexual abuse shall be void and unenforceable. Such agreements or provisions are contrary to the public policy of Georgia.

**Effective Date:** May 11, 2026

### [HB 1215 - Middle Judicial Circuit; superior courts; provide for a third judge](#)

(Includes substitute language from [HB 557](#), [SB 327](#), [HB 960](#), and [HB 1365](#))

**House Author:** Rep. Butch Parrish (R – Swainsboro)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Brian Strickland (R – McDonough)

This bill provides for an additional superior court judge in the Northeastern Judicial Circuit and Gwinnett Judicial Circuit, as well as the Atlanta Judicial Circuit, Clayton Judicial Circuit, and Middle Judicial Circuit (subject to appropriations). The FY 2027 budget provided funding for Northeastern, Gwinnett, and Middle, effective January 1, 2027.

**Effective Date:** January 1, 2027

### [HB 1247 - Georgia Bureaucratic Deference Elimination Act; enact](#)

(Includes substitute language from [SB 28](#))

**House Author:** Rep. Matt Reeves (R – Duluth)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Bo Hatchett (R – Cornelia)

This bill establishes that when interpreting Georgia's Constitution, statutes, or published rules, a court, or an officer hearing an administrative action, shall not defer to a state agency's determination or interpretation of such authorities. Additionally, this bill outlines that any claim of an unlawful employment practice made

against a member of the General Assembly that is resolved in whole, or in part, by a settlement agreement, a memorandum of understanding, etc. shall be subject to public disclosure with the claimant's identity redacted and the member's identity visible. This bill also includes the Red Tape Rollback Act of 2026 which requires each agency to submit a report to the Office of Planning and Budget by July 1, 2028, and at the end of each five-year period ending on July 1 thereafter.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1268 - Official Code of Georgia Annotated; revise, modernize and correct errors in omissions](#)

**House Author:** Rep. James Burchett (R – Waycross)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Bo Hatchett (R – Cordelia)

This bill revises, modernizes, and corrects errors in the Official Code of Georgia.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1344 - Georgia Insurance Affordability and Claims Integrity Act; enact](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Matt Reeves (R – Duluth)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Larry Walker, III (R – Perry)

This bill includes language from [HB 1042](#), which provides for amendments related to OCGA §§ 15-5-110, 112, relating to restriction of PII.

*Sections 14-1 and 14-2 of HB 1344 relate to restriction of personally identifiable information (PII) for judges.* This bill protects the PII of current and former judges and their spouses in publicly available content and restricts its public disclosure. Thus, the protected persons' home addresses, property parcel numbers, and telephone numbers shall be concealed from any written or electronic record maintained, controlled, or possessed by a state or local government entity that may be obtained by any person in the public. Any protected person may request access, or authorize a third-party individual or entity to access, such restricted PII by submitting a signed authorization form to such state or local government entity. Further, such information may be released

## COURTS *continued*

to the public with authorization from the protected person, their attorney, or legal representative.

**Effective Date:** January 1, 2027

[HB 1470 - Torts; abusive litigation based on alleged website access violations under federal and state law; create a cause of action](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Trey Kelley (R – Cedartown)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Brian Strickland (R – McDonough)

This bill outlines the remaining remedies available to a claimant who brings a civil action against a person or entity that operates a website allegedly violative of the Americans with Disabilities Act and such a claim is adjudicated on the merits, involuntarily dismissed, or dismissed based on lack of standing. Such an action must be brought within two years of the entry of the judgment in the underlying unsuccessful action.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[SB 218 - Prosecuting Attorneys Qualifications Commission; shall be assigned for administrative purposes only to the Administrative Office of the Courts; provide](#)

**Senate Author:** Sen. Randy Robertson (R – Cataula)

**House Sponsor:** Rep. Joseph Gullett (R – Dallas)

This bill assigns the Prosecuting Attorneys Qualifications Commission to the Administrative Office of the Courts for administrative purposes only. Further, this bill provides that the Prosecuting Attorneys Qualifications Commission may issue subpoenas, and employ investigators and special commission investigators to conduct investigations.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[SB 403 - Unclaimed Property; property is presumed abandoned; provide for exceptions](#)

**Senate Author:** Sen. Kay Kirkpatrick (R – Marietta)

**House Sponsor:** Rep. Matt Reeves (R – Duluth)

This bill outlines multiple changes to the disposition

of unclaimed property including exceptions to when property is presumed to be abandoned, clarifications for virtual currency, circumstances with authorized delays for notice publications, methods of payments for claims and in the absence of claims, and circumstances where a claim is void.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[SB 406 - "Georgia Property Owners' Bill of Rights Act"; enact](#)

**Senate Author:** Sen. Matt Brass (R – Newnan)

**House Sponsor:** Rep. Reynaldo Martinez (R – Loganville)

This bill provides for many changes regarding property owner associations. This bill provides for all property owners associations to be registered with the Secretary of the State. The Secretary of State shall have the authority to alter the registration of an association; limit the fines, fees, liens, or foreclosures that such an association may collect; or bar an officer, director, trustee, or executive personnel employee, or board member of such an association when a violation has occurred. Appeals of such order may be filed in the superior court of the county in which the largest portion of the association. Additionally, this bill addresses property owners' rights regarding such associations and foreclosures resulting from late payments of dues to such associations.

**Effective Date:** January 1, 2027 (*Section 7 - July 1, 2026*)

[SB 489 - Board of Commissioners of the Judges of the Probate Courts Retirement Fund of Georgia; allow to set monthly dues](#)

**Senate Author:** Sen. Russ Goodman (R – Cogdell)

**House Sponsor:** Rep. Chas Cannon (R – Moultrie)

This bill allows the Board of Commissioners of the Judges of the Probate Courts Retirement Fund of Georgia to set monthly dues between \$105 and \$150. Members are no longer required to pay dues after 30 years of payment.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

# LOCAL

## [HB 858 - Cobb County; State Court; change compensation and number of certain staff of solicitor-general](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Terry Cummings (D – Mableton)

This bill provides for additional assistant solicitors in the State Court of Cobb County.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

## [HB 857 - Cobb County; State Court; chief deputy clerk and clerk; change salary](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Terry Cummings (D – Mableton)

This bill amends the salary of the chief deputy clerk and clerks in the State Court of Cobb County.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

## [HB 935 - Thomas County; Probate Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Chas Cannon (R – Moultrie)

A local act authorizing the Probate Court of Thomas County to collect a technology fee on each civil filing. The fee is not to exceed \$10 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

## [HB 936 - Berlin, City of; Municipal Court; authorize assessment and collection of technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Chas Cannon (R – Moultrie)

A local act authorizing the Municipal Court of the City of Berlin to collect a technology fee on each criminal and quasi-criminal fine paid to the court. The fee is not to exceed \$10 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

## [HB 937 - Berrien County; Magistrate Court; authorize assessment and collection of technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Chas Cannon (R – Moultrie)

A local act authorizing the Magistrate Court of Berrien County to collect a technology fee on each civil filing and fine. The fees shall either be \$5 or \$10 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

## [HB 938 - Tift County; Magistrate Court; authorize assessment and collection of technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Jaclyn Ford (R – Tifton)

A local act authorizing the Magistrate Court of Tift County to collect a technology fee on each civil filing and fine. The fees shall either be \$5 or \$10 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

## [HB 939 - Tift County; State Court; authorize assessment and collection of technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Jaclyn Ford (R – Tifton)

A local act authorizing the State Court of Tift County to collect a technology fee on each civil filing and fine. The fees shall either be \$5 or \$10 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

## [HB 940 - Tift County; State Court; provide for compensation of the judge](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Jaclyn Ford (R – Tifton)

This bill amends the salary of judges and solicitor generals in the State Court of Tift County.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

## LOCAL *continued*

### [HB 941 - Tift County; Probate Court; authorize assessment and collection of technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Jaclyn Ford (R – Tifton)

A local act authorizing the Probate Court of Tift County to collect a technology fee on each civil filing and fine. The fees shall either be \$5 or \$10 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1037 - Cobb County; State Court; change compensation of judges](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Terry Cummings (D – Mableton)

This bill amends the salary of judges in the State Court of Cobb County.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1057 - Gwinnett County; State Court; provide eighth judge January 1, 2027 and ninth judge January 1, 2028](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Dar'shun Kendrick (D – Lithonia)  
This bill increases the number of judges from seven to nine in the State Court of Gwinnett County. It provides for the Governor to appoint an additional judge on January 1, 2027, for an initial term ending on December 31, 2028. Similarly, the bill then provides for the Governor to appoint an additional judge on January 1, 2028, for an initial term ending on December 31, 2030. Future successors of both judgeships will be elected at the general election conducted immediately prior to the expiration of the term of office.

**Effective Date:** May 12, 2026 (*Part I - January 1, 2027; Part II - January 1, 2028*)

### [HB 1083 - Madison County; Magistrate Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Rob Leverett (R – Elberton)

A local act authorizing the Magistrate Court of Madison County to collect a technology fee on each civil filing

and fine. The fee is not to exceed \$10 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1084 - Madison County; Probate Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Rob Leverett (R – Elberton)

A local act authorizing the Probate Court of Madison County to collect a technology fee on each civil filing and fine. The fee is not to exceed \$10 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1121 - Cordele Judicial Court; change certain terms of court](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Noel Williams, Jr. (R – Cordele)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Steven McNeel (R – Macon)

This bill amends the term of court for the superior courts in the Cordele Judicial Circuit to January 1 and July 1 for Ben Hill, Crisp, Dooly, and Wilcox counties.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1140 - Ben Hill County; Magistrate Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Leesa Hagan (R – Lyons)

A local act authorizing the Magistrate Court of Ben Hill County to collect a technology fee on each civil filing and fine. The fee is not to exceed \$5 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

## LOCAL *continued*

### [HB 1169 - Spalding County; Probate Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Beth Camp (R- Concord)

A local act authorizing the Probate Court of Spalding County to collect a technology fee on each civil filing and fine. The fee is not to exceed \$15 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1170 - Spalding County; State Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Beth Camp (R - Concord)

A local act authorizing the State Court of Spalding County to collect a technology fee on each civil filing and fine. The fee is not to exceed \$15 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1172 - Spalding County; Magistrate Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Beth Camp (R - Concord)

A local act authorizing the Magistrate Court of Spalding County to collect a technology fee on each civil filing and fine. The fee is not to exceed \$15 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1258 - Muscogee County; State Court; provide additional judge](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Tremaine Teddy Reese (D - Columbus)

This bill provides for the election of an additional judge in the State Court of Muscogee County. Thus, a third judge would be elected in the nonpartisan general election in 2026 for a term of four years beginning on January 1, 2027. The existing two judges in office on Decem-

ber 31, 2026, shall serve out the terms of office to which such judges were elected or appointed. The manner of election, powers, and compensation shall remain the same for the additional judge.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1297 - Pierce County; Magistrate Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Steven Meeks (R - Screven)

A local act authorizing the Magistrate Court of Pierce County to collect a technology fee on each civil filing and fine. The fee is not to exceed \$10 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1435 - Mount Airy, Town of; Municipal Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Victor Anderson (R - Cornelia)

A local act authorizing the Municipal Court of the Town of Mount Airy to collect a technology fee on each civil filing and fine. The fee is not to exceed \$10 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1485 - Union County; Probate Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Stan Gunter (R - Blairsville)

A local act authorizing the Probate Court of Union County to collect a technology fee on each civil filing and fine. The fee is not to exceed \$5 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

## LOCAL *continued*

### [HB 1534 - Chatham County; State Court; provide additional judge](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Anne Allen Westbrook (D – Savannah)

This bill provides for the election of an additional judge in the State Court of Chatham County. Thus, there shall be four judges effective January 1, 2029 with the additional judge being elected in the nonpartisan general election held and conducted jointly with the general primary in 2028.

**Effective Date:** January 1, 2027

### [HB 1507 - Wayne County; State Court; judge and solicitor; revise salary](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Steven Meeks (R – Screven)

This bill amends the salary of judges and solicitors in the State Court of Wayne County.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1513 - Fayette County; State Court; change compensation of judge](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Josh Bonner (R – Fayetteville)

This bill amends the salary of judges and solicitors in the State Court of Fayette County.

**Effective Date:** June 1, 2026

### [HB 1528 - Franklin Springs, City of; Municipal Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Alan Powell (R – Hartwell)

A local act authorizing the Municipal Court of the City of Franklin Springs to collect a technology fee on each criminal and quasi-criminal fine paid to the court. The fee is not to exceed \$15 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1529 - Canon, City of; Municipal Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Alan Powell (R – Hartwell)

A local act authorizing the Municipal Court of the City of Canon to collect a technology fee on each criminal and quasi-criminal fine paid to the court. The fee is not to exceed \$15 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1539 - Ware County; Probate Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. James Burchett (R – Waycross)

A local act authorizing the Probate Court of Ware County to collect a technology fee on each civil filing and fine. The fee is not to exceed \$10 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1540 - Ware County; State Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. James Burchett (R – Waycross)

A local act authorizing the State Court of Ware County to collect a technology fee on each civil filing and fine. The fee is not to exceed \$10 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1541 - Ware County; Magistrate Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. James Burchett (R – Waycross)

A local act authorizing the Magistrate Court of Ware County to collect a technology fee on each civil filing and fine. The fee is not to exceed \$10 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

## LOCAL *continued*

### [HB 1504 - Dekalb County; State Court; authorize the charge and collection of technology fees](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Omari Crawford (D – Decatur)

A local act authorizing the State Court of DeKalb County to collect a technology fee on each civil filing. The fee is not to exceed \$50 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1548 - Clarkesville, City of; Municipal Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Victor Anderson (R – Cornelia)

A local act authorizing the Municipal Court of the City of Clarkesville to collect a technology fee on each criminal and quasi-criminal fine paid to the court. The fee is not to exceed \$10 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1549 - Cornelia, City of; Municipal Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Victor Anderson (R – Cornelia)

A local act authorizing the Municipal Court of the City of Cornelia to collect a technology fee on each criminal and quasi-criminal fine paid to the court. The fee is not to exceed \$10 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1553 - Forest Park, City of; Municipal Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Rhonda Burnough (D – Riverdale)

A local act authorizing the Municipal Court of the City of Forest Park to collect a technology fee on each criminal and quasi-criminal fine paid to the court. The fee is not to exceed \$10 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1567 - Quitman, City of; transfer of all legal rights, privileges, and assets to Brooks County; provide](#)

**House Author:** Rep. John LaHood (R – Valdosta)

This bill provides for a referendum to consolidate the governments of City of Quitman and Brooks County. Following a majority vote favoring consolidation from both City of Quitman and Brooks County, the bill provides for the creation of the Quitman-Brooks County Charter and Unification Commission. The Commission's composition, procedures, and duties are outlined within the bill. Further, if City of Quitman and Brooks County are consolidated, the bill clarifies that Brooks County shall be vested with full authority to provide all governmental services within the former City of Quitman.

**Effective Date:** May 12, 2026

### [HB 1569 - McDonough, City of; Municipal Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Mary Ann Santos (D – McDonough)

A local act authorizing the Municipal Court of the City of McDonough to collect a technology fee on each criminal and quasi-criminal fine paid to the court. The fee is not to exceed \$15 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

### [HB 1571 - Bryan County; State Court; revise terms](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Ron Stevens (R – Savannah)

This bill amends an Act establishing the State Court of Bryan County to provide for terms of court. For criminal trials, four regular terms commencing on the second day of January and on the first day of April, July, and October of each year. For civil trials, monthly terms commencing on the first day of each month.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

## LOCAL *continued*

[HB 1588 - Cobb County; salaries of chief deputy sheriff, assistant chief deputy sheriff, and executive assistant to the sheriff shall be determined by the sheriff; provide](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Terry Cummings (D – Mableton)

This bill clarifies the sheriff of Cobb County shall have one chief deputy, appointed deputies, and clerical help. Further, this bill creates the office of assistant chief deputy and executive assistant to the sheriff for Cobb County.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[SB 613 - Superior Court of Clayton County; change the compensation of the sheriff](#)

**Senate Author:** Sen. Gail Davenport (D – Jonesboro)

**House Sponsor:** Rep. Yasmin Neal (R – Jonesboro)

This bill provides that the sheriff of Clayton County shall be paid \$185,000 per year in equal monthly installments.

**Effective Date:** First Day of the month following when the Sheriff of Clayton County fully complies with the 2024, 2025, and 2026 required audits

[SB 618 - Municipal Court of the City of Decatur; the assessment and collection of a technology fee; authorize](#)

**Senate Author:** Sen. Elena Parent (D – Atlanta)

**House Sponsor:** Rep. Mary Margaret Oliver (D – Decatur)

A local act authorizing the Municipal Court of the City of Decatur to collect a technology fee on each criminal and quasi-criminal fine paid to the court. The fee is not to exceed \$15 and must be used exclusively to provide for the technological needs of the court.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[SB 623 - State Court of Clayton County; compensation of the solicitor-general of the state court; revise provisions](#)

**Senate Author:** Sen. Kenya Wicks (D – Fayette)

**House Sponsor:** Rep. Yasmin Neal (R – Jonesboro)

This bill prohibits the solicitor-general's total salary from exceeding the greater of \$191,007 or 95 percent of the total compensation of the Chief Judge of the State Court of Clayton County.

**Effective Date:** First Day of the month following when the Solicitor of Clayton County fully complies with the 2024, 2025, and 2026 required audits

# PUBLIC SAFETY & TRAFFIC

## [HB 369 - Motor vehicles; sale of food or beverages; provide vehicle equipment standards](#)

(Includes Substitute language from [SB 573](#))

**House Author:** Rep. Dexter Sharper (D – Valdosta)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. John Albers (R – Roswell)

This bill establishes that all candidates to fill elected county offices in a consolidated law enforcement county, except for the offices of county sheriff and offices of county governing authorities established pursuant to or authorized by a local constitutional amendment, shall be elected in nonpartisan elections. Such nonpartisan elections shall be held and conducted in conjunction with the general primary in even numbered years. Further, this bill establishes that all candidates to fill the office of district attorney for a judicial circuit comprised solely of a consolidated law enforcement county shall be elected in the November nonpartisan elections. No candidate for such office shall be nominated by a political party or by a petition as a candidate of a political body or as an independent candidate.

**Effective Date:** January 1, 2028

## [HB 651 - Motor vehicles; use of automated traffic enforcement safety devices in school zones; revise provisions](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Alan Powell (R – Hartwell)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Randy Robertson (R – Cataula)

This bill updates provisions for the use of traffic enforcement safety devices in school zones and the subsequent warning signs.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

## [HB 1161 - Motor vehicles; proper operation upon approach by an authorized emergency vehicle or by a law enforcement vehicle for purposes of a traffic stop; provide](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Marvin Lim (D – Norcross)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. John Albers (R – Roswell)

This bill outlines multiple aspects surrounding traffic

and vehicle safety including proper protocol for the approach of emergency vehicles on the road, penalties for fleeing or attempting to elude a police officer, windshield tint regulations, and the ability to use and enforce school zone signage.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026 (*Section 5 - July 1, 2027*)

## [SB 160 - Reckless Stunt Driving; a motor vehicle involved in a second offense of reckless stunt driving; replace the forfeiture penalty](#)

**Senate Author:** Sen. Kay Kirkpatrick (R – Marietta)

**House Sponsor:** Rep. Alan Powell (R – Hartwell)

This bill provides for the use of intelligent speed assistance device limiting driving permits for certain suspensions of driver's licenses upon conviction for reckless stunt driving. An intelligent speed assistance device is a constant monitoring device certified by the commissioner of driver services to be installed within a vehicle to actively monitor and prevent the operator from exceeding the preset speed.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2028

## [SB 433 - "Rio's Law"](#)

**Senate Author:** Sen. Brian Strickland (R – McDonough)

**House Sponsor:** Rep. Eddie Lumsden (R – Armuchee)

This bill establishes that any owner of a private passenger motor vehicle who is a resident of Georgia, upon complying with the relevant motor vehicle laws and submitting an affidavit of a practitioner of the healing arts stating that the owner, their spouse, child, or ward, shall be issued a "Autism Spectrum Disorder or Developmental Disability" license plate from the commissioner. Any person owning a vehicle bearing such a license plate who is not authorized to have such a plate shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. Beginning January 1, 2027, peace officer training shall begin and include encounters with individuals with autism spectrum disorder or a developmental disability.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

## PUBLIC SAFETY & TRAFFIC *continued*

[SB 443 - Offenses Against Public Order; the punishment for the offense of obstructing highways, streets, sidewalks, or other public passages; increase](#)

**Senate Author:** Sen. Carden Summers (R – Cordele)

**House Sponsor:** Rep. Eddie Lumsden (R – Armuchee)

This bill establishes the offense of obstructing highways or streets and provides that an offender would be guilty of a high and aggravated misdemeanor. Such an offender may be held civilly liable for damages that result from the offense's conduct. Further, this bill establishes that a person who purposely or recklessly obstructs any sidewalk or any public passage in such a way to render it impassable or refuses to remove the obstruction after receiving a request is guilty of a misdemeanor.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[SB 587 - Offenses Against Public Health and Morals; the establishment of an animal cruelty database; provide](#)

**Senate Author:** Sen. Shawn Still (R – Suwanee)

**House Sponsor:** Rep. Beth Camp (R – Concord)

This bill establishes that, by January 1, 2027, subject to appropriations by the General Assembly or other available funding, the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of the State of Georgia shall create, administer, and maintain on its website a state-wide, publicly searchable animal cruelty database. Additionally, this bill provides for a superior court order to locate an alleged victim of child or elder abuse.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[SB 591 - Offenses Against Public Order; the disruption of a religious service; prohibit](#)

**Senate Author:** Sen. Steeve Gooch (R – Dahlonaga)

**House Sponsor:** Rep. Deborah Silcox (R – Sandy Springs)

This bill prohibits the disruption of any public assembly of persons for worship, religious observance, or other religious purpose. Any person who engages in disorderly or disruptive conduct with the intent to impede, disrupt, disturb, or interfere with the orderly conduct of any religious service, funeral, or memorial service shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. If such a person engages in disorderly or disruptive conduct at a funeral or memorial service of an individual receiving military funeral honors, such person shall be guilty of an aggravated misdemeanor.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

## DOMESTIC RELATIONS

[HB 256 - Social services; foster parents bill of rights; revise provisions](#)

*(Includes substitute language from [SB 525](#))*

**House Author:** Rep. Marcus Wiedower (R – Watkinsonville)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Matt Brass (R – Newnan)

This bill renames the “Foster Parents Bill of Rights” the “Foster Placements Bill of Rights” and increases protections for foster placements who care for children in the custody of the Department of Human Services. Additionally, this bill requires the recording of all proceedings under the juvenile code and establishes parties’ rights to obtain a full and complete record of such proceedings.

**Effective Date:** May 11, 2026

[HB 1283 - Family Justice Center Act; enact](#)

**House Author:** Rep. Esther Panitch (D – Sandy Springs)

**Senate Sponsor:** Sen. Randy Robertson (R – Cataula)

This bill establishes that any county, municipality, or combination thereof, in partnership with one or more nonprofit organizations, or any district attorney may establish a Family Justice Center. The bill details how the Family Justice Center shall be coordinated depending on whether it is organized and operated by a government entity or a non-profit organization. The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council shall handle funding for Family Justice Centers. Additionally, this bill outlines the confidentiality of all information and records held within the Family Justice Centers.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

[SB 383 - Child Abuse; local child fatality review committees; modify the review](#)

**Senate Author:** Sen. Kay Kirkpatrick (R – Marietta)

**House Sponsor:** Rep. Devan Seabaugh (R – Marietta)

This bill requires that each county establish a local child fatality review committee to review certain deaths, identify opportunities for intervention, and make recommendations for preventative measures. In each county, the chief superior court judge of the respective circuit shall establish the committee to fit the criteria listed in the bill.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

## 2026 STUDY COMMITTEES

### [House Blue Ribbon Study Committee on Criminal Post-Conviction Litigation](#)

**Chair:** Rep. Stan Gunter (R – Blairsville)

Rep. Clint Crowe (R – Jackson)

Rep. Chuck Efstoration (R – Mulberry)

Rep. Bill Fincher (R – Canton)

Rep. Scott Holcomb (D – Atlanta)

Rep. Soo Hong (R – Lawrenceville)

Rep. Rob Leverett (R – Elberton)

Rep. Tyler Paul Smith (R – Bremen)

### [Joint Study Committee on Evaluating Escalating Costs in Georgia's Foster Care System](#)

Rep. Beth Camp (R – Concord)

Rep. Brent Cox (R – Dawsonville)

Rep. Katie Dempsey (R – Rome)

Rep. Joseph Gullett (R – Dallas)

Rep. Mary Margaret Oliver (D – Decatur)

Rep. Esther Panitch (D – Sandy Springs)

To review tracked bills affecting the judiciary, look up a bill by topic or number, or access bill summaries, visit our Judicial Council/AOC Legislative Tracking Database page at [georgiacourts.gov/legislation](http://georgiacourts.gov/legislation).

During the legislative session, the AOC Capitol Team provides a Weekly Legislative Report, which can also be accessed from that page.

To view a complete list of legislation vetoed by the Governor, visit: <https://gov.georgia.gov/executive-action/legislation/vetoed-legislation/2026>.

The image shows a screenshot of the Georgia AOC Legislative Tracking Database website. At the top left is the Georgia AOC logo. The page title is "JC/AOC Legislative Tracking Database" with a "Login" link. A red circle highlights a button that says "Click here for the Weekly Legislative Report". Below this is a "View all tracked bills (Total 224 bills)" link. A "Bill search" section is visible, with three filters: "Search By Bill Number" (with an input field containing "Eg: HB 0002 or SB 0980" and a "Go" button), "By Legislative Issue" (with a dropdown menu showing "Budget (5)", "Civil (27)", "Court Administration (43)", and "Court Technology (23)"), and "By Tracking level" (with a dropdown menu showing "Key Bill" and "Monitoring").

Overlaid on the bottom right of the screenshot is a document titled "WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT" from the "JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF GEORGIA ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS". The date is "April 8, 2026". The report includes the following sections:

- Judicial Branch Initiatives**: On Tuesday, March 31, [HR 251](#), providing for a constitutional amendment for the nonpartisan election of probate court judges, achieved final passage after receiving unanimous support in the Senate. Following that, on Thursday, April 2, [HB 1344](#) passed the Senate with unanimous support and received a final Agree by the House for final passage. This legislation included language from [HB 1042](#), which provides for amendments related to OCGA §§ 15-5-110, 112, relating to restriction of personally identifiable information.
- Appropriations**: After a final Appropriations Conference Committee meeting on Thursday, April 2, the House and Senate each adopted the Conference Committee Report for the FY 2027 State Budget. [HB 974](#) now awaits the Governor's signature. The Judicial Council Budget can be found in Section 6, which begins on page 7 of the document.

The report concludes with a note: "This report is a compilation of items achieving final passage during the last week of session affecting Georgia's judiciary. This being the end of the legislative biennium, any bills that did not receive final passage are now moot. To view more legislation pertaining to the judiciary as well as bill summaries and previous reports, please visit [georgiacourts.gov/legislation](http://georgiacourts.gov/legislation). Bill summaries will be updated over the coming weeks to reflect final, As Passed versions. The annual Judicial Council/AOC Enacted Legislation report will be available after completion of the bill review period (May 12)."

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