



Judicial Council of Georgia Administrative Office of the Courts

CITIZENS GUIDE TO THE PETITION FOR REVIEW PROCESS

WHAT IS A PETITION FOR REVIEW?

Starting on July 1, 2023, a "petition for review" is the new procedure for appealing any final judgment of a "lower judicatory" to a superior court or state court. OCGA §§ 5-3-1 to 5-3-21.

 **Judicatory** means any court, official, board, tribunal, commission, municipal or county authority, council, or similar body exercising judicial or quasi-judicial powers. OCGA § 5-3-3 (5).

 **Lower judicatory** means any "judicatory" inferior in authority to the superior and state courts and subject to the appellate jurisdiction of the superior or state courts as provided by law and the Georgia Constitution. OCGA § 5-3-3 (6).

WHO ARE THE PARTIES?

 **Petitioner:** A "petitioner" is a person who files a petition for review in superior or state court.

 **Respondent:** The "respondent" is a person who is adverse to the petitioner and was a party to the dispute subject to the final judgment of the lower judicatory. OCGA § 5-3-3 (11).

 **Not a party:** A judge, official, or member of the lower judicatory who made the final judgment under review is not a party just because they made the final judgment appealed. A "respondent" must have been adverse to the petitioner and a party in the case in the lower judicatory. OCGA § 5-3-3 (11).



WHAT DOES A PETITION FOR REVIEW LOOK LIKE?

A Model Petition for Review is attached that you can fill in, revise if needed, and adapt to the unique circumstances of your case.



See the next page for Filing and Service Deadlines

CITIZENS GUIDE TO THE PETITION FOR REVIEW PROCESS | PAGE 2

WHEN ARE THE FILING DEADLINES?

Unless an exception applies, a petitioner must file a petition for review with the clerk of the reviewing court within 30 days after:

 **If the lower judiciary has a clerk:** The date the final judgment in the lower judiciary is filed or recorded, whatever comes first; or

 **If the lower judiciary does not have a clerk:** The date the final judgment in the lower judiciary is signed and notice of the final judgment has been provided to all parties. OCGA § 5-3-7 (b).

Shorter timeline for landlord/tenant dispossessory proceedings: A copy of the petition for review filed in the reviewing superior or state court must be filed in the trial court that rendered the decision appealed (e.g., the magistrate court) within seven days after the date the appealed judgment was entered in the trial court. OCGA § 44-7-56 (b) (1).

A demand for a jury trial in a petition for review must be filed in the reviewing court within 30 days after filing a petition for review. OCGA § 5-3-5 (c).

The reviewing court is only allowed to grant one filing deadline extension not to exceed 30 days for the filing of a petition for review. OCGA § 5-3-11 (b).

However, the reviewing court is allowed to grant additional filing deadline extensions for other documents if necessary to permit a just and expeditious review. OCGA § 5-3-11 (b).

QUESTIONS?

Visit jcaoc.georgiacourts.gov/hb916/ for more information, including a training video explaining the new petition for review procedure in detail.

WHEN ARE THE SERVICE DEADLINES?

Within five days: The petitioner must serve a copy of his or her petition for review on all the parties and the lower judiciary that made the final judgment appealed within five days after filing the petition for review in the reviewing court. Serve the lower judiciary's clerk if they have one. OCGA § 5-3-7 (g)-(h).

Reviewing court's case number: The copy of the petition for review served on the lower judiciary by the petitioner must include the reviewing court's case number, as provided in the attached Model Petition for Review. OCGA § 5-3-7 (h).

Within 30 days: The respondent must file his or her response to a petition for review with the reviewing court within 30 days after being served with a copy of the petition for review. If you have any, include any counterclaims, cross appeals, defenses, or third-party claims. OCGA § 5-3-8 (a).

Within 30 days: A petitioner's reply (if any) to a (respondent's) response must be filed by the petitioner within 30 days after being served with a copy of the (respondent's) response. Include counterclaims, cross appeals, defenses, or third-party claims if you have any. OCGA § 5-3-8 (c).

MANNER OF SERVICE OF PROCESS

 Service of a petition for review or other document shall be made in person, by mail, or electronically (if consent to electronic service is given). OCGA § 5-3-10 (a) (2).

 If service is made by mail, it shall be deemed perfected on the day it was deposited in the mail. If service is perfected by mail, three days shall be added to any deadline for mailing time. OCGA § 5-3-10 (a) (5). "Perfected" means to take all legal steps needed to complete service of process. OCGA § 5-3-3 (7).