



Georgia Commission on Dispute Resolution Meeting (Virtual)
Wednesday, February 12, 2025
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Via Zoom

AGENDA

- I. Welcome: Chief Judge M. Cindy Morris
- II. Roll call
- III. Meeting Minutes from December 4, 2024: *Approved via email*
- IV. Standing Committee Reports:
 - a. Budget and Personnel Committee: Judge Carrie B. Markham
 - b. Ethics Committee: Chief Presiding Judge Renata Turner
 - c. Training and Credentials Committee: Ms. Nicole Hull & Hon. Rebecca Crumrine Rieder
 - d. Outreach Committee: Mr. Hal Gray
 - e. DV Rules Committee: Ms. Peggy Wilson
- V. GODR Report: Ms. Tracy Johnson & Ms. Karlie Sahs
 - a. 2025 Program Directors' Conference: February 26-28
 - b. Strategic Projects List
 - c. Upcoming conferences:
 1. Georgia Council of Court Administrators, March 24-26
 2. Council of Probate Court Judges, April 18
- VI. New Business
- VII. Chairman's Report: Chief Judge Morris
- VIII. Old Business
- IX. 2025 Commission Dates: May 14 (*in person*); August 20 (*virtual*); December 10 (*in person*)
- X. Executive Session
- XI. Adjournment



Georgia Commission on Dispute Resolution

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

Chair M. Cindy Morris called the meeting to order. In addition to Chief Judge Morris, Commission members and Office staff present were:

Judge Carrie B. Markham, Chair-Elect; N. Staten Bitting Jr., Esq., Hon. Clarence Cuthpert Jr.; Judge Quinn Kasper; Representative Rob Leverett; Patrick T. O'Connor, Esq.; Judge Pandora E. Palmer; Senior Judge Jack Partain; Judge Vic Reynolds; Peggy Roth; Chief Judge Renata D. Turner; Randall Weiland; and Peggy McCoy Wilson.

Tracy B. Johnson, Executive Director, and Karlie A. Sahs, Deputy Director.

JC/AOC staff members present were Carole Griffith, Staff Attorney; Kristy King, I.T. Program Manager; and Kriste Pope, Information Systems Analyst.

The following guests observed the meeting virtually: Lynn Ansley, 7th JAD ADR Program; TJ BeMent, 10th JAD; Vanessa Billings, Eastern Judicial Circuit ADR Program; Tiffany Bradford, Southern Judicial Circuit ADR Program; Rita Carroll, Carroll County ADR Program; Abby Carter, Gwinnett Judicial Circuit ADR Program; Melissa Heard, Justice Center of Atlanta; Melissa Hughes, Tifton Judicial Circuit ADR Program; Jim Hunter, Rome Mediation Group; Linda Jezerinac, Blue Ridge Circuit ADR Program; Rebecca Lew, Cobb County Superior Court ADR Program; Rob McNiff, University of Georgia School of Law; Jody Overcash, Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit; Liesl Owen, 6th JAD ADR Program; Bonnie Powell, Fulton County Landlord/Tenant Mediation Program; Danny Price, Rome Mediation Group; Carlene Redmond, Cobb County Juvenile Court; Tangela Richmond, Miles Mediation; Olivia Wilson-Rudder, DeKalb County Juvenile Court ADR Program; Kathleen Sterne, Esq., Clayton Judicial Circuit ADR Program; Lyndsey Walters, Cordele Judicial Circuit ADR Program; and Shannon Watts, Southern Judicial Circuit ADR Program.

I. Welcome

Chief Judge Morris called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call of GCDR Members

Chief Judge Morris asked Ms. Karlie Sahs to conduct the roll call of GCDR members.

III. Meeting Minutes from December 4, 2024: *Approved via email*

The minutes of the December 4 Commission meeting were approved via email vote on December 20, 2024.

IV. Standing Committee Reports:

a. Budget and Personnel Committee: Judge Carrie Markham

The most recent FY25 budget report was included in the meeting materials. Judge Markham noted that revenue is slightly higher than previous years, with expenditures on target. As of January 2025, 56% of the total budget has been spent, aligning with projections.

Nearly all the ADR Institute budget has been expended, with a few invoices pending. No further budgetary or personnel matters were noted.

b. Ethics Committee: Chief Judge Renata D. Turner

The Committee on Ethics last met on December 11, 2024.

Chief Judge Renata Turner noted that, at their last meeting, the Ethics Committee reviewed and dismissed one (1) complaint against a registered neutral. There are currently two (2) outstanding complaints – one which is currently in the preliminary stages of investigation, and another which is scheduled to be reviewed at the Committee's upcoming February meeting.

Also at the December 11 meeting, three (3) applications were reviewed and approved for registration. There are two (2) remaining applications currently under staff review.

There are no pending appeals.

The Ethics Committee will meet next on February 19, 2025.

c. Training and Credentials Committee: Ms. Nicole Hull & Hon. Rebecca Crumrine Rieder

The Committee on Training and Credentials last met on January 28, 2025.

Ms. Carole Griffith provided the report on behalf of the co-chairs. The Committee reviewed four (4) inactive reinstatement request, and the applicant was required to pay the reinstatement fee, complete a practicum, and review continuing education materials.

The Committee also reviewed a request to waive the training requirements for Probate Mediation training. The Committee denied this request, as the applicant's experience was not sufficient to replace the training otherwise received through a Probate Mediation training course. Thus, the applicant will be required to complete the training if they wish to register in the Probate Mediation category.

There are currently no outstanding appeals.

The Committee will meet next on March 11, 2025.

d. Outreach Committee: Mr. Randall Weiland

The Committee has not met since October 21, 2024, but anticipates a full agenda at its next meeting, informed by feedback from the Court ADR Program Directors' Conference on February 26-28, 2025.

The Committee will meet next on April 1, 2025.

e. Domestic Violence Rules Committee: Ms. Peggy McCoy Wilson

The Committee held its last annual meeting on September 18, 2024.

Ms. Wilson noted no new updates since the last meeting but highlighted upcoming discussions at the Program Directors' Conference as part of the ongoing DV Rules review. The Committee aims to gather input from key stakeholders to ensure the rules remain relevant and effective.

The 2025 DV Rules Committee has not yet scheduled their 2025 annual meeting.

V. GODR Report: Ms. Tracy Johnson & Ms. Karlie Sahs

a. 2025 Program Directors' Conference: February 26-28

The 2025 Program Directors' Conference will be held on February 26-28 at the Thompson Savannah Hotel. A copy of the conference agenda was included with the materials, and Ms. Johnson shared highlights of the programming.

b. Strategic Projects Update

Updates to the strategic projects are as follows:

1. **Data Collection:** GODR is continuing collaboration with JC/AOC Office of Research & Data Analysis to refine the data collection process and present current data analytics. Data is collected by calendar year; 2024 data collection began on January 13, 2025, and will continue through March 17, 2025. There will be a session on data collection at the 2025 Program Directors' Conference.

GODR and JC/AOC Research and IT divisions continue their work to determine the best methods for collecting data from court ADR programs which are not using ScheduleADR.

2. **Neutral Registration System:** Ms. Kristy King shared that Amber Range has been promoted to Court Tools manager, overseeing the Georgia Courts Registrar (GCR) support team, and her work will be fundamental in current improvements to customer support and process optimization. The GCR is adding an additional position to support the team, and candidates are in the process of being recruited.
3. **Court Program Support:** Since the December GCDR meeting, Ms. Johnson and Ms. Sahs visited the following programs: Cordele Judicial Circuit

(January 14); Augusta Judicial Circuit (January 30); Eastern Judicial Circuit (January 31); and Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit (February 6).

GODR also continues to field ongoing onboarding requests for ScheduleADR; onboarding for Cordele Judicial Circuit ADR program is scheduled for Friday, February 14, 2025.

4. **Expansion of Neutral Services & Juvenile Court ADR Programs:** no updates to report.
5. **GODR 2.0; Judicially Hosted Settlement Conference (JHSC)/Evaluative Processes; ADR Institute; and Program Director Conference:** updates were provided earlier in the meeting or during Executive Session.

c. Upcoming Conferences:

1. **Georgia Council of Court Administrators**
March 24-26, Callaway Gardens. Ms. Johnson and Ms. Sahs will attend. Ms. Johnson and Ms. Griffith will also serve as co-presenters.
2. **Council of Probate Court Judges**
April 17, Athens. Ms. Johnson, Ms. Ellie Lanier, Esq., and Chair-Elect Judge Carrie Markham will serve as panelists.

VI. New Business

There was no new business to report.

VII. Chairman's Report: Chief Judge Morris

Chief Judge Morris shared the new committee appointments: Senior Judge Jack Partain has been appointed to the Committee on Ethics; Judge Quinn Kasper and Peggy Roth have been appointed to both the Committee on Training & Credentials and the Outreach Committee.

Chief Judge Morris congratulated GCDR Member Patrick O'Connor on his contribution to the recent publication *My Baseball Story*.

Chief Judge Morris concluded the Chairman's Report by sharing her support for the new statewide case management system initiative and encouraged other stakeholders to learn facts about the project as well as how their court could benefit from its use. Ms. Johnson added that the goal is for ScheduleADR to seamlessly integrate with the case management system once developed, saving invaluable time and resources for court ADR programs utilizing both systems.

VIII. Old Business

There was no old business to report.

IX. 2025 Commission Dates: May 14 (in-person); August 20 (virtual); and December 10 (in-person)

The Commission's next meeting will be held in person at the State Bar of Georgia Conference Center on May 14, 2025. The August 20 meeting will be held virtually, and the December 10 meeting will take place in person in Dalton, with the location to be determined.

X. Executive Session

Chief Judge Morris excused all guests, and the Commission moved into Executive Session at approximately 2:20 p.m.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting concluded at approximately 2:56 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by Karlie A. Sahs and Tracy B. Johnson]

[Minutes approved via email March 28, 2025]