

STANDING ORDER REGARDING CRIMINAL DOCKET MANAGEMENT

SEP 01 2026

Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit — Superior Court

Kimberly James, Clerk

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
STATE OF GEORGIA**

SUBJECT: Criminal Docket Management — Establishment of Active, Inactive, and Competency Dockets

EFFECTIVE DATE: September 8, 2026

I. Authority and Purpose

Pursuant to the authority vested in the judges of the Superior Court of the Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit under the laws of the State of Georgia, and in furtherance of the court's obligation to manage its criminal docket in an efficient, orderly, and just manner, the judges of this circuit hereby establish the following criminal docket management procedures applicable to all criminal cases pending in the Superior Court of the Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit.

The purpose of this Standing Order is to ensure that criminal cases are appropriately categorized and managed according to the procedural posture of each case, including matters involving questions of a defendant's mental competency to stand trial and matters in which a defendant has failed to appear before the court.

II. Establishment of Dockets

Effective upon the date of this Order, the Superior Court of the Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit shall maintain three criminal dockets:

1. **Active Docket** — The primary docket on which all pending criminal cases shall be placed upon filing or indictment unless and until transfer to another docket is required under this Order.
2. **Inactive Docket** — A docket to which cases shall be transferred when a defendant has failed to appear as provided herein and the case cannot presently proceed to disposition.
3. **Competency Docket** — A docket to which cases shall be transferred when questions as to a defendant's mental competency to stand trial have been raised through the filing of a motion for mental evaluation.

III. The Active Docket

A. General Administration

All criminal cases filed in or returned by indictment to the Superior Court of the Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit shall be placed on the Active Docket upon commencement. Cases on the Active Docket shall be subject to regular scheduling, hearings, arraignment, pretrial proceedings, and trial in the ordinary course.

B. Transfer Off the Active Docket

A case shall be removed from the Active Docket and transferred to the appropriate alternative docket as follows:

1. Transfer to the **Competency Docket** shall occur upon the filing of a motion for mental evaluation as provided in Section IV of this Order.
2. Transfer to the **Inactive Docket** shall occur upon a defendant's failure to appear as provided in Section V of this Order.

IV. The Competency Docket

A. Transfer to the Competency Docket

Any criminal case pending on the Active Docket in which an order for a mental evaluation of the defendant has been filed shall be transferred to the Competency Docket. Such order shall include language which directs the Clerk of Court to move the case from the Active Docket.

For purposes of this Order, a "motion for a mental evaluation" includes any written motion filed by the defendant, defense counsel, the State, or raised sua sponte by the court, requesting a court-ordered evaluation of the defendant's mental competency to stand trial. Such motions are governed by the applicable provisions of Georgia law and the Uniform Superior Court Rules, including the requirement that the court hold a hearing to determine whether there is sufficient information to raise a bona fide doubt regarding the accused's current mental competency to stand trial.

B. Administration of the Competency Docket

1. The Chief Judge of the Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit, or such judge as the Chief Judge shall designate (hereinafter, the "Competency Docket Judge"), shall be responsible for the administration and oversight of the Competency Docket.
2. Cases on the Competency Docket shall remain under the supervision of the Competency Docket Judge pending the resolution of all competency-related proceedings, including but not limited to the ordering of evaluations, receipt of reports from the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, competency hearings, and any required trial on the issue of competency.

3. While a case is on the Competency Docket, the applicable deadlines and procedural requirements of Georgia law governing competency evaluations shall continue to apply. The Competency Docket Judge shall monitor compliance with all statutory timelines.
4. The Clerk of Court shall maintain a separate Competency Docket listing and shall track the status of each case assigned thereto.

C. Return to the Active Docket

Upon the resolution of all issues as to the defendant's mental competency to stand trial, the Competency Docket Judge shall enter an order returning the case to the Active Docket. For purposes of this Order, competency issues shall be deemed resolved upon:

1. A judicial determination that the defendant is competent to stand trial;
2. A judicial determination that the defendant has been restored to competency following a period of treatment or evaluation; or
3. Such other disposition of competency proceedings as the Competency Docket Judge determines renders the case appropriate for return to the Active Docket and resumption of ordinary criminal proceedings.

Upon entry of the return order, the Clerk of Court shall transfer the case to the Active Docket and notify the assigned trial judge. The case shall thereafter proceed in the ordinary course on the Active Docket.

V. The Inactive Docket

A. Transfer to the Inactive Docket

A case pending on the Active Docket shall be transferred to the Inactive Docket when the defendant has failed to appear before the court for two (2) consecutive terms of court, without lawful excuse. For purposes of this Order:

1. A "term of court" means a regularly scheduled term of the Superior Court of the Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit in the county in which the case is pending during which the case was calendared and the defendant was required to appear.
2. "Failed to appear" means the defendant was not present at the designated time and place when the case was called during a term of court, after the defendant received actual or constructive notice of the required appearance as provided by Georgia law.
3. A defendant shall not be deemed to have failed to appear for purposes of this Order if the defendant was prevented from attending due to detention by reason of arrest, sentence, or confinement in a penal institution or jail, or due to involuntary confinement pursuant to court order in a mental institution, provided that written notice of such detention or

confinement is presented to the court as required by law. However, such defendants may be placed on the inactive docket if no Court Production Order has been filed.

B. Bench Warrants

Transfer of a case to the Inactive Docket shall not preclude the presiding judge from issuing a bench warrant for the arrest of the defendant. Upon a defendant's failure to appear, the presiding judge may, in accordance with Georgia law, issue a bench warrant. The issuance and pendency of a bench warrant shall be noted in the case file and on the Inactive Docket.

C. Administration of the Inactive Docket

1. The Clerk of Court shall maintain a separate Inactive Docket listing and shall track the status of each case assigned thereto, including the date of transfer and the status of any outstanding bench warrant.
2. The District Attorney's Office shall be notified of all transfers to the Inactive Docket.
3. Cases on the Inactive Docket shall not be scheduled for trial or other substantive proceedings while on the Inactive Docket but shall remain subject to administrative review by the court.
4. The court Administrators will monitor the active docket and shall notify the Clerk of Court which cases shall be moved to the inactive docket. No separate order shall be required.

D. Return to the Active Docket

A case shall be returned from the Inactive Docket to the Active Docket upon the defendant becoming available for court, including by reason of:

1. The defendant's voluntary appearance before the court;
2. The defendant's arrest on an outstanding bench warrant; or
3. The filing of a signed Court Production Order requiring the Defendant be produced for trial, or
4. Such other circumstance as renders the defendant available to appear and proceed with the case.
5. The Court Administrators will monitor the inactive docket and inform the Clerk when to transfer a case back to the active docket. No additional order shall be required to facilitate the transfer.

Upon the defendant becoming available for court, the presiding judge or the judge to whom the case is assigned shall instruct the Clerk to return the case to the Active Docket. The Clerk of

Court shall transfer the case accordingly, and the matter shall be rescheduled for appropriate proceedings in the ordinary course.

VI. Clerk of Court Responsibilities

The Clerk of Superior Court for each county within the Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit shall:

1. Maintain separate docket listings for the Active Docket, Inactive Docket, and Competency Docket as established by this Order;
2. Promptly effectuate all transfers between dockets upon entry of an order authorizing such transfer or as otherwise provided by this Order;
3. Provide regular docket reports to the judges of the circuit as directed by the Chief Judge;
and
4. Coordinate with the District Attorney's Office and defense counsel, as appropriate, regarding docket status and transfers.

VII. Coordination with District Attorney's Office

The District Attorney for the Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit shall designate such personnel as necessary to monitor the Active, Inactive, and Competency Dockets and to take appropriate action consistent with this Order and applicable law, including the timely notification of the court when a defendant on the Inactive Docket becomes available for court.

VIII. Effective Date and Applicability

This Standing Order shall take effect on September 8, 2026 and shall apply to all criminal cases then pending in the Superior Court of the Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit, as well as all cases filed thereafter. To the extent any prior standing order, administrative order, or local rule of the Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit conflicts with this Order, this Order shall control.

IX. Amendment and Review

The judges of the Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit may amend or supplement this Standing Order at any time by written order. The Chief Judge shall cause this Order to be published and distributed to the Clerk of Court, the District Attorney's Office, the public defender, and be posted on the website for the Circuit.

SO ORDERED, this 1 day of Sept., 2026

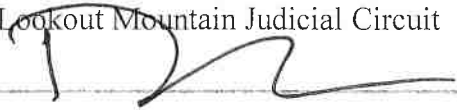
Brian M. House

Chief Judge, Superior Court
Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit



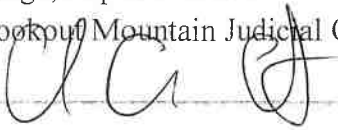
Don W. Thompson

Judge, Superior Court
Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit



Chris A. Arnt

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Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit



Melissa Gifford Hise

Judge, Superior Court
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