

RESOURCES--HELPFUL TOOLS

Attorney staff of the R.E.A.C.H. Clinic will only provide **limited legal services**. Make an online Appointment at <https://calendly.com/magistrate-selfhelp/clinic-appointment>.

For other self-help legal resources, try:

The Law Library- located on the 7th floor of the Justice Center Tower- offers a place to conduct legal research and find information to assist with your case.

The Uniform Magistrate Court Rules can be found in the Law Library or accessed at www.magistratefulton.org.

The Self-Help Center - Room 300 on the ground floor of the Justice Center Tower with self-help books, computer use and notary services.

For additional help finding an attorney:

State Bar of Georgia (www.gabar.org) has a referral service to find an attorney licensed to practice law in the State of Georgia.

Atlanta Legal Aid (www.atlantalegalaid.org) and **The Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation** (www.avlf.org) offer attorney assistance in certain consumer matters.



KEY LEGAL DEFINITIONS

Plaintiff: a person who brings a case against another in court.

Mediation: a meeting of the parties and an independent person; often used to help parties come to an agreement, which closes the case.

Subpoena: a court order requiring a person to attend a court hearing.

Hearsay: out of court statement that one cannot adequately prove.

Exhibits: a document or object to be used as evidence.

Warrant: a document issued authorizing the police to make an arrest or search property.

Litigants: the people involved in a lawsuit.

Affidavit: a written statement confirmed by oath or affirmation.

Monetary Judgement: an order following a lawsuit allowing a party to collect money damages.

Defendant: an individual, company, or institution sued or accused in a court.

Motion: a request to a court for a desired ruling or order.

Dismissed: case outcome that ends a case without liability.

Dismissed Without Prejudice: The case is not dismissed forever. A party could bring the case back to court.

Calendar: a document that lists the cases and hearings to be held at that specific time and date.



MAGISTRATE COURT OF FULTON COUNTY

R.E.A.C.H. Clinic
*Rapid Education Assistance
Court Help Clinic*

**Chief Magistrate Judge
Judge Cassandra Kirk**

**Justice Center Tower
185 Central Avenue S.W.
7th Floor, Judicial Resource Center
Atlanta, GA 30303**

HOURS OF OPERATION
Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

CONTACT US
404-613-9307
magistrate.selfhelp@fultoncountyga.gov

**Inform, Engage, and Empower
Our Community**

Disclaimer: The information in this pamphlet is not legal advice. It is intended to give a general description of the services available through the R.E.A.C.H. Clinic. Consult an attorney for legal advice about your case.

The Magistrate Court offers this clinic to provide Rapid Education Assistance Court Help (R.E.A.C.H.) to support self-represented individuals with small claims, garnishment, and private warrant application matters before the Magistrate Court of Fulton County. The Clinic staff includes a staff attorney, volunteers, and law students. The R.E.A.C.H. Clinic is available to both sides of the lawsuit and their attorneys. If an individual is represented by an attorney, our staff cannot provide direct help.

The R.E.A.C.H. Clinic staff will not provide legal advice. The role of staff members includes the following types of assistance:

- A preliminary discussion to listen to concerns and explain processes.
- Help in using computers located in the courthouse to obtain information and to fill out court forms.
- Help in finding information about the law and how to find a lawyer.
- Help in finding resources in the courthouse and outside the courthouse to assist in resolving their case.
- Help in organizing documents needed for their cases.
- Explain courtroom protocol. Describe the various individuals in the court and their roles, such as judge, court clerk, marshal, and judicial assistant.
- If necessary, provide help with needed social services.
- Act as scribe in filling out forms or other paperwork.
- Attorney staff may provide **limited legal services**.

- Attorney staff will not go with individuals to court or perform any independent investigation or research.
- Clinic non-attorney staff shall not give legal advice.
- No staff shall get involved in negotiations or settlement conferences or perform any service that constitutes the practice of law. Clinic staff shall not provide personal advice.

CLINIC AREAS

Small claims action is a civil suit to obtain money damages equal to **\$15,000.00** or less. The plaintiff brings the action and the defendant is the opposing party.

Garnishment is a civil action to collect the wages, money or property of a **defendant**, (judgment debtor) which are being held by the **garnishee**, (job or bank). The **plaintiff**, (judgment creditor) may file a garnishment in Magistrate Court, after the plaintiff has obtained a valid judgment no greater than \$15,000.00 and the garnishee is located in Fulton County.

Private warrant applications allow citizens, (petitioner) to ask the court for a warrant against another citizen (accused) for a criminal act. A hearing will be held before the warrant will be issued.

Abandonment of a minor child is a special type of private warrant application where the custodial parent asserts that the non-custodial parent has failed to provide for their child for at least 30 days. It is best but not required that the custodial parent has a court order for support.

*Courts can be confusing
and are not user friendly.*



Do I need a lawyer?

It is a good idea to have a lawyer to represent you, but, it is not always necessary or possible. The R.E.A.C.H. Clinic staff will help guide you through the processes and forms for Court. We recognize that at times your situation may be more complicated than one which our staff can assist.

You may need a lawyer if:

- You want legal advice.
- You want to discuss legal strategies.
- You want a confidential attorney-client relationship.
- Your case is/ may become complicated.