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Authority launches eFile Scanning feature

The Clerks' Authority is pleased to announce the introduction of a new eFile Scanning feature that transforms designated search terminals in Superior Court clerk offices into full eFile kiosks.

This new capability will be available on designated search terminals, specifically those already equipped for web camera identity verification. On enabled terminals, filers will see a new "Scan" button during the eFiling process, allowing them to securely scan paper documents directly into the eFile website using a GSCCCA-provided scanner at the terminal. This eliminates the need for users to prepare documents in advance and provides a more convenient, on-site solution.

To promote ease of use and support compliance with statutory requirements, the Authority developed this feature to ensure that individuals who arrive with paper documents can continue to be served at the clerk's office while still filing electronically. By bridging the gap be-



The Authority recently installed its first eFile Scanning kiosk in Forsyth County to test rollout procedures.

tween paper and digital processes, the eFile Scanning feature helps constituents comply with statutory mandates while benefiting from the efficiency of eFiling.

An email will be distributed to all Superior Court clerks by the end of May with additional details and participation instructions. Clerks who wish to offer this service in their county will be

able to sign up. Following enrollment, the Authority will verify hardware requirements, ship any necessary equipment, and coordinate installation at the clerk's office. The rollout timing will vary by county based on technical readiness. ■

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April Board meeting review

The Authority Board met on April 15 for its quarterly meeting. Following is a summary of the reports and actions of the meeting.

General Business

The minutes of the January 14, 2026 scheduled Board meeting were approved.

Will Derzis, CPA, from Mauldin & Jenkins, provided an update on the financial reports as of February 28, 2026. He praised the Authority staff for their high performance and adherence to all accounting industry standards. The latest financial reports indicate that the Clerks' Authority is maintaining a strong financial position.



GSCCCA FY 2027 Budget

Executive Director Rachel Rice provided an overview of the FY 2027 budget, emphasizing that it was developed with careful consideration of long-term technical needs to ensure the Authority can effectively fulfill its responsibilities to clerks and the public. The GSCCCA FY 2027 Budget was approved as presented.

Filing Activity Notification System (FANS)

The Filing Activity Notification System (FANS) has experienced steady growth since launching in January 2023. FANS is designed to notify individuals when specific real estate and personal property records are filed with a Superior Court clerk, indexed, and the data is transmitted by clerks throughout Georgia.

As of April 12, 2026, the system boasts 113,261 registered users who have submitted a total of 248,223 information requests concerning names, addresses, and document types, leading to 665,619 matches. This figure includes both active and inactive users. An account is deemed inactive if the user has not logged into FANS for 12 months, and notifications are sent to users accordingly.

UCC Project

The Authority received and processed 4,420 Certified Search requests through Q3 of FY 2026. There were no searches to report for December 2025 and January 2026 due to a cybersecurity incident that halted processing. These UCC Certified Search requests are managed internally by Authority staff, involving an exact name search of the UCC database, with the results subsequently transmitted to the customers.

As of Q3 FY 2026, there were 216,104 UCC filings statewide, averaging 24,012 filings per month. The first three months of the fiscal year saw a significant increase in UCC filings, primarily driven by a rise in UCC continuations. These continuations were essential for extending the effectiveness of UCC financing statements filed in 2020, linked to funds provided through federal COVID assistance programs. However, this surge in filings is starting to decline, as indicated by the current numbers.

Fines & Fees Division

The Fines & Fees staff continues to work closely with courts to promote and ensure compliance. Since the January Board meeting, the number of non-compliant courts has decreased.

To date, collections for the fiscal year have surpassed projections compared to FY 2025, positioning the Authority to meet its annual collection goals. In the first three quarters of FY 2026, the Fines & Fees Division has collected \$73.6 million in court fees and \$1.2 million in trust fund interest. Additionally, staff has processed 23,330 reports.

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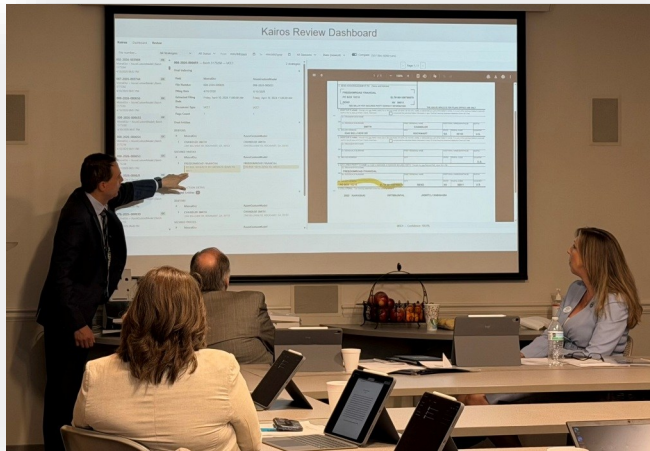


Board meeting review — Cont. from Page 2

In 2026, several additional training sessions will be conducted, including webinars and in-person classes for specific Superior Court clerk offices and the Municipal Court Clerks' Association, as well as training at the 2026 Clerks' Spring Conference.

Training & Outreach

The 2026 training classes are progressing well, with registrations continuing to rise. Webinars being offered include: FANS, eFile 101, Common Indexing Transmission Errors, Fines and Fees, Navigating eLearn and Training, among others. In-person classes include Notary Public and Real Estate Deed Indexing. (See the schedule of remaining 2026 classes and webinars on Page 9.)



The Authority's online training platform, eLearn, is experiencing significant engagement from both clerks and the public. As of March 31, 2026, there were 164,091 active users registered on the site, with 160,262 having accessed the Notary Public course. At present, 52 clerks and deputy clerks have successfully passed the Indexing Certification exam.

Additionally, the Authority provided training at the 2026 Clerks' Spring Conference. (See photos and more information on Page 8.)

Electronic Document Certification (eCert) Program

At present, 110 counties are participating in the eCert Program, with two more in the testing or training phase. As of April 10, 2026, these participating counties had received 310,656 electronic certified document requests, of which 233,574 had been processed. Additionally, 95 counties are using the Regular Copies feature, with three new counties joining since the January Board meeting.

The eCert Program allows individuals to electronically request certified and regular copies of documents from a specific clerk's office, eliminating the need for travel to the courthouse.

eFiling Project

Superior Court clerks continue to leverage the Authority's eFiling initiatives to enhance public service. Currently, 154 clerks are participating in UCC eFiling, with 141 requiring

eFiling as the only submission method. Additionally, 130 clerks are utilizing the auto-numbering feature. In the first three quarters of FY 2026, a total of 207,354 UCCs have been eFiled, averaging 23,038 filings per month. So far, seven counties are using the UCC

eFile API through their local vendors.

In terms of Real Estate eFiling, all 159 clerks are fully compliant with statutory requirements by accepting all document types electronically, with 152 counties participating in the estimated fee process.

The online notary public application process currently involves 154 clerks, of which 50 allow Mail-in Renewals (MIR).

Regarding the ACH Payment process, all 159 clerks are involved to varying degrees, and as of April 10, 2026, 82 counties had been activated to participate in ePay.

At present, 35 counties are fully participating in all products and services offered by the Authority.

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Board meeting review — Cont. from Page 3

Voluntary Historical Deed Project

At present, 105 counties are participating in the Voluntary Historical Deed Re-Indexing Project. The statewide “good-from” date is January 1, 1990. To date, over 6 million instruments have been released to production, while an additional 1.7 million instruments are currently in quarantine for review. Recently, more than 11,000 instruments were released, with additional releases expected soon. A total of 158 docket surveys have been completed, and 157 indexing directions have been issued.

1989-1987 Historical Deed Project

The 1989-1987 Historical Deed Re-Indexing Project was originally scheduled for completion by June 30, 2025; however, the project was not finished before the contract expired on that date. As of April 14, 2026, over 3.2 million instruments have been successfully released from quarantine, while instruments from four counties remain in quarantine.

Currently, over \$7.3 million has been disbursed or is payable to clerks, and over \$2.4 million has been paid to vendors. In total, over \$9.7 million has been expended on the project so far.

Archival Services

At present, 158 counties are participating in the VaultTek Online Archive Program, enabling clerks to back up all their files with the Authority at no cost. Since 2008, there have been 256 data restores totaling 5.3 TB of data. As of Q3 FY 2026, more than 1.6 billion files, totaling 640 TB of data, are securely backed up for clerks.

Notable VaultTek highlights in Q3 include:

- ❖ Restored 1,546 files back to clerks' offices
- ❖ Replaced/upgraded equipment in two counties
- ❖ Provided direct technical support to clerks in 38 counties beyond the Authority's regular daily support
- ❖ Posted two new blogs to the VaultTek website:

- ◇ The January blog emphasized the importance of not becoming complacent about untested disaster recovery plans.
- ◇ The March blog highlighted the risks of relying solely on shared drives for protecting digital records from data loss.

The Virtual Microfilm (VMF) storage currently holds approximately 335 million images, including deed, lien, and plat images.

Notary & Authentications Division

Through Q3 FY 2026, a total of 45,458 apostilles have been processed and issued. This marks a 17.1% increase compared to the same period in FY 2025. The top five destination countries for these apostilles were Korea ROK (1,473), India (1,446), Mexico (1,222), Honduras (916), and Colombia (860). The top five document types were birth certificates (3,184), Spanish language documents (2,041), foreign language documents (1,812), certified copies (1,145), and Power of Attorney documents (1,100).

Upcoming Board Meetings

Quarterly 2026 Board meetings are scheduled for July 8 and October 21. ■

HelpDesk is here to support you!

Open ...

**Monday through Friday
7:30 am to 6:00 pm EST**

Contact ...

**404-327-9760 or 800-304-5174
help@gsccca.org**



Authority updates:

Print button added to ePay Portal

The GSCCCA is pleased to announce the addition of a new **Print** button available in the ePay Portal (<https://ePay.gsccca.org>) for payments submitted by clerks' offices to the GSCCCA.

This enhancement allows users to:

- ❖ View detailed payment information
- ❖ Print payment details directly from the payment section

The new feature has been well received by clerks, with McDuffie County Superior Court Clerk Gina Timmerman writing: "I used it – very nice update."

Training materials have been updated to reflect this new feature and are available on eLearn at <https://eLearn.gsccca.org>.

With questions or for more information about the ePay Portal, contact Jamie McCarron at 800.304.5175x1402 or jamie.mccarron@gsccca.org. ■

Walk-in service suspended

Due to construction aimed at improving public service and enhancing office safety, the Clerks' Authority suspended all walk-in service for apostille and authentication requests in mid-April. Since that time, all requests have been processed either by mail or through the drop box located in the lobby of the Authority office located at:

GSCCCA — Notary Division
1875 Century Blvd, Suite 100
Atlanta, GA 30345

The apostille request form and instructions for mailing or using the drop box are available on the Authority's website at <https://www.gsccca.org/docs/notary-documents/>.

All online services remain fully operational during the temporary closure, and walk-in service is expected to resume within a month or so. The Authority apologizes for any inconvenience as it works to improve its service to the public. ■

Did you know?



- ❖ In 2025, the Clerks' Authority issued 58,355 apostilles, the highest number ever issued in a single year.
- ❖ Mexico is the most common destination country for apostilles.
- ❖ 335 million images of deeds, liens, and plats are archived in the Virtual Microfilm (VMF) storage.
- ❖ 96% of all UCCs are filed electronically.
- ❖ The Authority has indexed more than 8 million UCCs since the project's inception in 1995.
- ❖ 154 counties participate in Notary Online, providing a more efficient notary application process.
- ❖ The Authority's Customer Support Team is available to clerks, clerk office staff, and website customers to assist with technical support issues.
- ❖ The Pike County Courthouse, pictured to the right, was used as a filming location for the hit films *Fried Green Tomatoes*, *Murder in Coweta County*, *Tank*, and *Logan Lucky*.



2026 legislative updates:

HB 413 clarifies TOD procedures

House Bill 413, recently passed by the Georgia General Assembly and signed by Gov. Brian Kemp on April 22, 2026, updates Georgia law governing transfer-on-death (TOD) deeds. The bill became effective upon signature, with certain provisions, such as affidavit requirements, applying to deaths on or after July 1, 2026. These deeds are a relatively new estate planning tool that allow property to pass directly to designated beneficiaries upon death. HB 413 does not create TOD deeds, but instead clarifies procedures following the law's initial implementation in 2024.

The legislation focuses on standardizing how TOD deeds are completed, including:

- ❖ An attorney-in-fact (a person authorized to act under a power of attorney) is not authorized to execute a TOD deed on behalf of the record owner.
- ❖ A TOD deed does not automatically transfer title upon the owner's death, and a real estate transfer tax form (PT-61) shall not be filed with the TOD deed itself.
- ❖ Transfer of title is completed only when the beneficiary executes an affidavit after the owner's death and records it in the Superior Court clerk's office in the county where the property is located. For a record owner's death on or after July 1, 2026, the affidavit must include:
 - ◇ A death certificate of the owner
 - ◇ The deed book and page number of the recorded TOD deed
 - ◇ A legal description of the real estate
 - ◇ A real estate transfer tax declaration form (PT-61)
- ❖ The personal representative of the deceased record owner's estate must provide each beneficiary with notice of the TOD deed.
- ❖ The prior requirement that the affidavit be recorded within nine months has been removed.
- ❖ The bill also clarifies various responsibilities of the estate, including the payment of taxes, liens, and related obligations.

In response to these new requirements, the Authority is updating the GSCCCA eFile Portal



(<https://efile.gsccca.org>) to include a new instrument type: "Deed – TOD Beneficiary Affidavit," which will require a PT-61. These updates are intended to reduce confusion for filers and help clerks' offices process TOD affidavits more efficiently. ■

SB 489 affects Probate Courts

Senate Bill 489 introduces changes affecting the Probate Judges Retirement Fund and the collection and allocation of certain Probate Court-related fees.

Effective July 1, 2027, members of the Probate Judges Retirement Fund will be required to pay monthly dues ranging from \$105 to \$150, as determined by the Board of Commissioners. These dues will cease after 30 years of contributions. While specific to probate judges, this change reflects a broader legislative focus on the long-term sustainability of judicial retirement systems.

SB 489 increases the Probate Judges Retirement Fund assessment for the following:

- ❖ Marriage License Fees: Increased from 20% to 25%
- ❖ Civil Filing Fees: Increased from \$2 to \$5
- ❖ Criminal Fees: Increased from \$3 to \$5
- ❖ Bond Forfeitures: Increased from \$3 to \$5

As with other legislative changes affecting court operations, the Authority will continue to monitor developments and provide guidance as needed. ■



Kristin Hall named Clerk of the Year

Congratulations to Emanuel County Superior Court Clerk Kristin C. Hall, who was named the Stetson F. Bennett Superior Court Clerk of the Year at the Superior Court Clerks' Association of Georgia annual banquet held on St. Simons Island. The award is the highest honor bestowed by the Association and is awarded only once in a clerk's career based on peer nomination and selection.



Hall (on right) poses with fellow award finalists Erica L. Woodford, Esq. (Bibb County) and Rita Harkins (Lumpkin County)



Established in 1985 and named for longtime Wayne County Clerk Stetson F. Bennett, the award recognizes outstanding dedication and service among Georgia's clerks of Superior Court. Since its inception, only 41 clerks, now including Hall, have received the honor.

First elected in 2012, Hall is widely recognized for her leadership and service both locally and statewide. She currently serves as vice president of the Council of Superior Court Clerks of Georgia and, in 2024, was named the District 8 Clerk of the Year. Last year, she was a finalist for the statewide award and a co-recipient

of the ÉCLAT award, an honor bestowed by her peers for exceptional commitment and service to the clerk community.

"Kristin is one of the smartest and hardest-working clerks of Superior Court in Georgia," said former longtime Liberty County Superior Court Clerk and past Clerks' Authority Chairman F. Barry Wilkes. "She has become one of the state's leading

voices in court technology and records management, and clerks across Georgia regularly seek her guidance."

Fannin County Superior Court Clerk and Conference Chair Dana Chastain added, "Kristin is so deserving of this prestigious honor. She is highly respected among her peers, dedicated, dependable, and always has the best interest of all clerks at heart."

A lifelong Emanuel County resident, Hall is a graduate of the University of Georgia and earned her master's in public administration in 2023. Now serving her fourth term, she remains committed to serving both her community and fellow clerks across the state.

In response to being recognized, Hall said: "While the award can only be received once, the work doesn't end [there]. Whether it is the work I do in Emanuel County with my amazing staff and fellow county public servants or the work I do for clerks on the statewide level, my commitment to service and dedication for our citizens will not change. My desire every day is that Emanuel County has a clerk's office they are proud of."

The Authority extends its congratulations to Kristin Hall on this well-deserved honor. ■



Pictured above, Hall with Barry Wilkes and, to the left, with her husband Mitch, and their kids Camden, Brooks, and Ivy, who surprised her by attending the awards banquet

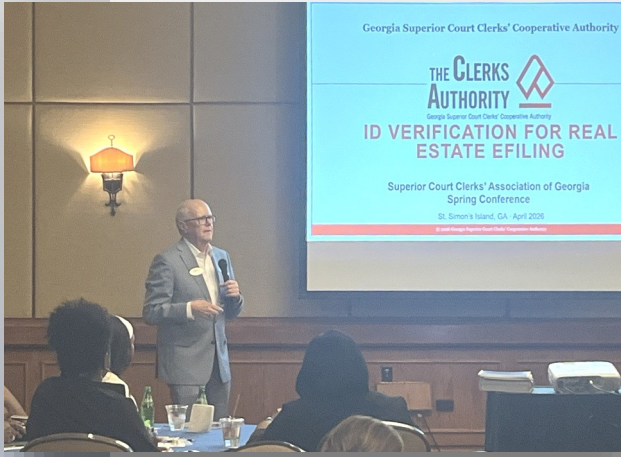


Authority presents at Clerks' Spring Conference

At the 2026 Clerks' Spring Conference, recently held on St. Simons Island, the Authority provided certificate training on fines and fees, as well as disaster recovery and records management.

The disaster recovery program focused on practical strategies for preparing for and responding to emergencies affecting court operations and records, including testing recovery plans, strengthening preparedness efforts, and identifying weaknesses before a disaster occurs. Attendees also participated in interactive exercises simulating disaster response scenarios and stress testing recovery plans in real time. Additional sessions addressed vendor and purchasing considerations, the financial impact of inadequate planning, and the growing importance of cybersecurity in protecting court records and systems.

Authority staff also conducted training sessions on ID verification for real estate eFiling, the new email and password policy, and technology and employees from a human resources perspective. In addition, attendees received a



Communications Director & Compliance Officer Mike Smith covered ID verification for real estate eFiling.

live demonstration of the new eFile Scanning feature. The Authority also hosted a retreat room that provided refreshments and an opportunity to share information and answer questions about Authority programs and services.

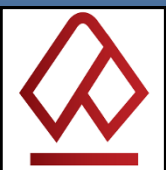
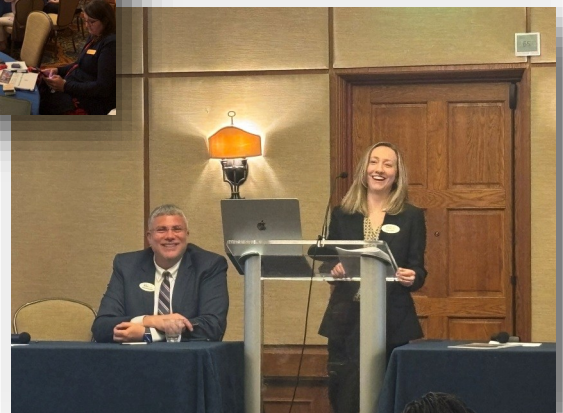
All Authority presentations from the conference are available at the Clerk Resource Center under *Conference Materials*. ■



Systems Manager Eric Bolton discussed the new email and password policy with the group.



Director of Product Management Richard McPhaul and Director of Business Operations Sarah Leary presented a session on technology and employees from a human resources perspective. The program was designed to increase awareness of emerging technology and the possibility that employees and/or members of the public may be recording interactions at any time.



Much training available for remainder of 2026

The Authority's 2026 training program has been well received, with numerous educational opportunities still available throughout the remainder of the year. All training programs are open and free of charge to Superior Court clerks, their staff, and vendors. Brief program descriptions are provided below, and the remaining training dates appear in the box to the right.

In-person classes

In-person, classroom training is being offered on the Real Estate Indexing Standards at two more locations: Athens and Hamilton. Each class is three hours in length and will be hosted by the local Superior Court clerk. A description of the program content follows. To register for one of these classes, go to www.gsccca.org/training.

Real Estate Indexing Standards — This classroom training is designed for both new and experienced indexers. The course offers a comprehensive review of the GSCCCA statewide indexing standards, including:

- ❖ The purpose of indexing standards and the difference between the local index and the statewide GSCCCA index
- ❖ Extracting and indexing instrument types, party names, property data, cross indexing, and using the general description field
- ❖ A review of allowable characters, required abbreviations, and guidance on indexing numbers and complex instruments, including government names
- ❖ A step-by-step walkthrough of the indexing process from start to finish

2026 Training Schedule

In-person classes

August 14	Athens	Real Estate Indexing Standards
October 8	Hamilton	Real Estate Indexing Standards

Webinars

June 9	Fines and Fees
June 18	Good-From Dates, Good-Thru Dates (New)
July 16	Outlook 101 (New)
July 21	Authority ACH 101 (Newly revamped)
July 24	ePay
August 4	Authority Emails—Point of Contact (New)
August 11	Pending Lien Search
Sept. 9	Good-From Dates, Good-Thru Dates (New)
September 10	Fines and Fees
September 15	Navigating eLearn and Training (New)
September 17	Common Indexing Transmission Errors (New)
September 30	FANS (New)
October 1	Common Indexing Transmission Errors (New)
October 6	Navigating eLearn and Training (New)
October 29	Pending Lien Search
November 3	eFile 101
November 5	Outlook 101 (New)

Participants should come prepared with questions for Authority staff and fellow clerks.

Webinars

Seventeen webinars, covering eleven different subjects, remain on the 2026 schedule. Dates are listed above and descriptions follow. To register for a webinar, go to www.gsccca.org/training.

Authority ACH 101 & Accounting Tips (ACH Opportunities) — Did you know the Clerks' Authority offers ACH payment options for Notary Online Mail-In Renewals, eCert, eFile, and Print and Image disbursements? This newly updated, one-hour webinar explains how to enroll in or update ACH information, manage changes to existing accounts, and efficiently track multiple daily ACH deposits. Participants will also receive practical accounting tips and recommended best practices for reconciling and monitoring ACH transactions.

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Much training available — Cont. from Page 9

Authority Emails—Point of Contact — This new 30-minute webinar provides an overview of the Authority’s group email addresses designed to support clerks. Participants will learn which contact to use for specific services and products, ensuring questions and requests are directed to the appropriate team for timely assistance.

Common Indexing Transmission Errors — This new 30-minute webinar reviews the most common indexing transmission errors identified in deed, lien, and plat index data submissions. Participants will gain a clear understanding of critical and non-critical errors, what these errors mean, and how they can impact good-through dates. The session will also provide practical guidance on mitigating errors and implementing strategies to prevent rejections.

eFile 101 — Designed for both new and experienced eFile court personnel, this one-hour webinar provides a comprehensive overview of the GSCCCA eFile Portal, with a focus on maximizing the use of available online resources. Participants will learn how to set up and manage accounts, navigate both the current and archive dashboards, and view Real Estate and UCC eFilings. The session also highlights how to effectively use the Clerk Guide, Filer Guide, and ID Verification Guide to research and resolve questions or concerns.

ePay — This 30-minute webinar introduces ePay, a fast and convenient method for submitting ACH payments for UCC, Real Estate, and Notary fees. Participants will receive a guided walkthrough of the ePay Portal, including how to navigate the system, edit and manage the digital wallet, and view and pay outstanding invoices efficiently.

FANS — This new 30-minute webinar provides an overview of FANS (Filing Activity Notification System), explaining how the system works and how it supports property record monitoring. The session also equips clerks’ offices with practical tools and guidance to help educate constituents on using this service as a proactive measure to help combat deed fraud.

Fines and Fees — This one-hour webinar provides a high-level overview of fines and fees and offers practical guidance on using the

CourtTRAX.org system for all F&F-related inquiries. The session includes a review of reporting requirements, including all funds remitted or reported to the Authority, an overview of CourtTRAX.org and its latest enhancements, and answers to frequently asked questions.

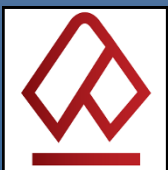
Good-From Dates, Good-Thru Dates — This new one-hour webinar provides a clear overview of how good-from and good-thru dates function within the statewide index, while also emphasizing the importance of maintaining accurate date information. Participants will learn the purpose of these dates, how they reflect the completeness of a county’s index data, and how to monitor their status using available GSCCCA resources. The session also covers PMG monthly alerts and demonstrates how to check date status using the Program Status Report.

Navigating eLearn and Training — This new 30-minute webinar provides an overview of the Authority’s Learning Management System platforms, eLearn and Training. Participants will learn what each platform offers, how to navigate the systems, and how to utilize them for both office and public use. The session also covers content search functions to help users efficiently locate the training resources they need.

Outlook 101 — This 30-minute introductory webinar will help participants make the most of Microsoft Outlook’s features. The session covers setting up and managing “Out of Office” replies, creating and customizing email signatures, exploring different email view options, and accessing Outlook via both the web and the app. Participants will also learn strategies for organizing their inbox using folders, subfolders, archiving, and rules, as well as how to efficiently use the address book and distribution lists for clerks, circuits, and districts.

Pending Lien Search — This one-hour webinar provides guidance on managing state tax lien eFilings within the lien search process. Participants will learn how to

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Much training available — Cont. from Page 10

identify and remove state tax lien eFilings that should no longer remain in the pending lien search.

Online courses

In addition to in-person classes and webinars, the Authority continues to provide its popular and widely utilized online training courses via its eLearn website.

Courses include:

- ❖ CourtTRAX.org
- ❖ eCertification Portal
- ❖ ePay Portal
- ❖ GSCCCA Fines & Fees – Introduction
- ❖ GSCCCA Indexing Standards

- ❖ GSCCCA Indexing Standards – Extended
- ❖ GSCCCA Indexing Standards – Common Mistakes
- ❖ Notary Online
- ❖ Notary Online – Mail-In Renewals
- ❖ Notary Public
- ❖ UCC
- ❖ UCC eFile

Courses are available 24/7 making training completely flexible. To learn more about or register for one of these online training options, please go to <https://eLearn.gsccca.org>.

With questions regarding any of the Authority’s 2026 training opportunities, email training@gsccca.org. ■

Host Notary Public class or webinar

The Authority continues to receive very positive feedback from attendees of its Notary Public classes. Hosted by Superior Court clerks and offered free of charge to their constituents, the training is available either in-person or as a webinar through the Zoom platform.

The classes are conducted by Communications Director & Compliance Officer Mike Smith and coordinated by Training & Education Manager Greg Hummel. The program covers the duties of a notary public, best practices, Georgia notary law, and real-life examples of the “dos and don’ts” of being a competent Georgia notary,

while also providing time for audience questions.

Offering this training provides clerks

with positive community exposure, while delivering a valuable public service to their constituents. The photos are from a recent class hosted by Rockdale County Superior Court Clerk Janice Morris, which drew 140 attendees.

