

CONTEMPT

This packet contains forms and information on:

How to File a Petition for Citation of Contempt

It is advisable to have an attorney when filing legal papers to be sure that your rights are protected and that all the procedures are correctly followed. **Courthouse personnel are prohibited by state law O.C.G.A. § 15-19-51 from giving legal advice.** Different situations may require special procedures and courthouse personnel cannot advise you on how to proceed or what forms may be necessary in specific situations.

HOW TO FILE A PETITION FOR CITATION OF CONTEMPT

Use this packet only if the other side lives in Cobb County and you have a Superior Court Order from a Georgia Court which orders your ex-spouse or the other parent of your child(ren) to do certain things, and that person has not done them. For example, this packet should be used if:

- you have not received child support as ordered **OR**
- you have not been permitted to visit with your child(ren) as ordered **OR**
- the other person has not turned over property as ordered or has not performed other acts as ordered **OR**
- the other person has not obtained health insurance or paid you back for medical expenses as ordered

If your ex-spouse no longer lives in Georgia and you need to file a contempt action for custody or visitation against your ex-spouse, you must seek the advice of an attorney, unless your ex-spouse can be personally served while in Georgia with a copy of your petition that was filed in Georgia.

If your ex-spouse no longer lives in Georgia, you can use these forms to file a contempt action for nonpayment of child support/alimony, to obtain health/life insurance, to pay medical expenses, to turn over property, or to pay other expenses.

If you have a court order from another state, please contact an attorney.

BASIC STEPS OF THIS PROCESS

- STEP 1:** Fill out the Petition for Citation of Contempt.
- STEP 2:** Fill out the Verification form.
- STEP 3:** Fill out the Rule Nisi form.
Note: Most petitions require summons to be attached to your Petition for Service. However, for a contempt action, the Rule Nisi serves as your summons.
- STEP 4:** Complete the form for Service (Must be obtained from the Clerk/Sheriff's Office).
- STEP 5:** Make a copy of your Court Order and attach it to the Petition for Citation of Contempt.
- STEP 6:** Put the documents in order.
- STEP 7:** Make two (2) copies of each document.
- STEP 8:** File the original documents with the Clerk of Court.
- STEP 9:** Take one (1) copy of the documents to the Sheriff's office.
- STEP 10:** Come to Court on the date and time indicated on the Rule Nisi form.

DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS FOR FORM COMPLETION

Step 1:

Petition for Citation of Contempt

- **Petitioner:** You are the Petitioner. Fill in your name on the line after “Petitioner” and on the line after “NOW COMES.”
- **Respondent:** The Respondent is the person who has not obeyed the Order. Fill in that person’s full name on the line after “Respondent.”
- **File Number:** Leave the Civil Action File Number blank. It will be filed in by the Clerk of Court when you file the Petition.
- **Paragraph 1:**
 - Fill in the county that issued the order.
 - Fill in the name of the case where you got the order that is not being obeyed. This can be found at the top of the original court order. (Example: Joe Smith v. Jane Smith)
 - Fill in the case number from that case.
 - Fill in the date the judge signed the Order. This is on the last page of the Order above the judge’s signature.
- **Paragraph 2:**
 - Put an “x” in the box that is true and fill in the blank.
- **Paragraph 3:**
 - Put an “x” in all the boxes that are true.
 - If you did not get items the Court ordered, you should list them on the lines.
 - If you did not get medical insurance or have not been re-paid for medical costs, those should be listed.
 - Put the date of the day you finish the form and sign your name. Then clearly print your name, address, and telephone number.

Step 2:

Verification

- This document tells the Court that you swear, under oath, that what you wrote or put in the Petition is true and correct.
- Print or type your full name next to the word “Petitioner.”
- Print or type the full name of the person disobeying the order next to the word “Respondent.”
- Where it says: “I _____,” print or type your full name.
- Where it says: “This ____ day of _____, 20____,” fill in the current date, month, and year.
- Print or type your full name where indicated and fill in your address and telephone number.
- **DO NOT SIGN THIS DOCUMENT.** You may only sign this document in front of a public notary. Public notaries are available at banks, the post office, grocery stores, or the Cobb County Superior Court Clerk’s Office.

Step 3:

Rule Nisi

- This document is used to set a hearing date.
- Fill in your full name as the “Petitioner” and the other person’s full name as the “Respondent.”
- You must have a hearing date attached to your petition. In order to get one, you should take these documents to the Cobb County Superior Court Clerk’s Office. The clerk will instruct you on how to get a hearing date.
- The remaining information on this document will be filled in by the Court clerk when you take the papers to be filed.

Step 4: Service

- The Petition for Citation of Contempt must be *served* on the opposing party. You can either have the Sheriff serve the papers, or you may personally serve the papers if the Respondent is willing to sign an Acknowledgement of Service form.
- Sheriff's Entry of Service: This document is used by the Sheriff when s/he serves a copy of the documents on the Respondent. You can get this form from the Sheriff's Office in the courthouse.
 - Write your address under "Petitioner's Address" on the left.
 - Write the Respondent's full name and address under "Name and Address of Party to be served."
 - On the right, write your full name on the line above "Petitioner."
 - On the right, write the Respondent's full name on the line above "Respondent."

Step 5: Original Order

- Make a copy of the Court Order that the opposing party disobeyed, and attach it to the Petition for Citation of Contempt.

Step 6: Putting the Documents in Order

- Put the documents in the following order:
 - Sheriff's Entry of Service
 - Petition
 - Copy of the pre-existing Court Order that was disobeyed
 - Verification
 - Rule Nisi
- Make three (3) copies of all documents in the package.

Step 7: Filing

- Take the document package to the Cobb County Superior Court Clerk's Office to file. Have the clerk fill in the case number and Rule Nisi form for all three (3) copies. Be sure to tell the clerk that you need a hearing date for your Rule Nisi form. Have the clerk stamp your copies. Keep a copy of the document package for your records.
- Take one copy of the document package to the Sheriff's Office so that the Sheriff can serve it upon the opposing party. You will have to pay a service fee. Check with the Sheriff's Office for the schedule fee.

Step 8: Court Appearance

- Come to Court on the hearing date and time that is indicated on the Rule Nisi form. You should go to the courtroom indicated on this document, and let the case manager know that you are there. Then, wait for your case to be called by the judge.
- When you schedule your Final Hearing, make sure you completely fill out the enclosed Final Order on Motion to Contempt as completely as possible. Bring these forms to your hearing and present them to the judge.

Fees are subject to change. Please check with the Clerk's Office.