



Judicial Council of Georgia

Administrative Office of the Courts

Chief Justice Nels S.D. Peterson
Chair

Cynthia H. Clanton
Director

December 1, 2025

The Honorable Shondeana Crews Morris
Chief Judge
DeKalb Judicial Circuit
556 North McDonough Street, Suite 3047
Newnan, Georgia 30263

Re: The Judicial Council of Georgia American Rescue Plan Act Funding Award- CY2026

Dear Chief Judge Crews Morris,

On behalf of the Judicial Council of Georgia Ad Hoc Committee on American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA Committee), I am pleased to inform you that the DeKalb Judicial Circuit has been awarded \$ 40,448 for CY2026.

The effective date for the award begins on January 1, 2026, and will end September 30, 2026.

Attached are the CY2026 Grant Agreement outlining the responsibilities and expectations of both parties and the CY2026 approved budget. Please review and sign the Grant Agreement and return it within **ten** days of receipt. Upon acceptance of the award, as indicated by returning the signed agreement, the circuit will receive by email the instructions and budget reimbursement form to begin the reimbursement process. The agreement with the original signature may be mailed or emailed to both:

Kari Kitchens
Administrative Office of the Courts
244 Washington Street SW
Suite 300
Atlanta, Georgia 30334-5900
470.734.6655

kari.kitchens@georgiacourts.gov and arpa@georgiacourts.gov

244 Washington Street SW • Suite 300 • Atlanta, GA 30334
404-656-5171 • www.georgiacourts.gov

We continue to value the ongoing efforts employed in clearing your circuit's backlog of cases and applaud you for your superior service to the State of Georgia and the Judiciary.

As always, please feel free to reach out to let us know how we can support you during this grant process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Regina Hailey". The script is cursive and fluid.

Regina Hailey
ARPA Grants Manager
Judicial Council of Georgia / Administrative Office of the Court

Attachments: Grant Award Conditions and Restrictions
Grant Award Agreement
Approved Budget Form

Cc: LeNora Hawkins Ponzo via email to lhponzo@dekalbcountyga.gov
Charlyn Shepher via email to cshepherd@coweta.ga.gov
Will Simmons via email to wtsimmons@gmail.com

**JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF GEORGIA
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT GRANT AWARD
CONDITIONS AND RESTRICTIONS**

Judicial Circuit Name: Dekalb
Award Date: November 7, 2025

Section 1. Conditions

All the following conditions apply to the enclosed grant award:

- (a) Grant recipients shall comply with the conditions and restrictions in this attachment.
- (b) Grant recipients shall comply with all procedures and instructions detailed in the current *Overview and Instructions, Judicial Branch ARPA FAQs, Award Amendments and Budget Revision Policy, Audio-Visual Equipment Modernization Policy, and Use of Award Funds Policy* (incorporated herein by reference and posted under Quick Links at <https://jcaoc.georgiacourts.gov/arpa/>).
- (c) The ARPA grants awarded by the Judicial Council of Georgia Ad Hoc Committee on American Rescue Plan Act Funding (“ARPA Committee”) on November 7, 2025, are subject to audit and were awarded for eligible expenses *beginning on January 1, 2026, through September 30, 2026, only*.
- (d) Any portion of this award that is not expended by September 30, 2026, shall revert to the ARPA Committee on or before November 1, 2026.
- (e) *Grant recipients shall not submit a reimbursement request for any ineligible expenditure listed in Section 2 (b) of this attachment. Only the expenditures listed in Section 2 (a) of this attachment are currently authorized.*
- (f) If awarded funds for court-based mental health diversion services, recipient shall (for U.S. Treasury reporting purposes): (1) report the amount of the ARPA funds allocated to evidence-based interventions; and (2) report whether ARPA-funded activities are primarily serving a disproportionately impacted community. See Treasury’s [Compliance and Reporting Guidance](#), “Project Demographic Distribution” and “Use of Evidence,” pp. 27-28; 47; 50-51; 55 for details. *Such report shall be communicated monthly by letter accompanying the reimbursement requests for applicable expenditures.* EC 1.12; 31 CFR § 35.6 (b) (3) (i) (C).
- (g) If awarded funds for court-based substance use diversion services, recipient shall (for U.S. Treasury reporting purposes): (1) report the amount of the ARPA funds allocated to evidence-based interventions; and (2) report whether ARPA-funded activities are primarily serving a disproportionately impacted community. See Treasury’s [Compliance and Reporting Guidance](#), “Project Demographic Distribution” and “Use of Evidence,” pp. 27-28; 47; 50-51; 55 for details. *Such report shall be communicated monthly by letter accompanying the reimbursement requests for applicable expenditures.* EC 1.13; 31 CFR § 35.6 (b) (3) (i) (C).
- (h) If awarded funds for court-based eviction prevention and diversion services, recipient shall (for U.S. Treasury reporting purposes): (1) report the amount of the ARPA funds allocated to evidence-based interventions; and (2) report whether ARPA-funded activities are primarily serving a disproportionately impacted community. See Treasury’s [Compliance and Reporting Guidance](#), “Project Demographic Distribution” and “Use of Evidence,” pp. 27-28; 47; 50-51; 55 for details. *Such report shall be communicated monthly by letter accompanying the reimbursement requests for applicable expenditures.* ECs 2.2, 2.18; 31 CFR § 35.6 (b) (3) (ii) (A) (1), (5).

- (i) The enclosed grant award is subject to the following specific conditions: None.

Section 2. Restrictions

(a) Federally Eligible Uses Currently Authorized by the Executive Branch and the ARPA Committee

Only the following expenditures are currently authorized by the Executive Branch and the ARPA Committee:

(1) *Personnel.* Payroll costs for personnel responding to court case backlogs with a primary focus on serious violent felonies; backfilling positions requiring less experience to reassign more experienced staff to expedite the disposition of serious violent felony cases; or personnel administering the ARPA grant. *As used in this expenditure category only, “primary focus on serious violent felonies” means more than 50 percent of total personnel costs awarded in each calendar year under Application section (E) (1) must be dedicated to responding to serious violent felonies, as defined in OCGA § 17-10-6.1 (a).*

(2) *Court-based Eviction, Mental Health, or Substance Use Diversion.* Payroll costs for personnel performing court-based eviction, mental health, or substance use diversion services only if: (i) such services respond to case backlogs; and (ii) a subrecipient provides a *numerical* estimate to the AOC demonstrating that such services will conserve staff time and resources to respond to backlogs of serious violent felony cases, as defined in OCGA § 17-10-6.1 (a). *As used in these expenditure categories, “numerical” means containing one or more of the number symbols 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9; e.g., 20 hours of staff time per week, 18 percent of a judge’s caseload, or some other numerical measurement.*

(3) *Other Program Costs.* Reasonable and necessary costs to support a response to court case backlogs with a primary focus on cases involving serious violent felonies or to perform ARPA grant administration, as follows:

- (i) The purchase of necessary supplies and materials used by personnel funded by the ARPA grant;
- (ii) The purchase or rental of equipment used by personnel funded by the ARPA grant, including any reasonable and required license, basic operating or word processing software, or service needed to use such equipment;
- (iii) Travel costs of personnel and contractors funded by the ARPA grant traveling between counties in multi-county judicial circuits that are necessary to address the backlog in court cases with a primary focus on cases involving serious violent felonies;
- (iv) Rental of temporary space for personnel funded by the ARPA grant;
- (v) Printing, publication, media, or postage costs;
- (vi) Jury expenditures for the trial of cases that are part of the case backlog caused by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- (vii) Jury sequestration costs if necessary for jurors in serious violent felony cases;
- (viii) Continuing legal education and professional dues for law clerks, staff attorneys, and prosecutors funded by the ARPA grant, as required by the State Bar of Georgia to maintain a law license;
- (ix) Mandatory continuing judicial education for judges funded by the ARPA grant, as required by the Institute of Continuing Judicial Education and uniform court rules;
- (x) Contracts for professional services or per diem to respond to court case backlogs, including services provided by interpreters, senior judges, state paid county reimbursed (SPCR) prosecutors, and court reporters; or to perform grant administration;

- (xi) Mandatory training for victim assistance coordinators and victims' advocates funded by the ARPA grant, as required by law and the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council;
- (xii) Mandatory training for district attorney investigators funded by the ARPA grant, as required by law and the Peace Officer Standards and Training Council;
- (xiii) Audio-visual equipment modernization in *existing* courtrooms, the purchase and installation of which is subject to all applicable federal procurement requirements found in 2 CFR §§ 200.318-200.327 (see **FAQ 28.2** for detailed federal procurement guidance from OPB) and the **Audio-Visual Equipment Modernization Policy** (available under Quick Links at jcaoc.georgiacourts.gov/arpa);
- (xiv) Legal research software for ARPA-funded law clerks, staff attorneys, and prosecutors, the purchase of which is subject to all applicable federal procurement requirements found in 2 CFR §§ 200.318-200.327 (see **FAQ 28.2** for detailed federal procurement guidance from OPB);
- (xv) Digital evidence management software, the purchase of which is subject to all applicable federal procurement requirements found in 2 CFR §§ 200.318-200.327 (see **FAQ 28.2** for detailed federal procurement guidance from OPB); and
- (xvi) Other program costs necessary to address a court backlog caused or exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic with a primary focus on cases involving serious violent felonies may be approved by OPB at its sole discretion following a written request for approval by AOC prior to AOC's approval of said costs;
- (xvii) Contracts for services by a licensed psychologist or psychology doctoral student under the supervision of a licensed psychologist to conduct pre-trial psychological assessments as required by law or court order.

(b) Federally Eligible Uses Not Currently Authorized by the Executive Branch or the ARPA Committee

All the following federally eligible ARPA expenditure categories (ECs) *are not* currently authorized by the Executive Branch or the ARPA Committee:

- (1) Professional dues, continuing education, and training for staff (unless expressly authorized in Section 2 (a) (3) of this attachment) (ECs 3.5, 7.1; 31 CFR § 35.6 (b) (3) (ii) (E) (4); 87 Fed. Reg. 4,438 (Jan. 27, 2022) (Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200 Subpart E) applies to ARPA funds); 2 CFR § 200.473 ("The cost of training and education provided for employee development is allowable")).
- (2) Case management systems and software (EC 7.1; 31 CFR § 35.6 (b) (3) (ii) (E) (4); 87 Fed. Reg. 4,389 (Jan. 27, 2022) ("improvements to case management systems . . . are eligible").
- (3) Unauthorized software. Only the following software is currently authorized by OPB: (i) basic operating and word processing software; (ii) digital evidence management software; and (iii) legal research software for ARPA-funded staff attorneys and prosecutors. See **Overview and Instructions, Administrative Expenses Note #6** for special procurement rules for certain software.
- (4) ARPA grants to municipal courts (pursue ARPA funds from cities before contacting the ARPA Committee), public defenders, or conflict attorneys (request ARPA funds from [GPDC](#)).
- (5) COVID-19 testing (EC 1.2; 31 CFR § 35.6 (b) (3) (i) (A)). Contact the [Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency](#) (GEMA) for COVID-19 testing assistance.
- (6) The purchase of personal protective equipment (e.g., gloves, masks, and hand sanitizer) (EC 1.5; 31 CFR § 35.6 (b) (3) (i) (A)). Contact [GEMA](#) for personal protective equipment.

- (7) Expenditures to prevent COVID-19 in congregate settings (e.g., plexiglass, cleaning supplies or services) (EC 1.4; 31 CFR § 35.6 (b) (3) (i) (A)). Contact [GEMA](#) for assistance with supplies to prevent COVID-19 in congregate settings.
- (8) Payroll supplements, stipends, bonuses, “premium pay,” or any other payroll payments to staff that do not correspond to actual documented payroll time spent responding to case backlogs or performing ARPA grant administration. “Premium pay” is defined in 31 CFR §§ 35.3, 35.6 (c). EC 4.1.
- (9) Long-term infrastructure (i.e., capital) investments in public facilities, such as physical plant improvements, permanent adaptations to existing public buildings, or constructing new facilities to respond to the pandemic or its negative economic impacts (ECs 3.5, 7.1; 31 CFR § 35.6 (b) (3) (i) (A), (b) (3) (ii), (b) (4); 87 Fed. Reg. 4,389 (Jan. 27, 2022)). *Grant recipients should rent equipment (if possible, practical, and cost-effective) to avoid violating the prohibition on purchasing permanent infrastructure. See **Overview and Instructions, § 15; Audio-Visual Equipment Modernization Policy** for an exception for audio-visual equipment modernization projects in existing permanent courtrooms.*
- (10) Adding or upgrading a court’s broadband connection, including modernization of cybersecurity for existing or new broadband infrastructure (EC 5.19; 31 CFR § 35.6 (e) (2) (i)-(ii)).
- (11) Offsets to a reduction in government revenue due to the pandemic, which may be used to maintain existing infrastructure, build new infrastructure, or provide any government service, excluding contributions to a rainy-day fund (EC 6.1; 31 CFR § 35.6 (d); 87 Fed. Reg. 4,422-4,430 (Jan. 27, 2022)).
- (12) General modernization of cybersecurity not related to broadband upgrades, including hardware, related software, and protection of critical infrastructure (falls under the category of government revenue offsets) (EC 6.1; 31 CFR § 35.6 (d)). See 31 CFR § 35.6 (e) (2) (ii).



Judicial Council of Georgia

Administrative Office of the Courts

Chief Justice Nels S.D. Peterson
Chair

Cynthia H. Clanton
Director

Judicial Council of Georgia American Rescue Plan Act Grant Funding Calendar Year 2026 Grant Agreement

Award Name: 2026_ARPA_3Y024	
Recipient Name: DEKALB JUDICIAL CIRCUIT	
Award Amount: \$ 40,448	CFDA: 21.027
Grant Period: January 1, 2026 – September 31, 2026	Award Effective: January 1, 2026

With the acceptance of this award, you agree to administer this grant in compliance with your approved application, the grant budget, and the conditions and restrictions set forth in the grant package. Further, in accordance with Department of Treasury regulations 31 CFR Part 205, implementing the Cash Management Improvement Act, you agree to limit your request for reimbursement of federal funds to the minimum amount needed and to time the request in accordance with the actual, immediate requirements in carrying out programs funded through this award. Failure to adhere to these requirements may cause the suspension of grant funds.

Grantee Responsibilities:

Submit monthly reimbursement requests via email to the Administrative Office of the Courts to Kari.Kitchens@georgiacourts.gov and ARPA@georgiacourts.gov, by the 15th of each month. The monthly requests are to include invoice copies, payroll reports/time sheets, receipts, and, in some cases, check copies, general ledger reports, and additional documentation as requested for the prior month's expenditures.

AOC Responsibilities:

The AOC will review expense documentation for accuracy and completeness and submit the monthly requests for reimbursements to the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB). Upon reimbursement from OPB, the AOC will remit reimbursements to the grantees.

Acceptance of Terms and Conditions:

Signature and Title:

Date:

JUDICIAL BRANCH ARPA GRANT BUDGET TEMPLATE - see instructions at bottom

Submitted by: DeKalb Judicial Circuit

Budget Categories			Calendar Year 2026		Committee Approved Award \$40,448
Personnel Services	Salary	Quantity	Total	Revision	Revised Total Budget
Grant Administration and Clerical (include in application section (E) (6))					
	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
Total Grant Admin and Clerical Request	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
Personnel Directly Responding to Case Backlog (include in application section (E) (1))					
Senior Judges	\$ 10,000	1	\$ 100,000	\$ 59,552	\$ 40,448
	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
Total-Personnel Directly Responding to Case Backlog	\$ 100,000	0	\$ 100,000	\$ 59,552	\$ 40,448
Percentage of “Total-Personnel Directly Responding to Case Backlog” for CYs 2023-2025 Dedicated to Serious Violent Felonies					100%
Personnel Court-Based Mental Health Diversion (include in application section (E) (2))					
	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
Total Personnel Court-Based Mental Health Diversion (include in application section (E) (2))	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
Personnel Court-Based Substance Use Diversion (include in application section (E) (3))					
	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
Total Personnel Court-Based Substance Use Diversion (include in application section (E) (3))	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
Personnel Court-Based Eviction Prevention and Diversion (include in application section (E) (4))					
	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
Total Personnel Court-Based Eviction Prevention and Diversion (E) (4)	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
Total Personnel Costs:	\$ 100,000	0	\$ 100,000		\$ 40,448
Direct/Administrative Costs:					
	Amount		CY 2026	Revision	Revised Total Budget
ARPA-Eligible Administrative Expenses (include in application section (E) (6))					
	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
Total ARPA-Eligible Administrative Expenses	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
ARPA-Audio Visual Equipment Modernization (include in application section (E) (7))					
	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
Total ARPA Audio Visual Equipment Modernization	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
Temporary Facilities or Workspace (include in application section (E) (5))					
	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
Total Temporary Facilities or Workspace	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
Total Direct/Administrative Costs:	\$ -	0	\$ -		\$ -
TOTAL OVERALL BUDGET					
	\$ 100,000	0	\$ 100,000	\$ (59,552)	\$ 40,448

Instructions for Revised Budgets due 11/21/25:

Please place amount (per line) that the circuit wants to be decreased in revision column E.

Do not remove or type over any formulas.

Rev. 11/10/25

Final Approved v.9 11.07.25

Revised accepted 12.8.25