

GSCCCA Update

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An update on the activities of the Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Cooperative Authority

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Wireless networking initiative launched

In a continuing effort to support Superior Court clerks in their critical work, the Clerks' Authority has launched a statewide wireless networking initiative — a major step forward in modernizing courthouse technology and enhancing connectivity across Georgia. The new service will provide clerks and their staff with secure, high-speed wireless access within their offices, offering greater flexibility, mobility, and efficiency in daily operations.

This exciting development builds on several years of major infrastructure upgrades completed by the Authority. Earlier this year, the Authority successfully concluded a multi-year project to upgrade all Authority-provided internet circuits at the counties. Each county now benefits from at least a 100Mb circuit, ensuring faster and more reliable connections for the applications and services clerks rely on every day.

While those county upgrades were underway, the Authority also began modernizing its core networking infrastructure at its data centers. These enhancements — which are now 95% complete — include switch upgrades to reduce processing times for user requests and firewall upgrades to strengthen network security and protect sensitive data. The project remains on track for completion by the end of the calendar year.

With those foundational improvements nearly finished, the Au-

Continued on Page 5



Table of Contents

Wireless networking initiative launched	Pages 1, 5
October board meeting review	Pages 2-4
Did you know ...	Page 4
Authority presents at COAG conference	Page 5
Authority to introduce new scanning feature	Page 6
Protective order forms updated	Page 6
Congratulations to 2025 ÉCLAT recipients	Page 7-8
Walker honored as 2024 ÉCLAT recipient	Pages 8
2026 training program to be finalized soon	Page 9
Chatham County opens new courthouse	Page 9

October board meeting review

The Authority Board met on October 8 for its quarterly meeting. Following is a summary of the reports and actions of the meeting.

General Business

The minutes of the July 9 scheduled Board meeting were approved.

Will Derzis, CPA, from Mauldin & Jenkins, presented the results of the 2025 annual audit, which was completed on June 30, 2025. The audit received a clean opinion, with Derzis commending the Authority staff for their continued high performance and adherence to all accounting industry standards. The audit also included a compliance report. A financial analysis as of August 31, 2025 was also provided, noting that the Authority remains on sound financial footing.

Updated Protective Order Forms

The updated protective order forms were approved by the Board. (See more information on Page 6.)

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 October 6, 2025, the system had a total of 96,593 registered users. These users have submitted 209,648 requests for information related to names, addresses, and document types, resulting in 474,289 matches. The total number of registered users includes both active and inactive users. An account is considered inactive if the user does not log into FANS for a period of 12 months, and users are notified accordingly. A list of FANS' registered users by county was provided to board members.

UCC Project

The Authority received and processed 1,841 UCC Certified Search requests during the first quarter of FY 2026. These searches are conducted internally by Authority staff and involve an exact-name search of the UCC database,

with results transmitted directly to the requesting customer.

In Q1 FY 2026, there were 83,185 UCC filings statewide, averaging 27,728 monthly filings. The initial three months of the fiscal year experienced a notable increase in UCC filings, primarily driven by a rise in UCC continuation statements. These continuations were necessary to extend the effectiveness of UCC financing statements filed in 2020, which are linked to funds distributed through federal COVID assistance programs. This surge in filings is already beginning to decline, with the expectation that levels will return to historical norms in the near future.

Fines & Fees Division

The number of non-compliant courts has remained consistent since the previous board meeting in July. To address this issue, the Authority conducts audits of submitted reports and contacts the courts when discrepancies are identified. The Fines & Fees staff continues to collaborate effectively with these courts to facilitate compliance.

In terms of financial performance, collections have exceeded projections when compared to FY 2025.

Regarding training initiatives, this year's training classes have received positive feedback. Sessions were conducted at three different locations, with an additional training opportunity scheduled at the Authority office. Furthermore, specialized classes were offered for mandatory Municipal Court clerk training, supplemented by individualized training sessions for clerks in Banks and Henry counties. Additionally, four webinars focused on Courtrax enhancements were successfully held.

Training & Outreach

It was reported that Authority training offered in 2025 has received positive feedback, including *Fines & Fees*, *Real Estate Deed Indexing*, and *Notary Public* classes.

Continued on Page 3



Board meeting review — Cont. from Page 2

The Authority's online training platform, eLearn, continues to see significant engagement from clerks and the public. As of September 30, 2025, there were 118,742 active users regis-

tered on the site, with 114,930 users accessing the Notary Public course. At the time of this report, 51 clerks and deputy clerks had successfully passed the Indexing Certification exam.

Furthermore, the Authority played an

active role at the 2025 Fall COAG Conference, where staff presented on a variety of relevant topics. (See more information on Page 5.)

Electronic Document Certification (eCert) Program

At present, 105 counties are participating in the eCert Program, with an additional three counties in the testing or training phase. As of October 1, 2025, participating counties have received 249,458 electronic certified document requests.

Additionally, 89 counties are utilizing the Regular Copies feature, with six counties added since the July board meeting. The Product Management Group conducts regular meetings to discuss, maintain, and address both internal and external suggestions for program improvement.

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

eFiling Project

Superior Court clerks are actively leveraging the eFiling initiatives provided by the Authority

to enhance public service. Currently, 153 clerks participate in UCC eFiling, with 135 mandating eFiling as the sole method of filing. Additionally, 120 clerks utilize the auto-numbering feature. In the first quarter of FY 2026, a total of 20,262 UCCs were eFiled. To date, seven counties are utilizing the UCC eFile API through their local vendors.

For Real Estate eFiling, all 159 clerks fully comply with statutory requirements by accepting all document types electronically, with 148 counties participating in the estimated fee process.

The online notary public application process currently has 154 participating clerks, with 50 allowing Mail-in Renewals (MIR).

eFile System Certification

The eFile System Certification Project commenced in January 2022 and is now complete. As of October 1, 2025, nine systems have achieved full certification. Each vendor has at least one certified system, which clerks can verify through their respective vendors.

On November 22, 2024, the Clerks' Authority initiated the eFile System Certification Update process in response to changes outlined in H.B. 1292. This update process required systems to complete tests demonstrating compliance with new requirements effective January 1, 2025, most notably the deprecation of "Participant IDs" for eFilings submitted on or after that date.

Voluntary Historical Deed Project

At present, 102 counties are participating in the Voluntary Historical Deed Re-Indexing Project. The statewide "good-from" date remains January 1, 1990. To date, nearly 5.9 million instruments have been released to production, with an additional 1.6 million currently in quarantine for review. As part of this project, 158 docket surveys were completed and 157 Indexing Directions were issued. To assist with the quarantined instruments, an additional quality assurance reviewer has been added.

Continued on Page 4



Board meeting review — Cont. from Page 3

1989-1987 Historical Deed Project

An update on the 1989-1987 Historical Deed Re-Indexing Project was provided. Although the project's completion date was June 30, 2025, it was not finalized before the associated contracts expired. As of October 3, 2025, vendor reports estimate the project encompasses approximately 3.2 million instruments, with 2,935,701 instruments successfully released from quarantine to date. The total estimated cost for the three-year project is \$10,301,959.

Currently, \$7,037,224.50 has been disbursed or is payable to clerks, and \$1,782,357 has been paid to vendors, for a total of \$8,819,581.50 expended on the project thus far.

Archival Services

In an update on the Authority's archival services, it was reported that there are currently 158 active counties participating in the VaultTek Online Archive Program. This service allows clerks to back up any and all files with the Authority at no cost. Since 2008, there have been 252 data restores, involving a total of 5 TB of data. In the first quarter of FY 2026, 19.38 TB of data was securely backed up for clerks.

The Virtual Microfilm (VMF) storage currently contains approximately 334,000,000 images, including deed, lien, and plat images. Notable highlights for VaultTek in Q1 include:

- ◆ Four restore requests managed in the past quarter.
 - ◇ Two requests were due to human error, involving the accidental overwriting of images in a deed book.
 - ◇ Two requests resulted from a server crash and subsequent server replacement.
- ◆ Over 2.1 million files totaling more than 261 GB of data were restored to clerk offices this past quarter.
- ◆ Equipment was replaced or upgraded in five counties.
- ◆ A VMF webinar training session was held in September.

Notary & Authentications Division

The total number of notary commissions issued in Q1 FY 2026 was 12,291, reflecting a 4.6% increase compared to the first quarter of FY 2025.

In the first quarter of FY 2026, there was a 15.6% increase in apostilles issued, totaling 15,551, which is the second highest number issued ever. The top five destination countries for these apostilles are South Korea (ROK), Mexico, India, Colombia, and Spain. Additionally, Honduras and Italy have shown significant increases in apostille requests.

Upcoming Board Meetings

Board meetings are scheduled for the following 2026 dates:

- ❖ January 14
- ❖ April 15
- ❖ July 8
- ❖ October 21 ■

Did you know ...

- ❖ The Clerks' Authority has almost 6 million instruments available on gsccca.org from voluntary historical deed and plat projects.
- ❖ 105 counties are participating in the Authority's Electronic Document Certification (eCert) Program, which has over 180,000 processed requests.
- ❖ Counties can now pay Real Estate, UCC, and Notary fees with ACH payments through the Authority's ePay (epay.gsccca.org) system.
- ❖ 153 clerks' offices offer UCC eFiling, with 135 of those mandating that UCCs be eFiled.
- ❖ 334,000,000 deed, lien, and plat images have been stored and protected through Virtual Microfilm (VMF).
- ❖ Since 2008, the Authority has processed 252 requests from clerks to restore data.



Wireless networking initiative launched — Cont. from Page 1

thority has shifted focus to upgrading network equipment at the county level. Old switches are being replaced with new hardware that supports faster local network speeds, provides improved insight into network traffic for better troubleshooting, and enables the delivery of wireless networking as a service.

As of October 30, 2025, switches have been replaced in 11 counties, and wireless networking has already been implemented in six. The Authority plans to deploy the new equipment statewide by the end of 2026. To meet this

goal, the rollout has been divided into 10 phases, with scheduling for equipment replacement visits beginning this month.

The addition of wireless networking marks a significant milestone for the Clerks' Authority. By expanding mobility and ensuring secure, high-speed access to essential systems, the Authority continues its mission to provide innovative technology solutions that help clerks serve the public efficiently and effectively. ■



Authority presents at COAG conference

The 2025 Fall COAG Conference was recently held and proved to be a great success! A team from the Clerks' Authority attended the event in Savannah, demonstrating the organization's continued dedication to supporting Superior Court clerks across the state.

At the conference, the Authority provided a room exclusively for clerks and their staff, ensuring personalized, on-site assistance throughout the program. Additionally, Authority team members conducted a series of presentations covering timely and practical topics, including:

- H.B. 199
- Image API bridge and image compensation
- eFile scanning
- H.B. 177
- County wireless updates
- Equipment replacement
- Vendor certification (vendor checklist)
- Passwords and multi-factor authentication (social responsibility)
- 2026 training schedule

The conference offered an excellent opportunity for the Authority to share the latest updates, highlight ongoing initiatives, and preview upcoming projects planned for 2026. All Authority presentations from the conference are available at the Clerk Resource Center under Conference Materials.



Authority to introduce new scanning feature

The Clerks' Authority is excited to announce the upcoming launch of a scanning option to select search terminals in Superior Court clerks' offices around the state. This new feature will transform these terminals into a full eFile kiosk, enabling filers to register for an account, verify their identity using a web camera, and scan documents directly from the website while filing. This improvement is designed to enable a seamless eFiling experience in Superior Court clerks' offices, making the filing process faster, easier, and more efficient.

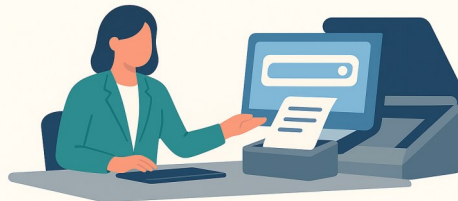
This new scanning capability will be limited to specified search terminals equipped with GSCCCA-supported scanners. These are the same terminals currently used for web camera identity verification. To enable scanning, each

terminal will require a lightweight desktop application to be installed. This application securely connects the eFile website with the scanner hardware. The eFile website will

automatically detect whether the application is installed; if it is not, the new scanning features will simply not appear on that terminal.

The project is currently in active development and is expected

to be completed by the end of 2025. The rollout will begin in late 2025 and continue into early 2026, following a schedule similar to the web camera deployment. Timing will vary by county based on the technical environment and readiness. ■



Protective order forms updated

House Bill 177, passed during the 2025 legislative session, expands protective measures by allowing household pets to be included in both family violence and dating violence protective orders. In response, the Council of Superior Court Judges has released updated forms to reflect the new statutory requirements. These revisions were approved by the Authority Board of Directors at its October meeting.

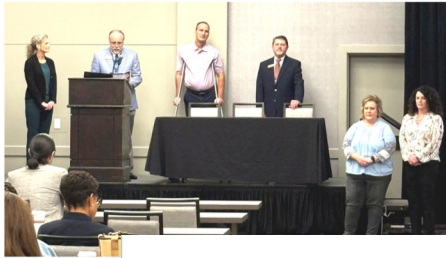
The review process is still underway, with recent approval from the Georgia Crime Information Center, and final approval from the Georgia Supreme Court still outstanding. Once all approvals are secured, the following updated forms will be released:

- ❖ SC-15 Family Violence Ex Parte Protective Order
- ❖ SC-16 Family Violence Twelve Month Protective Order
- ❖ SC-22 Family Violence Three Year/Permanent Protective Order
- ❖ SC-26 Petition for Temporary Protective Order
- ❖ SC-28 Petition for Dating Violence Temporary Protective Order
- ❖ SC-29 Dating Violence Ex Parte Protective Order
- ❖ SC-30 Dating Violence Twelve Month Protective Order



Congratulations to 2025 ÉCLAT recipients

Congratulations to the 2025 ÉCLAT recipients: **Tracy H. Brown**, Catoosa County Superior Court Clerk, and **Kristin C. Hall**, Emanuel County Superior Court Clerk. The awards ceremony was held during the COAG Fall Conference in Savannah.



The **ÉCLAT** (pronounced *eh-clah*) Award was established in 2005 by the Superior Court Clerks' Association of Georgia to recognize Superior Court clerks for *Exceptional Commitment, Leadership, Accomplishment, and Teamwork*. In 2019, the award was renamed the **F. Barry Wilkes ÉCLAT**

Award to honor Wilkes' service and commitment to the Superior Court clerk community. Wilkes is a past chairman of the Clerks' Authority and the long-time, now-retired, Superior Court clerk of Liberty County.

At the ceremony, Dana Chastain, Fannin County Superior Court Clerk, introduced the ÉCLAT Board, followed by Clerks' Authority Chairman Greg Allen, Forsyth County Superior Court Clerk, who shared why Tracy and Kristin were so deserving of being honored by their peers.

Over the past two years, Superior Court Clerks across Georgia have faced significant challenges in implementing Senate Bill 401, which imposed new requirements for Juvenile Court reporting and compliance. Thanks to the extraordinary leadership of Tracy and Kristin, clerks not only met those challenges

but also strengthened their role as trusted partners in the judicial process.

Together, Tracy and Kristin worked tirelessly with case management vendors, legislators, and judges to ensure data was captured accurately and transmitted on time. They pressed for clarity on what "compliance" truly meant under S.B. 401, and when others faltered, they personally ensured lawmakers received reliable, clerk-sourced data. Their efforts not only resolved immediate problems but also forged lasting relationships with the Juvenile Judges Council, legislators, and vendors. As one colleague noted:

"They did not wait on [others] to fail once again... they led us in the charge of submitting our own data... by gathering information from our clerk body, compiling it, and hand delivering it to legislators and judges."

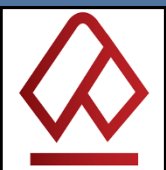
Dividing the work strategically, Tracy focused on educating local judges and coordinating with vendors on transmitting data, while Kristin engaged directly with the Juvenile Judges Council, lawmakers, and other system partners. Together, they elevated the role of clerks as trusted experts, ensuring that clerks now have a seat at the table in the S.B. 401 process and are recognized by legislators and judges as vital resources.

Beyond their joint leadership, each honoree brings an exceptional record of individual service.

A lifelong resident of Catoosa County, **Tracy** worked in the Superior Court clerk's office for nearly two decades before being elected clerk in 2013. From day one, she has maintained an open-door policy, believing that serving the public and ensuring access to county records is the most important part of her role. She prides herself on "always being there to help." One colleague praised her "dedication and hard work," noting that she embodies the very essence of the ÉCLAT: exceptional commitment, leadership, accomplishment, and teamwork.

Kristin, a lifelong resident of Emanuel County and graduate of the University of Georgia, was elected clerk in 2012. She has described the posi-

Continued on Page 8



2025 ÉCLAT — Cont. from Page 7

tion as humbling, challenging, and rewarding: “Every day presents something new, but we try to be that positive force for the people we are serving.”

In 2024, she was named Clerk of the Year for Judicial District 8. Colleagues have highlighted her quiet yet firm leadership: “She met with the bill’s sponsor and successfully bridged an

avalanche of misinformation... Her knowledge, demeanor, and unwavering commitment to her fellow clerks has been an outstanding example of leadership and professionalism.”

Congratulations, Tracy and Kristin, on this well-deserved honor! ■

Walker honored as 2024 ÉCLAT recipient

It took an extra year, but **Rhett Walker**, Dodge County Superior Court Clerk, finally received his **2024 ÉCLAT Award**. Because Rhett was unable to attend last year’s ceremony, the award had been held — until now. Thanks to Dana Chastain, Fannin County Superior Court Clerk, that wait came to an end. While streaming the 2025 COAG Fall Conference from the Dodge County Courthouse, Dana personally presented Rhett with his well-deserved award, recognizing more than two decades of dedicated leadership and selfless service to his community, his staff, his judicial team, and his fellow clerks.

Raised in Dodge County, Rhett joined the U.S. Coast Guard after high school, where he served three years on an ice breaker traveling to Antarctica. Following his service, he returned home to manage the family farm full-time until his election as clerk in 2000. Rhett still oversees the cattle operation on the farm, earning recognition as the Eastman Rotary Club’s Farmer of the Year in 2023. His commitment to community extends to his work with the Heart of Georgia Community Action Council, an organization which works to uplift individuals and families in Middle Georgia by offering a wide range of essential services.

A steadfast advocate for his peers, Rhett currently serves as chairman of the Georgia Superior Court Clerks’ Association Retirement Board. In nominating him for the ÉCLAT, one clerk noted that “under Rhett’s leadership, our retirement is sound and secure.” Previously, Rhett served on the Board of Directors for the Georgia Superior Court Clerks’ Cooperative Authority during the pivotal development and implementation of the Authority’s eFiling system for UCC and real estate documents. In 2021, Rhett was named 8th District Clerk of the Year.

As one appreciative clerk put it: “For 24 plus years, Rhett has been an essential part of the clerks of Superior Court working alongside and behind the scenes for all clerks in Georgia locally and on the state level. His hard work, determination, and dedication to this organization does not go unnoticed.”

Congratulations, Rhett, for this well-earned and long-awaited honor!



2026 training program to be finalized soon

Scheduling for the Authority's 2026 training program is nearly complete with a variety of subjects to be covered. All training is open and free-of-charge to Superior Court clerks, their employees, and vendors.

In-person classes

In-person, classroom training will be offered on the Real Estate Indexing Standards at multiple locations across the state.

Webinars

A number of webinars will be offered on timely topics including:

- ❖ Authority Emails (Point of Contact)
- ❖ eFile 101
- ❖ eFile Vendor (eFile from a vendor's perspective – calls, notifications, warning vs. exception response, and more)
- ❖ ePay

- ❖ Pending Lien Search – Resolution
- ❖ Outlook 101
- ❖ FANS
- ❖ Navigating eLearn and Training Sites
- ❖ Authority ACH 101 and Accounting Tips (ACH opportunities)
- ❖ Good-Through Dates and Good-From Dates
- ❖ Common Indexing Transmission Errors
- ❖ Protective Orders – Form Changes

Online courses

Additionally, the Authority will continue to provide its popular and widely utilized online training courses via its eLearn website.

The complete 2026 schedule with dates and program descriptions will be available soon. For more information, email training@gsccca.org. ■

Chatham County opens new courthouse

Chatham County Superior Court Clerk and Authority Board Member Tammie Mosley welcomed fellow clerks and members of the Authority staff for a tour of the recently opened Gadsden Courthouse in Savannah. The new courthouse honors Judge Eugene H. Gadsden, the first African American judge in Chatham County. The former courthouse — fondly remembered for its “rickety elevators” — is named the Coleman Courthouse, recognizing Sen. J. Tom Coleman Jr., a dedicated public servant who made lasting contributions to Chatham County. Pictured top left are Authority Chairman Greg Allen, Authority Executive Director Rachel Rice, and Tammie Mosley. Pictured below are Tammie, Greg, Fulton County Superior Court Clerk Ché Alexander, and Gwinnett County Superior Court Clerk Tiana Garner.

