

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COLUMBIA COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

 **EFILED IN OFFICE**
CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT
COLUMBIA COUNTY, GEORGIA

2026ECV0357

MAR 23, 2026 03:16 AM


Cindy Mason, Clerk
Columbia County, Georgia

WAYLAND BRAXTON WILLIS)
Plaintiff,)

vs.)

HON. SHERYL B JOLLY)
Defendant.)

Civil Action File No. **2026ECV0357**

PETITION FOR EXEMPTION FROM MEDIATION

Petitioner Wayland Braxton Willis, proceeding pro se, respectfully petitions this Court for an exemption from the Standing Order Requiring Mediation in Civil Cases entered in the above-styled action. In support thereof, Petitioner states as follows:

I. BASIS FOR EXEMPTION

The Standing Order filed in this case provides that a party may petition the Court to exempt the case from mediation where, inter alia, the issue to be considered presents a question of law only. See Standing Order Requiring Mediation in Civil Cases, Exemptions ¶(b), Civil Action File No. 2026ECV0357.

This action is a Petition for Writ of Mandamus. It presents a single, dispositive question of law: whether the Trial Court has a ministerial duty to enter written rulings on properly filed and pending motions. The Petition does not seek resolution of disputed facts, allocation of damages, or adjudication of competing claims between private parties. It seeks only to compel the performance of a judicial function.

Mandamus is an extraordinary writ directed at compelling a public officer to perform a duty required by law. See O.C.G.A. § 9-6-20. Petitioner filed a Petition for Writ of Mandamus in the Georgia Court of Appeals, Case No. A26E0154. On March 6, 2026, the Court of Appeals denied that petition on jurisdictional grounds, holding that its original mandamus jurisdiction is limited to matters involving existing or impending appeals. *Arnold v. Alexander*, 321 Ga. 330, 335 (1) (914 SE2d 311) (2025). The Court expressly directed that such a petition “may be filed in the appropriate superior

court.” Petitioner then properly filed this action in Superior Court on March 9, 2026. The question before this Court—whether a trial court’s failure to adjudicate twenty-two properly filed motions over a period exceeding 123 days constitutes a failure to exercise jurisdiction—is entirely legal in character. No factual development, witness testimony, or evidentiary proceeding is required.

II. MEDIATION IS INAPPLICABLE TO THIS PROCEEDING

Mediation presupposes a dispute between parties capable of voluntary resolution through negotiation. This proceeding does not involve a bilateral dispute amenable to compromise. The Respondent is a sitting Superior Court judge named in her official capacity. The relief sought—issuance of written rulings on pending motions—is not a matter subject to negotiation between the parties. A judge’s duty to adjudicate pending matters is not a concession to be bargained for; it is an obligation imposed by law.

Requiring mediation in this context would produce an absurd result: a petitioner and a sitting judge would be directed to confer before a mediator over whether the judge must perform her adjudicative function. No mediation outcome could lawfully grant or withhold the relief this Petition seeks. The question is binary—the Trial Court either has the duty to rule or it does not—and it can be resolved only by this Court on the legal record.

III. ADDITIONAL EXEMPTION GROUNDS

The Standing Order further provides that mandatory mediation is not required in cases involving declaratory relief. See Standing Order, Exemptions ¶(d). To the extent the Petition for Writ of Mandamus seeks a declaration regarding the Trial Court’s duty to enter rulings, this case falls within the declaratory relief exemption as well.

Finally, the Standing Order permits exemption for any reason the assigned judge finds sufficient to justify the parties not participating in mediation. See Standing Order, Exemptions ¶(c). The nature of mandamus proceedings—an extraordinary writ directed at a public officer in her official capacity—constitutes such a reason.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Petitioner respectfully requests that this Court enter an Order exempting Civil Action File No. 2026ECV0357 from the mandatory mediation requirement imposed by the Standing Order, and permitting this matter to proceed to adjudication on the legal merits without prior mediation.

Respectfully submitted, this **23rd** day of **March, 2026**.

Wayland B. Willis

Wayland Braxton Willis

Petitioner, Pro Se

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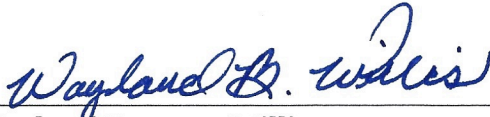
CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I have this day served a true and correct copy of the foregoing **Petition for Exemption from Mediation** by depositing the same in the United States Mail with proper postage affixed upon the following:

Hon. Sheryl B. Jolly, Respondent
Superior Court of Columbia County
640 Ronald Reagan Drive | Evans, Georgia 30809

Columbia County Attorney's Office
630 Ronald Reagan Drive, Building C | Evans, Georgia 30809

Submitted, this 23rd day of **March, 2026**.



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