

House Bill 24 (AS PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE)

By: Representatives Willard of the 49th, Lindsey of the 54th, Weldon of the 3rd, Dobbs of the 53rd, Jacobs of the 80th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend the Official Code of Georgia Annotated so as to substantially revise, supersede,
2 and modernize provisions relating to evidence; to provide for legislative findings; to provide
3 for definitions; to provide for general provisions; to provide for judicial notice; to provide
4 for parol evidence; to provide for admission of relevant evidence; to provide for testimonial
5 privileges; to provide for competency of witnesses; to provide for opinions and expert
6 testimony; to provide for and define hearsay; to provide for authentication and identification
7 of writings, recordings, and photographs; to provide for the best evidence rule; to provide for
8 establishment of lost records; to provide for medical and other confidential information; to
9 provide for securing attendance of witnesses and production and preservation of evidence;
10 to provide for proof generally; to amend Title 35 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
11 relating to law enforcement officers and agencies, so as to move provisions relating to DNA
12 analysis of persons convicted of certain crimes from Title 24 to Title 35; to change
13 provisions relating to foreign language interpreters and interpreters for the hearing impaired;
14 to amend the Official Code of Georgia Annotated so as to conform provisions to the new
15 Title 24 and correct cross-references; to provide for effective dates and applicability; to
16 repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

17 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

18 **SECTION 1.**

19 It is the intent of the General Assembly in enacting this Act to adopt the Federal Rules of
20 Evidence, as interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States and the United States
21 circuit courts of appeal as of January 1, 2013, to the extent that such interpretation is
22 consistent with the Constitution of Georgia. Where conflicts were found to exist among the
23 decisions of the various circuit courts of appeal interpreting the federal rules of evidence, the
24 General Assembly considered the decisions of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals. It is the
25 intent of the General Assembly to revise, modernize, and reenact the general laws of this
26 state relating to evidence while adopting, in large measure, the Federal Rules of Evidence.

27 The General Assembly is cognizant that there are many issues regarding evidence that are
 28 not covered by the Federal Rules of Evidence and in those situations the former provisions
 29 of Title 24 have been retained. Unless displaced by the particular provisions of this Act, the
 30 General Assembly intends that the substantive law of evidence in Georgia as it existed on
 31 December 31, 2012, be retained.

32 **SECTION 2.**

33 The Official Code of Georgia Annotated is amended by repealing in its entirety Title 24,
 34 relating to evidence, and enacting a new Title 24 to read as follows:

35 "TITLE 24

36 CHAPTER 1

37 ARTICLE 1

38 24-1-1.

39 The object of all legal investigation is the discovery of truth. Rules of evidence shall be
 40 construed to secure fairness in administration, eliminate unjustifiable expense and delay,
 41 and promote the growth and development of the law of evidence to the end that the truth
 42 may be ascertained and proceedings justly determined.

43 24-1-2.

44 (a) The rules of evidence shall apply in all trials by jury in any court in this state.

45 (b) The rules of evidence shall apply generally to all nonjury trials and other fact-finding
 46 proceedings of any court in this state subject to the limitations set forth in subsections (c)
 47 and (d) of this Code section.

48 (c) The rules of evidence, except those with respect to privileges, shall not apply in the
 49 following situations:

50 (1) The determination of questions of fact preliminary to admissibility of evidence when
 51 the issue is to be determined by the court under Code Section 24-1-104;

52 (2) Criminal proceedings before grand juries;

53 (3) Proceedings for extradition or rendition;

54 (4) Proceedings for revoking parole;

55 (5) Proceedings for the issuance of warrants for arrest and search warrants except as
 56 provided by subsection (b) of Code Section 17-4-40;

57 (6) Proceedings with respect to release on bond;

58 (7) Dispositional hearings and custody hearings in juvenile court; or

59 (8) Contempt proceedings in which the court, pursuant to subsection (a) of Code Section
 60 15-1-4, may act summarily.

61 (d)(1) In criminal commitment or preliminary hearings in any court, the rules of evidence
 62 shall apply except that hearsay shall be admissible.

63 (2) In in rem forfeiture proceedings, the rules of evidence shall apply except that hearsay
 64 shall be admissible in determining probable cause or reasonable cause.

65 (3) In presentence hearings, the rules of evidence shall apply except that hearsay and
 66 character evidence shall be admissible.

67 (4) In administrative hearings, the rules of evidence as applied in the trial of nonjury civil
 68 actions shall be followed, subject to special statutory rules or agency rules as authorized
 69 by law.

70 (e) Except as modified by statute, the common law as expounded by Georgia courts shall
 71 continue to be applied to the admission and exclusion of evidence and to procedures at
 72 trial.

73 ARTICLE 2

74 24-1-101.

75 Reserved.

76 24-1-102.

77 Reserved.

78 24-1-103.

79 (a) Error shall not be predicated upon a ruling which admits or excludes evidence unless
 80 a substantial right of the party is affected and:

81 (1) In case the ruling is one admitting evidence, a timely objection or motion to strike
 82 appears of record, stating the specific ground of objection, if the specific ground was not
 83 apparent from the context; or

84 (2) In case the ruling is one excluding evidence, the substance of the evidence was made
 85 known to the court by an offer of proof or was apparent from the context within which
 86 questions were asked.

87 Once the court makes a definitive ruling on the record admitting or excluding any evidence,
 88 either at or before trial, a party need not renew an objection or offer of proof to preserve
 89 such claim of error for appeal.

90 (b) The court shall accord the parties adequate opportunity to state grounds for objections
 91 and present offers of proof. The court may add any other or further statement which shows

92 the character of the evidence, the form in which it was offered, the objection made, and the
93 ruling thereon. The court may direct the making of an offer of proof in question and
94 answer form.

95 (c) Jury proceedings shall be conducted, to the extent practicable, so as to prevent
96 inadmissible evidence from being suggested to the jury by any means, including, but not
97 limited to, making statements or offers of proof or asking questions in the hearing of the
98 jury.

99 (d) Nothing in this Code section shall preclude a court from taking notice of plain errors
100 affecting substantial rights although such errors were not brought to the attention of the
101 court.

102 24-1-104.

103 (a) Preliminary questions concerning the qualification of a person to be a witness, the
104 existence of a privilege, or the admissibility of evidence shall be determined by the court,
105 subject to the provisions of subsection (b) of this Code section. In making its
106 determination, the court shall not be bound by the rules of evidence except those with
107 respect to privileges. Preliminary questions shall be resolved by a preponderance of the
108 evidence standard.

109 (b) When the relevancy of evidence depends upon the fulfillment of a condition of fact,
110 the court shall admit it upon, or subject to, the introduction of evidence sufficient to support
111 a finding of the fulfillment of the condition.

112 (c) Hearings on the admissibility of confessions shall in all cases be conducted out of the
113 hearing of the jury. Hearings on other preliminary matters shall be conducted out of the
114 hearing of the jury when the interests of justice require or when an accused is a witness and
115 requests a hearing outside the presence of the jury.

116 (d) The accused shall not, by testifying upon a preliminary matter, become subject to
117 cross-examination as to other issues in the proceeding.

118 (e) This Code section shall not limit the right of a party to introduce before the jury
119 evidence relevant to weight or credibility.

120 24-1-105.

121 When evidence which is admissible as to one party or for one purpose but which is not
122 admissible as to another party or for another purpose is admitted, the court, upon request,
123 shall restrict the evidence to its proper scope and instruct the jury accordingly.

124 24-1-106.

125 When a writing or recorded statement or part thereof is introduced by a party, an adverse
 126 party may require the introduction at that time of any other part or any other writing or
 127 recorded statement which, in fairness, should be considered contemporaneously with the
 128 writing or recorded statement.

129 CHAPTER 2

130 ARTICLE 1

131 24-2-201.

132 (a) This Code section governs only judicial notice of adjudicative facts.

133 (b) A judicially noticed fact shall be a fact which is not subject to reasonable dispute in
 134 that it is either:

135 (1) Generally known within the territorial jurisdiction of the court; or

136 (2) Capable of accurate and ready determination by resort to sources whose accuracy
 137 cannot reasonably be questioned.

138 (c) A court may take judicial notice, whether or not requested by a party.

139 (d) A court shall take judicial notice if requested by a party and provided with the
 140 necessary information.

141 (e) A party shall be entitled, upon timely request, to an opportunity to be heard as to the
 142 propriety of taking judicial notice and the tenor of the matter noticed. In the absence of
 143 prior notification, such request may be made after judicial notice has been taken.

144 (f) Judicial notice may be taken at any stage of the proceeding.

145 (g)(1) In a civil proceeding, the court shall instruct the jury to accept as conclusive any
 146 fact judicially noticed.

147 (2) In a criminal proceeding, the court shall instruct the jury that it may, but is not
 148 required to, accept as conclusive any fact judicially noticed.

149 ARTICLE 2

150 24-2-220.

151 The existence and territorial extent of states and their forms of government; all symbols of
 152 nationality; the laws of nations; all laws and resolutions of the General Assembly and the
 153 journals of each branch thereof as published by authority; the laws of the United States and
 154 of the several states thereof as published by authority; the uniform rules of the courts; the
 155 administrative rules and regulations filed with the Secretary of State pursuant to Code
 156 Section 50-13-6; the general customs of merchants; the admiralty and maritime courts of

157 the world and their seals; the political makeup and history of this state and the federal
158 government as well as the local divisions of this state; the seals of the several departments
159 of the government of the United States and of the several states of the union; and all similar
160 matters of legislative fact shall be judicially recognized without the introduction of proof.
161 Judicial notice of adjudicative facts shall be governed by Code Section 24-2-201.

162 24-2-221.

163 When certified by a public officer, clerk, or keeper of county or municipal records in this
164 state in a manner as specified for county records in Code Section 24-9-920 or in a manner
165 as specified for municipal records in paragraph (1) or (2) of Code Section 24-9-902 and in
166 the absence of contrary evidence, judicial notice may be taken of a certified copy of any
167 ordinance or resolution included within a general codification required by paragraph (1)
168 of subsection (b) of Code Section 36-80-19 as representing an ordinance or resolution duly
169 approved by the governing authority and currently in force as presented. Any such
170 certified copy shall be self-authenticating and shall be admissible as prima-facie proof of
171 any such ordinance or resolution before any court or administrative body.

172 CHAPTER 3

173 24-3-1.

174 Parol contemporaneous evidence shall be generally inadmissible to contradict or vary the
175 terms of a valid written instrument.

176 24-3-2.

177 If the writing does not purport to contain all the stipulations of the contract, parol evidence
178 shall be admissible to prove other portions thereof not inconsistent with the writing;
179 collateral undertakings between parties of the same part among themselves would not
180 properly be looked for in the writing.

181 24-3-3.

182 (a) All contemporaneous writings shall be admissible to explain each other.

183 (b) Parol evidence shall be admissible to explain all ambiguities, both latent and patent.

184 24-3-4.

185 The surrounding circumstances shall always be proper subjects of proof to aid in the
186 construction of contracts.

187 24-3-5.
188 Evidence of known and established usage shall be admissible to aid in the construction of
189 contracts as well as to annex incidents.

190 24-3-6.
191 Parol evidence shall be admissible to rebut an equity, to discharge an entire contract, to
192 prove a new and distinct subsequent agreement, to enlarge the time of performance, or to
193 change the place of performance.

194 24-3-7.
195 Parol evidence shall be admissible to prove a mistake in a deed or any other contract
196 required by law to be in writing.

197 24-3-8.
198 Parol evidence shall be admissible to show that a writing either was originally void or
199 subsequently became void.

200 24-3-9.
201 Receipts for money shall always be only prima-facie evidence of payment and may be
202 denied or explained by parol.

203 24-3-10.
204 Blank endorsements of negotiable paper may always be explained between the parties
205 themselves or those taking with notice of dishonor or of the actual facts of such
206 endorsements.

207 CHAPTER 4

208 24-4-401.
209 As used in this chapter, the term 'relevant evidence' means evidence having any tendency
210 to make the existence of any fact that is of consequence to the determination of the action
211 more probable or less probable than it would be without the evidence.

212 24-4-402.
213 All relevant evidence shall be admissible, except as limited by constitutional requirements
214 or as otherwise provided by law or by other rules, as prescribed pursuant to constitutional

215 or statutory authority, applicable in the court in which the matter is pending. Evidence
216 which is not relevant shall not be admissible.

217 24-4-403.

218 Relevant evidence may be excluded if its probative value is substantially outweighed by
219 the danger of unfair prejudice, confusion of the issues, or misleading the jury or by
220 considerations of undue delay, waste of time, or needless presentation of cumulative
221 evidence.

222 24-4-404.

223 (a) Evidence of a person's character or a trait of character shall not be admissible for the
224 purpose of proving action in conformity therewith on a particular occasion, except for:

225 (1) Evidence of a pertinent trait of character offered by an accused or by the prosecution
226 to rebut the same; or if evidence of a trait of character of the alleged victim of the crime
227 is offered by an accused and admitted under paragraph (2) of this subsection, evidence
228 of the same trait of character of the accused offered by the prosecution;

229 (2) Subject to the limitations imposed by Code Section 24-4-412, evidence of a pertinent
230 trait of character of the alleged victim of the crime offered by an accused or by the
231 prosecution to rebut the same; or evidence of a character trait of peacefulness of the
232 alleged victim offered by the prosecution in a homicide case to rebut evidence that the
233 alleged victim was the first aggressor; or

234 (3) Evidence of the character of a witness, as provided in Code Sections 24-6-607,
235 24-6-608, and 24-6-609.

236 (b) Evidence of other crimes, wrongs, or acts shall not be admissible to prove the character
237 of a person in order to show action in conformity therewith. It may, however, be
238 admissible for other purposes, including, but not limited to, proof of motive, opportunity,
239 intent, preparation, plan, knowledge, identity, or absence of mistake or accident. The
240 prosecution in a criminal proceeding shall provide reasonable notice to the defense in
241 advance of trial, unless pretrial notice is excused by the court upon good cause shown, of
242 the general nature of any such evidence it intends to introduce at trial. Notice shall not be
243 required when the evidence of prior crimes, wrongs, or acts is offered to prove the
244 circumstances immediately surrounding the charged crime, motive, or prior difficulties
245 between the accused and the alleged victim.

246 24-4-405.

247 (a) In all proceedings in which evidence of character or a trait of character of a person is
248 admissible, proof shall be made by testimony as to reputation or by testimony in the form
249 of an opinion.

250 (b) In proceedings in which character or a trait of character of a person is an essential
251 element of a charge, claim, or defense or when an accused testifies to his or her own
252 character, proof may also be made of specific instances of that person's conduct. The
253 character of the accused, including specific instances of the accused's conduct, shall also
254 be admissible in a presentencing hearing subject to the provisions of Code Section 17-10-2.

255 (c) On cross-examination, inquiry shall be allowable into relevant specific instances of
256 conduct.

257 24-4-406.

258 Evidence of the habit of a person or of the routine practice of an organization, whether
259 corroborated or not and regardless of the presence of eyewitnesses, is relevant to prove that
260 the conduct of the person or organization on a particular occasion was in conformity with
261 such habit or routine practice.

262 24-4-407.

263 In civil proceedings, when, after an injury or harm, remedial measures are taken to make
264 such injury or harm less likely to recur, evidence of the remedial measures shall not be
265 admissible to prove negligence or culpable conduct but may be admissible to prove product
266 liability under subsection (b) or (c) of Code Section 51-1-11. The provisions of this Code
267 section shall not require the exclusion of evidence of remedial measures when offered for
268 impeachment or for another purpose, including, but not limited to, proving ownership,
269 control, or feasibility of precautionary measures, if controverted.

270 24-4-408.

271 (a) Except as provided in Code Section 9-11-68, evidence of:

272 (1) Furnishing, offering, or promising to furnish; or

273 (2) Accepting, offering, or promising to accept

274 a valuable consideration in compromising or attempting to compromise a claim which was
275 disputed as to either validity or amount shall not be admissible to prove liability for or
276 invalidity of any claim or its amount.

277 (b) Evidence of conduct or statements made in compromise negotiations or mediation shall
278 not be admissible.

279 (c) This Code section shall not require the exclusion of any evidence otherwise
280 discoverable merely because it is presented in the course of compromise negotiations or
281 mediation. This Code section shall not require exclusion of evidence offered for another
282 purpose, including, but not limited to, proving bias or prejudice of a witness, negating a
283 contention of undue delay or abuse of process, or proving an effort to obstruct a criminal
284 investigation or prosecution.

285 24-4-409.

286 Evidence of furnishing, offering, or promising to pay medical, hospital, or similar expenses
287 occasioned by an injury shall not be admissible to prove liability for the injury.

288 24-4-410.

289 Except as otherwise provided by law, evidence of the following shall not, in any judicial
290 or administrative proceeding, be admissible against the criminal defendant who made the
291 plea or was a participant in the plea discussions:

292 (1) A plea of guilty which was later withdrawn;

293 (2) A plea of nolo contendere;

294 (3) Any statement made in the course of any proceedings in which a guilty plea or a plea
295 of nolo contendere was entered and was later withdrawn, vacated, or set aside; or

296 (4) Any statement made in the course of plea discussions with an attorney for the
297 prosecuting authority which does not result in a plea of guilty or which results in a plea
298 of guilty later withdrawn, vacated, or set aside;

299 provided, however, that the statements described in paragraphs (1) through (4) of this Code
300 section shall be admissible in any proceeding wherein another statement made in the course
301 of the same plea or plea discussions has been introduced and the statement ought in fairness
302 be considered contemporaneously with it or in a criminal proceeding for perjury or false
303 statement if the statement was made by the accused under oath, on the record, and in the
304 presence of counsel or after the accused voluntarily waived his or her right to counsel.

305 24-4-411.

306 In all civil proceedings involving a claim for damages, evidence that a person was or was
307 not insured against liability shall not be admissible except as provided in this Code section.

308 This Code section shall not require the exclusion of evidence of insurance against liability
309 in proceedings under Code Section 46-7-12 or when such evidence is offered for a relevant
310 purpose, including, but not limited to, proof of agency, ownership, or control, and the court
311 finds that the danger of unfair prejudice is substantially outweighed by the probative value
312 of the evidence.

313 24-4-412.

314 (a) In any prosecution for rape in violation of Code Section 16-6-1; aggravated assault
315 with the intent to rape in violation of Code Section 16-5-21; aggravated sodomy or sodomy
316 in violation of Code Section 16-6-2; statutory rape in violation of Code Section 16-6-3;
317 aggravated child molestation or child molestation in violation of Code Section 16-6-4;
318 incest in violation of Code Section 16-6-22; sexual battery in violation of Code Section
319 16-6-22.1; or aggravated sexual battery in violation of Code Section 16-6-22.2, evidence
320 relating to the past sexual behavior of the complaining witness shall not be admissible,
321 either as direct evidence or on cross-examination of the complaining witness or other
322 witnesses, except as provided in this Code section. For the purposes of this Code section,
323 evidence of past sexual behavior includes, but is not limited to, evidence of the
324 complaining witness's marital history, mode of dress, general reputation for promiscuity,
325 nonchastity, or sexual mores contrary to the community standards.

326 (b) In any prosecution for rape in violation of Code Section 16-6-1; aggravated assault
327 with the intent to rape in violation of Code Section 16-5-21; aggravated sodomy or sodomy
328 in violation of Code Section 16-6-2; statutory rape in violation of Code Section 16-6-3;
329 aggravated child molestation or child molestation in violation of Code Section 16-6-4;
330 incest in violation of Code Section 16-6-22; sexual battery in violation of Code Section
331 16-6-22.1; or aggravated sexual battery in violation of Code Section 16-6-22.2, evidence
332 relating to the past sexual behavior of the complaining witness may be introduced if the
333 court, following the procedure described in subsection (c) of this Code section, finds that
334 the past sexual behavior directly involved the participation of the accused and finds that the
335 evidence expected to be introduced supports an inference that the accused could have
336 reasonably believed that the complaining witness consented to the conduct complained of
337 in the prosecution.

338 (c) The procedure for introducing evidence as described in subsection (b) of this Code
339 section shall be as follows:

340 (1) At the time the defense seeks to introduce evidence which would be covered by
341 subsection (b) of this Code section, the defense shall notify the court of such intent,
342 whereupon the court shall conduct an in camera hearing to examine the accused's offer
343 of proof;

344 (2) At the conclusion of the hearing, if the court finds that any of the evidence introduced
345 at the hearing is admissible under subsection (b) of this Code section or is so highly
346 material that it will substantially support a conclusion that the accused reasonably
347 believed that the complaining witness consented to the conduct complained of and that
348 justice mandates the admission of such evidence, the court shall by order state what

349 evidence may be introduced by the defense at the trial of the case and in what manner the
350 evidence may be introduced; and
351 (3) The defense may then introduce evidence pursuant to the order of the court.

352 24-4-413.

353 (a) In a criminal proceeding in which the accused is accused of an offense of sexual
354 assault, evidence of the accused's commission of another offense of sexual assault shall be
355 admissible and may be considered for its bearing on any matter to which it is relevant.

356 (b) In a proceeding in which the prosecution intends to offer evidence under this Code
357 section, the prosecutor shall disclose such evidence to the accused, including statements
358 of witnesses or a summary of the substance of any testimony that is expected to be offered,
359 at least ten days in advance of trial, unless the time is shortened or lengthened or pretrial
360 notice is excused by the judge upon good cause shown.

361 (c) This Code section shall not be the exclusive means to admit or consider evidence
362 described in this Code section.

363 (d) As used in this Code section, the term 'offense of sexual assault' means any conduct
364 or attempt or conspiracy to engage in:

365 (1) Conduct that would be a violation of Code Section 16-6-1, 16-6-2, 16-6-3, 16-6-5.1,
366 16-6-22, 16-6-22.1, or 16-6-22.2;

367 (2) Any crime that involves contact, without consent, between any part of the accused's
368 body or an object and the genitals or anus of another person;

369 (3) Any crime that involves contact, without consent, between the genitals or anus of the
370 accused and any part of another person's body; or

371 (4) Any crime that involves deriving sexual pleasure or gratification from the infliction
372 of death, bodily injury, or physical pain on another person.

373 24-4-414.

374 (a) In a criminal proceeding in which the accused is accused of an offense of child
375 molestation, evidence of the accused's commission of another offense of child molestation
376 shall be admissible and may be considered for its bearing on any matter to which it is
377 relevant.

378 (b) In a proceeding in which the state intends to offer evidence under this Code section,
379 the prosecuting attorney shall disclose the evidence to the accused, including statements
380 of witnesses or a summary of the substance of any testimony that the prosecuting attorney
381 expects to offer, at least ten days in advance of trial, unless the time is shortened or
382 lengthened or pretrial notice is excused by the judge upon good cause shown.

383 (c) This Code section shall not be the exclusive means to admit or consider evidence
 384 described under this Code section.

385 (d) As used in this Code section, the term 'offense of child molestation' means any conduct
 386 or attempt or conspiracy to engage in:

387 (1) Conduct that would be a violation of Code Section 16-6-4, 16-6-5, 16-12-100,
 388 16-12-100.2, or 16-12-100.3;

389 (2) Any crime that involves contact between any part of the accused's body or an object
 390 and the genitals or anus of a child;

391 (3) Any crime that involves contact between the genitals or anus of the accused and any
 392 part of the body of a child; or

393 (4) Any crime that involves deriving sexual pleasure or gratification from the infliction
 394 of death, bodily injury, or physical pain on a child.

395 24-4-415.

396 (a) In a civil or administrative proceeding in which a claim for damages or other relief is
 397 predicated on a party's alleged commission of conduct constituting an offense of sexual
 398 assault or an offense of child molestation, evidence of that party's commission of another
 399 offense of sexual assault or another offense of child molestation shall be admissible and
 400 may be considered as provided in Code Sections 24-4-413 and 24-4-414.

401 (b) A party who intends to offer evidence under this Code section shall disclose the
 402 evidence to the party against whom it will be offered, including statements of witnesses or
 403 a summary of the substance of any testimony that is expected to be offered, at least ten
 404 days in advance of trial, unless the time is shortened or lengthened or pretrial notice is
 405 excused by the judge upon good cause shown.

406 (c) This Code section shall not be the exclusive means to admit or consider evidence
 407 described in this Code section.

408 (d) As used in this Code section, the term:

409 (1) 'Offense of child molestation' means any conduct or attempt or conspiracy to engage
 410 in:

411 (A) Conduct that would be a violation of Code Section 16-6-4, 16-6-5, 16-12-100,
 412 16-12-100.2, or 16-12-100.3;

413 (B) Any crime that involves contact between any part of the accused's body or an
 414 object and the genitals or anus of a child;

415 (C) Any crime that involves contact between the genitals or anus of the accused and
 416 any part of the body of a child; or

417 (D) Any crime that involves deriving sexual pleasure or gratification from the infliction
 418 of death, bodily injury, or physical pain on a child.

419 (2) 'Offense of sexual assault' means any conduct or attempt or conspiracy to engage in:
 420 (A) Conduct that would be a violation of Code Section 16-6-1, 16-6-2, 16-6-3,
 421 16-6-5.1, 16-6-22, 16-6-22.1, or 16-6-22.2;
 422 (B) Any crime that involves contact, without consent, between any part of the
 423 accused's body or an object and the genitals or anus of another person;
 424 (C) Any crime that involves contact, without consent, between the genitals or anus of
 425 the accused and any part of another person's body; or
 426 (D) Any crime that involves deriving sexual pleasure or gratification from the infliction
 427 of death, bodily injury, or physical pain on another person.

428 24-4-416.

429 (a) As used in this Code section, the term 'health care provider' means any person licensed
 430 under Chapter 9, 10A, 11, 11A, 26, 28, 30, 33, 34, 35, 39, or 44 of Title 43 or any hospital,
 431 nursing home, home health agency, institution, or medical facility licensed or defined under
 432 Chapter 7 of Title 31. The term shall also include any corporation, professional
 433 corporation, partnership, limited liability company, limited liability partnership, authority,
 434 or other entity comprised of such health care providers.

435 (b) In any claim or civil proceeding brought by or on behalf of a patient allegedly
 436 experiencing an unanticipated outcome of medical care, any and all statements,
 437 affirmations, gestures, activities, or conduct expressing regret, apology, sympathy,
 438 commiseration, condolence, compassion, mistake, error, or a general sense of benevolence
 439 which is made by a health care provider or an employee or agent of a health care provider
 440 to the patient, a relative of the patient, or a representative of the patient and which relates
 441 to the unanticipated outcome shall be inadmissible as evidence and shall not constitute an
 442 admission of liability or an admission against interest.

443 24-4-417.

444 (a) In a criminal proceeding involving a prosecution for a violation of Code Section
 445 40-6-391, evidence of the commission of another violation of Code Section 40-6-391 on
 446 a different occasion by the same accused shall be admissible when:

447 (1) The accused refused in the current case to take the state administered test required
 448 by Code Section 40-5-55 and such evidence is relevant to prove knowledge, plan, or
 449 absence of mistake or accident;

450 (2) The accused refused in the current case to provide an adequate breath sample for the
 451 state administered test required by Code Section 40-5-55 and such evidence is relevant
 452 to prove knowledge, plan, or absence of mistake or accident; or

453 (3) The identity of the driver is in dispute in the current case and such evidence is
 454 relevant to prove identity.

455 (b) In a criminal proceeding in which the state intends to offer evidence under this Code
 456 section, the prosecuting attorney shall disclose such evidence to the accused, including
 457 statements of witnesses or a summary of the substance of any testimony that the
 458 prosecuting attorney expects to offer, at least ten days in advance of trial, unless the time
 459 is shortened or pretrial notice is excused by the judge upon good cause shown.

460 (c) This Code section shall not be the exclusive means to admit or consider evidence
 461 described in this Code section.

462 CHAPTER 5

463 24-5-501.

464 (a) There are certain admissions and communications excluded from evidence on grounds
 465 of public policy, including, but not limited to, the following:

466 (1) Communications between husband and wife;

467 (2) Communications between attorney and client;

468 (3) Communications among grand jurors;

469 (4) Secrets of state;

470 (5) Communications between psychiatrist and patient;

471 (6) Communications between licensed psychologist and patient as provided in Code
 472 Section 43-39-16;

473 (7) Communications between a licensed clinical social worker, clinical nurse specialist
 474 in psychiatric/mental health, licensed marriage and family therapist, or licensed
 475 professional counselor and patient;

476 (8) Communications between or among any psychiatrist, psychologist, licensed clinical
 477 social worker, clinical nurse specialist in psychiatric/mental health, licensed marriage and
 478 family therapist, and licensed professional counselor who are rendering psychotherapy
 479 or have rendered psychotherapy to a patient, regarding that patient's communications
 480 which are otherwise privileged by paragraph (5), (6), or (7) of this subsection; and

481 (9) Communications between accountant and client as provided by Code Section
 482 43-3-32.

483 (b) As used in this Code section, the term:

484 (1) 'Psychotherapy' means the employment of psychotherapeutic techniques.

485 (2) 'Psychotherapeutic techniques' shall have the same meaning as provided in Code
 486 Section 43-10A-3.

487 24-5-502.

488 Every communication made by any person professing religious faith, seeking spiritual
489 comfort, or seeking counseling to any Protestant minister of the Gospel, any priest of the
490 Roman Catholic faith, any priest of the Greek Orthodox Catholic faith, any Jewish rabbi,
491 or any Christian or Jewish minister or similar functionary, by whatever name called, shall
492 be deemed privileged. No such minister, priest, rabbi, or similar functionary shall disclose
493 any communications made to him or her by any such person professing religious faith,
494 seeking spiritual guidance, or seeking counseling, nor shall such minister, priest, rabbi, or
495 similar functionary be competent or compellable to testify with reference to any such
496 communication in any court.

497 24-5-503.

498 (a) A husband and wife shall be competent but shall not be compellable to give evidence
499 in any criminal proceeding for or against each other.

500 (b) The privilege created by subsection (a) of this Code section or by corresponding
501 privileges in paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of Code Section 24-5-501 or subsection (a) of
502 Code Section 24-5-505 shall not apply in proceedings in which the husband or wife is
503 charged with a crime against the person of a child under the age of 18, but such husband
504 or wife shall be compellable to give evidence only on the specific act for which the accused
505 is charged.

506 24-5-504.

507 Any law enforcement officer testifying in his or her official capacity in any criminal
508 proceeding shall not be compelled to reveal his or her home address. Such officer may be
509 required to divulge the business address of his or her employer, and the court may require
510 any law enforcement officer to answer questions as to his or her home address whenever
511 such fact may be material to any issue in the proceeding.

512 24-5-505.

513 (a) No party or witness shall be required to testify as to any matter which may incriminate
514 or tend to incriminate such party or witness or which shall tend to bring infamy, disgrace,
515 or public contempt upon such party or witness or any member of such party or witness's
516 family.

517 (b) Except in proceedings in which a judgment creditor or judgment creditor's successor
518 in interest seeks postjudgment discovery involving a judgment debtor pursuant to Code
519 Section 9-11-69, no party or witness shall be required to testify as to any matter which shall
520 tend to work a forfeiture of his or her estate.

521 (c) No official persons shall be called on to disclose any state matters of which the policy
522 of the state and the interest of the community require concealment.

523 24-5-506.

524 (a) No person who is charged in any criminal proceeding with the commission of any
525 criminal offense shall be compellable to give evidence for or against himself or herself.

526 (b) If an accused in a criminal proceeding wishes to testify and announces in open court
527 his or her intention to do so, the accused may so testify. If an accused testifies, he or she
528 shall be sworn as any other witness and, except as provided in Code Sections 24-6-608 and
529 24-6-609, may be examined and cross-examined as any other witness. The failure of an
530 accused to testify shall create no presumption against the accused, and no comment shall
531 be made because of such failure.

532 24-5-507.

533 (a) Whenever in the judgment of the Attorney General or any district attorney the
534 testimony of any person or the production of evidence of any kind by any person in any
535 criminal proceeding before a court or grand jury is necessary to the public interest, the
536 Attorney General or the district attorney may request in writing the superior court to order
537 such person to testify or produce the evidence. Upon order of the court, such person shall
538 not be excused on the basis of the privilege against self-incrimination from testifying or
539 producing any evidence required, but no testimony or other evidence required under the
540 order or any information directly or indirectly derived from such testimony or evidence
541 shall be used against the person in any proceeding or prosecution for a crime or offense
542 concerning which he or she testified or produced evidence under court order. However,
543 such person may nevertheless be prosecuted or subjected to penalty or forfeiture for any
544 perjury, false swearing, or contempt committed in testifying or failing to testify or in
545 producing or failing to produce evidence in accordance with the order but shall not be
546 required to produce evidence that can be used in any other court of this state, the United
547 States, or any other state. Any order entered under this Code section shall be entered of
548 record in the minutes of the court so as to afford a permanent record thereof, and any
549 testimony given by a person pursuant to such order shall be transcribed and filed for
550 permanent record in the office of the clerk of the court.

551 (b) If a person refuses to testify after being granted immunity from prosecution and after
552 being ordered to testify as set forth in this Code section, such person may be adjudged in
553 contempt and committed to the county jail until such time as such person purges himself
554 or herself of contempt by testifying as ordered without regard to the expiration of the grand

555 jury. If the grand jury before which such person was ordered to testify has been dissolved,
 556 such person may purge himself or herself by testifying before the court.

557 24-5-508.

558 Any person, company, or other entity engaged in the gathering and dissemination of news
 559 for the public through any newspaper, book, magazine, radio or television broadcast, or
 560 electronic means shall have a qualified privilege against disclosure of any information,
 561 document, or item obtained or prepared in the gathering or dissemination of news in any
 562 proceeding where the one asserting the privilege is not a party, unless it is shown that this
 563 privilege has been waived or that what is sought:

564 (1) Is material and relevant;

565 (2) Cannot be reasonably obtained by alternative means; and

566 (3) Is necessary to the proper preparation or presentation of the case of a party seeking
 567 the information, document, or item.

568 CHAPTER 6

569 ARTICLE 1

570 24-6-601.

571 Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, every person is competent to be a witness.

572 24-6-602.

573 A witness may not testify to a matter unless evidence is introduced sufficient to support a
 574 finding that the witness has personal knowledge of such matter. Evidence to prove
 575 personal knowledge may, but need not, consist of the witness's own testimony. The
 576 provisions of this Code section are subject to Code Section 24-7-703 and shall not apply
 577 to party admissions.

578 24-6-603.

579 (a) Before testifying, every witness shall be required to declare that he or she will testify
 580 truthfully by oath or affirmation administered in a form calculated to awaken the witness's
 581 conscience and impress the witness's mind with the duty to do so.

582 (b) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this Code section, in all
 583 proceedings involving deprivation as defined by Code Section 15-11-2 and in all criminal
 584 proceedings in which a child was a victim of or witness to any crime, the child shall be
 585 competent to testify, and the child's credibility shall be determined as provided in this
 586 chapter.

587 24-6-604.

588 Except as provided in Code Sections 24-6-656 and 24-6-657 or by the rules promulgated
589 by the Supreme Court of Georgia pursuant to Code Section 15-1-14, an interpreter shall be
590 subject to the provisions of Code Section 24-7-702. Interpreters shall be required to take
591 an oath or affirmation to make a true translation.

592 24-6-605.

593 The judge presiding at the trial shall not testify in that trial as a witness. No objection need
594 be made in order to preserve this issue.

595 24-6-606.

596 (a) A member of the jury shall not testify as a witness before that jury in the trial of the
597 case in which the juror is sitting. If a juror is called to testify, the opposing party shall be
598 afforded an opportunity to object out of the presence of the jury.

599 (b) Upon an inquiry into the validity of a verdict or indictment, a juror shall not testify by
600 affidavit or otherwise nor shall a juror's statements be received in evidence as to any matter
601 or statement occurring during the course of the jury's deliberations or to the effect of
602 anything upon the jury deliberations or any other juror's mind or emotions as influencing
603 the juror to assent to or dissent from the verdict or indictment or concerning the juror's
604 mental processes in connection therewith; provided, however, that a juror may testify on
605 the question of whether extraneous prejudicial information was improperly brought to the
606 juror's attention, whether any outside influence was improperly brought to bear upon any
607 juror, or whether there was a mistake in entering the verdict onto the verdict form.

608 24-6-607.

609 The credibility of a witness may be attacked by any party, including the party calling the
610 witness.

611 24-6-608.

612 (a) The credibility of a witness may be attacked or supported by evidence in the form of
613 opinion or reputation, subject to the following limitations:

614 (1) The evidence may refer only to character for truthfulness or untruthfulness; and

615 (2) Evidence of truthful character shall be admissible only after the character of the
616 witness for truthfulness has been attacked by opinion or reputation evidence or otherwise.

617 (b) Specific instances of the conduct of a witness, for the purpose of attacking or
618 supporting the witness's character for truthfulness, other than a conviction of a crime as
619 provided in Code Section 24-6-609, or conduct indicative of the witness's bias toward a

620 party may not be proved by extrinsic evidence. Such instances may however, in the
621 discretion of the court, if probative of truthfulness or untruthfulness, be inquired into on
622 cross-examination of the witness:

623 (1) Concerning the witness's character for truthfulness or untruthfulness; or

624 (2) Concerning the character for truthfulness or untruthfulness of another witness as to
625 which character the witness being cross-examined has testified.

626 (c) The giving of testimony, whether by an accused or by any other witness, shall not
627 operate as a waiver of the accused's or the witness's privilege against self-incrimination
628 when examined with respect to matters which relate only to character for truthfulness.

629 24-6-609.

630 (a) *General rule.* For the purpose of attacking the character for truthfulness of a witness:

631 (1) Evidence that a witness other than an accused has been convicted of a crime shall be
632 admitted subject to the provisions of Code Section 24-4-403 if the crime was punishable
633 by death or imprisonment in excess of one year under the law under which the witness
634 was convicted and evidence that an accused has been convicted of such a crime shall be
635 admitted if the court determines that the probative value of admitting the evidence
636 outweighs its prejudicial effect to the accused; or

637 (2) Evidence that any witness has been convicted of a crime shall be admitted regardless
638 of the punishment, if it readily can be determined that establishing the elements of such
639 crime required proof or admission of an act of dishonesty or making a false statement.

640 (b) *Time limit.* Evidence of a conviction under this Code section shall not be admissible
641 if a period of more than ten years has elapsed since the date of the conviction or of the
642 release of the witness from the confinement imposed for such conviction, whichever is the
643 later date, unless the court determines, in the interests of justice, that the probative value
644 of the conviction supported by specific facts and circumstances substantially outweighs its
645 prejudicial effect. However, evidence of a conviction more than ten years old, as
646 calculated in this subsection, shall not be admissible unless the proponent gives to the
647 adverse party sufficient advance written notice of intent to use such evidence to provide the
648 adverse party with a fair opportunity to contest the use of such evidence.

649 (c) *Effect of pardon, annulment, certificate of rehabilitation, or discharge from a first*
650 *offender program.* Evidence of a final adjudication of guilt and subsequent discharge
651 under any first offender statute shall not be used to impeach any witness and evidence of
652 a conviction shall not be admissible under this Code section if:

653 (1) The conviction has been the subject of a pardon, annulment, certificate of
654 rehabilitation, or other equivalent procedure based on a finding of the rehabilitation of the

655 person convicted, and that person has not been convicted of a subsequent crime which
656 was punishable by death or imprisonment in excess of one year; or

657 (2) The conviction has been the subject of a pardon, annulment, or other equivalent
658 procedure based on a finding of innocence.

659 (d) *Nolo contendere* pleas and juvenile adjudications. A conviction based on a plea of
660 nolo contendere shall not be admissible to impeach any witness under this Code section.
661 Evidence of juvenile adjudications shall not generally be admissible under this Code
662 section. The court may, however, in a criminal proceeding allow evidence of a juvenile
663 adjudication of a witness other than the accused if conviction of the offense would be
664 admissible to attack the credibility of an adult and the court is satisfied that admission in
665 evidence is necessary for a fair determination of the issue of guilt or innocence of the
666 accused.

667 (e) *Pendency of appeal*. The pendency of an appeal shall not render evidence of a
668 conviction inadmissible. Evidence of the pendency of an appeal shall be admissible.

669 24-6-610.

670 Evidence of the beliefs or opinions of a witness on matters of religion shall not be
671 admissible for the purpose of proving that by reason of the nature of the beliefs or opinions
672 the witness's credibility is impaired or enhanced.

673 24-6-611.

674 (a) The court shall exercise reasonable control over the mode and order of interrogating
675 witnesses and presenting evidence so as to:

676 (1) Make the interrogation and presentation effective for the ascertainment of the truth;

677 (2) Avoid needless consumption of time; and

678 (3) Protect witnesses from harassment or undue embarrassment.

679 (b) A witness may be cross-examined on any matter relevant to any issue in the
680 proceeding. The right of a thorough and sifting cross-examination shall belong to every
681 party as to the witnesses called against the party. If several parties to the same proceeding
682 have distinct interests, each party may exercise the right to cross-examination.

683 (c) Leading questions shall not be used on the direct examination of a witness except as
684 may be necessary to develop the witness's testimony. Ordinarily leading questions shall
685 be permitted on cross-examination. When a party calls a hostile witness, an adverse party,
686 or a witness identified with an adverse party, interrogation may be by leading questions.

687 24-6-612.

688 (a) If a witness uses a writing to refresh his or her memory while testifying, an adverse
689 party shall be entitled to have the writing produced at the hearing or trial, to inspect it, to
690 cross-examine the witness on such writing, and to introduce in evidence those portions of
691 such writing which relate to the testimony of the witness.

692 (b) If a witness uses a writing to refresh his or her memory before testifying at trial and the
693 court in its discretion determines it is necessary in the interests of justice, an adverse party
694 shall be entitled to have the writing produced at the trial, to inspect it, to cross-examine the
695 witness on such writing, and to introduce in evidence those portions of such writing which
696 relate to the testimony of the witness. If the writing used is protected by the attorney-client
697 privilege or as attorney work product under Code Section 9-11-26, use of the writing to
698 refresh recollection prior to the trial shall not constitute a waiver of that privilege or
699 protection. If it is claimed that the writing contains matters not related to the subject matter
700 of the testimony, the court shall examine the writing in camera, excise any portions of such
701 writing not so related, and order delivery of the remainder of such writing to the party
702 entitled to such writing. Any portion withheld over objections shall be preserved and made
703 available to the appellate court in the event of an appeal. If a writing is not produced or
704 delivered pursuant to an order under this Code section, the court shall make any order
705 justice requires; provided, however, that in criminal proceedings, when the prosecution
706 elects not to comply, the order shall be one striking the testimony or, if the court in its
707 discretion determines that the interests of justice so require, declaring a mistrial.

708 24-6-613.

709 (a) In examining a witness concerning a prior statement made by the witness, whether
710 written or not, the statement need not be shown nor its contents disclosed to the witness at
711 that time; provided, however, upon request the same shall be shown or disclosed to
712 opposing counsel.

713 (b) Except as provided in Code Section 24-8-806, extrinsic evidence of a prior inconsistent
714 statement by a witness shall not be admissible unless the witness is first afforded an
715 opportunity to explain or deny the prior inconsistent statement and the opposite party is
716 afforded an opportunity to interrogate the witness on the prior inconsistent statement or the
717 interests of justice otherwise require. This subsection shall not apply to admissions of a
718 party-opponent as set forth in paragraph (2) of subsection (d) of Code Section 24-8-801.

719 (c) A prior consistent statement shall be admissible to rehabilitate a witness if the prior
720 consistent statement logically rebuts an attack made on the witness's credibility. A general
721 attack on a witness's credibility with evidence offered under Code Section 24-6-608 or
722 24-6-609 shall not permit rehabilitation under this subsection. If a prior consistent

723 statement is offered to rebut an express or implied charge against the witness of recent
 724 fabrication or improper influence or motive, the prior consistent statement shall have been
 725 made before the alleged recent fabrication or improper influence or motive arose.

726 24-6-614.

727 (a) The court may, on its own motion, call a court appointed expert, call a witness
 728 regarding the competency of any party, or call a child witness or, at the suggestion of a
 729 party, call such witnesses, and all parties shall be entitled to cross-examine such witnesses.

730 In all other situations, the court may only call witnesses when there is an agreement of all
 731 of the parties for the court to call such witnesses and all parties shall be entitled to
 732 cross-examine such witnesses.

733 (b) The court may interrogate witnesses whether called by itself pursuant to subsection (a)
 734 of this Code section or by a party.

735 (c) Objections to the calling of witnesses by the court or to interrogation by the court may
 736 be made at the time or at the next available opportunity when the jury is not present.

737 24-6-615.

738 Except as otherwise provided in Code Section 24-6-616, at the request of a party the court
 739 shall order witnesses excluded so that each witness cannot hear the testimony of other
 740 witnesses, and it may make the order on its own motion. This Code section shall not
 741 authorize exclusion of:

742 (1) A party who is a natural person;

743 (2) An officer or employee of a party which is not a natural person designated as its
 744 representative by its attorney; or

745 (3) A person whose presence is shown by a party to be essential to the presentation of
 746 the party's cause.

747 24-6-616.

748 Subject to the provisions of Code Section 17-17-9, the victim of a criminal offense shall
 749 be entitled to be present in any court exercising jurisdiction over such offense.

750 ARTICLE 2

751 24-6-620.

752 The credibility of a witness shall be a matter to be determined by the trier of fact, and if the
 753 case is being heard by a jury, the court shall give the jury proper instructions as to the
 754 credibility of a witness.

755 24-6-621.

756 A witness may be impeached by disproving the facts testified to by the witness.

757 24-6-622.

758 The state of a witness's feelings towards the parties and the witness's relationship to the
759 parties may always be proved for the consideration of the jury.

760 24-6-623.

761 It shall be the right of a witness to be examined only as to relevant matters and to be
762 protected from improper questions and from harsh or insulting demeanor.

763 ARTICLE 3

764 24-6-650.

765 It is the policy of the State of Georgia to secure the rights of hearing impaired persons who,
766 because of impaired hearing, cannot readily understand or communicate in spoken
767 language and who consequently cannot equally participate in or benefit from proceedings,
768 programs, and activities of the courts, legislative bodies, administrative agencies, licensing
769 commissions, departments, and boards of this state and its political subdivisions unless
770 qualified interpreters are available to assist such persons.

771 24-6-651.

772 As used in this article, the term:

773 (1) 'Agency' means any agency, authority, board, bureau, committee, commission, court,
774 department, or jury of the legislative, judicial, or executive branch of government of this
775 state or any political subdivision thereof.

776 (2) 'Court qualified interpreter' means any person licensed as an interpreter for the
777 hearing impaired pursuant to Code Section 15-1-14.

778 (3) 'Hearing impaired person' means any person whose hearing is totally impaired or
779 whose hearing is so seriously impaired as to prohibit the person from understanding oral
780 communications when spoken in a normal conversational tone.

781 (4) 'Intermediary interpreter' means any person, including any hearing impaired person,
782 who is able to assist in providing an accurate interpretation between spoken English and
783 sign language or between the variance of sign language by acting as an intermediary
784 between a hearing impaired person and a qualified interpreter.

785 (5) 'Proceeding' means any meeting, hearing, trial, investigation, or other proceeding of
786 any nature conducted by an agency.

787 (6) 'Qualified interpreter' means any person certified as an interpreter for hearing
788 impaired persons by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf or a court qualified
789 interpreter.

790 24-6-652.

791 (a) The agency conducting any proceeding shall provide a qualified interpreter to the
792 hearing impaired person:

793 (1) Whenever the hearing impaired person is a party to the proceeding or a witness
794 before the proceeding; or

795 (2) Whenever a person who is below the age of 18 years is a party to the proceeding or
796 a witness before the proceeding conducted by an agency whose parents are hearing
797 impaired persons or whose guardian is a hearing impaired person.

798 (b) A hearing impaired person shall notify the agency not less than ten days, excluding
799 weekends and holidays, prior to the date of the proceeding of the need for a qualified
800 interpreter. If the hearing impaired person received notice of the proceeding less than ten
801 days, excluding weekends and holidays, prior to the proceeding, such person shall notify
802 the agency as soon as practicable after receiving such notice.

803 24-6-653.

804 (a) An arresting law enforcement agency shall provide a qualified interpreter to any
805 hearing impaired person whenever a hearing impaired person is arrested for allegedly
806 violating any criminal law or ordinance of this state or any political subdivision thereof.

807 (b)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, no interrogation, warning,
808 informing of rights, taking of statements, or other investigatory procedures shall be
809 undertaken upon a hearing impaired person unless a qualified interpreter has been
810 provided or the law enforcement agency has taken such other steps as may be reasonable
811 to accommodate such person's disability. No answer, statement, admission, or other
812 evidence acquired through the interrogation of a hearing impaired person shall be
813 admissible in any criminal or quasi-criminal proceedings unless such was knowingly and
814 voluntarily given. No hearing impaired person who has been taken into custody and who
815 is otherwise eligible for release shall be detained because of the unavailability of a
816 qualified interpreter.

817 (2) If a qualified interpreter is not available, an arresting officer may interrogate or take
818 a statement from such person, provided that if the hearing impaired person cannot hear
819 spoken words with a hearing aid or other sound amplification device, such interrogation
820 and answers thereto shall be in writing and shall be preserved and turned over to the court
821 in the event such person is tried for the alleged offense.

822 24-6-654.

823 (a) A court shall provide a court qualified interpreter to any hearing impaired person
824 whenever the hearing impaired person has been provided with a public defender or court
825 appointed legal counsel.

826 (b) The court qualified interpreter authorized by this Code section shall be present at all
827 times when the hearing impaired person is consulting with legal counsel.

828 24-6-655.

829 Whenever a hearing impaired person shall be authorized to be provided a qualified
830 interpreter, such person may waive the right to the use of such interpreter. Any such
831 waiver shall be in writing and shall be approved by the agency or law enforcement agency
832 before which the hearing impaired person is to appear. In no event shall the failure of a
833 hearing impaired person to request an interpreter be deemed to be a waiver of the hearing
834 impaired person's right to a qualified interpreter.

835 24-6-656.

836 Whenever a hearing impaired person shall be authorized to be provided a qualified
837 interpreter, the agency or law enforcement agency shall determine whether the qualified
838 interpreter so provided is able to communicate accurately with and translate information
839 to and from the hearing impaired person. If it is determined that the qualified interpreter
840 cannot perform these functions, the agency or law enforcement agency shall obtain the
841 services of another qualified interpreter or shall appoint an intermediary interpreter to assist
842 the qualified interpreter in communicating with the hearing impaired person.

843 24-6-657.

844 (a) Prior to providing any service to a hearing impaired person, any qualified interpreter
845 or intermediary interpreter shall subscribe to an oath that he or she will interpret all
846 communications in an accurate manner to the best of his or her skill and knowledge. The
847 Supreme Court of Georgia may by rule of court prescribe the form of the oath for
848 interpreters and intermediary interpreters for use in court and other judicial proceedings.

849 (b) Whenever a hearing impaired person communicates with any other person through the
850 use of an interpreter and under circumstances which make such communications privileged
851 or otherwise confidential, the presence of the interpreter shall not vitiate such privilege and
852 the interpreter shall not be required to disclose the contents of such communication.

853 (c) Whenever a qualified interpreter is required by this article, the agency or law
854 enforcement agency shall not begin the proceeding or take any action until such interpreter

855 is in full view of and spatially situated so as to assure effective communication with the
 856 hearing impaired person.

857 (d) The agency or law enforcement agency may, upon its own motion or upon motion of
 858 any party, witness, or participant, order that the testimony of the hearing impaired person
 859 be electronically and visually recorded. Any such recording may be used to verify the
 860 testimony given by the hearing impaired person.

861 24-6-658.

862 Any qualified interpreter or intermediary interpreter providing service under this article
 863 shall be compensated by the agency or law enforcement agency requesting such service.

864 CHAPTER 7

865 24-7-701.

866 (a) If the witness is not testifying as an expert, the witness's testimony in the form of
 867 opinions or inferences shall be limited to those opinions or inferences which are:

868 (1) Rationally based on the perception of the witness;

869 (2) Helpful to a clear understanding of the witness's testimony or the determination of
 870 a fact in issue; and

871 (3) Not based on scientific, technical, or other specialized knowledge within the scope
 872 of Code Section 24-7-702.

873 (b) Direct testimony as to market value is in the nature of opinion evidence. A witness
 874 need not be an expert or dealer in an article or property to testify as to its value if he or she
 875 has had an opportunity to form a reasoned opinion.

876 24-7-702.

877 (a) Except as provided in Code Section 22-1-14 and in subsection (g) of this Code section,
 878 the provisions of this Code section shall apply in all civil proceedings. The opinion of a
 879 witness qualified as an expert under this Code section may be given on the facts as proved
 880 by other witnesses.

881 (b) If scientific, technical, or other specialized knowledge will assist the trier of fact to
 882 understand the evidence or to determine a fact in issue, a witness qualified as an expert by
 883 knowledge, skill, experience, training, or education may testify thereto in the form of an
 884 opinion or otherwise, if:

885 (1) The testimony is based upon sufficient facts or data;

886 (2) The testimony is the product of reliable principles and methods; and

887 (3) The witness has applied the principles and methods reliably to the facts of the case
888 which have been or will be admitted into evidence before the trier of fact.

889 (c) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (b) of this Code section and any other
890 provision of law which might be construed to the contrary, in professional malpractice
891 actions, the opinions of an expert, who is otherwise qualified as to the acceptable standard
892 of conduct of the professional whose conduct is at issue, shall be admissible only if, at the
893 time the act or omission is alleged to have occurred, such expert:

894 (1) Was licensed by an appropriate regulatory agency to practice his or her profession
895 in the state in which such expert was practicing or teaching in the profession at such time;
896 and

897 (2) In the case of a medical malpractice action, had actual professional knowledge and
898 experience in the area of practice or specialty in which the opinion is to be given as the
899 result of having been regularly engaged in:

900 (A) The active practice of such area of specialty of his or her profession for at least
901 three of the last five years, with sufficient frequency to establish an appropriate level
902 of knowledge, as determined by the judge, in performing the procedure, diagnosing the
903 condition, or rendering the treatment which is alleged to have been performed or
904 rendered negligently by the defendant whose conduct is at issue; or

905 (B) The teaching of his or her profession for at least three of the last five years as an
906 employed member of the faculty of an educational institution accredited in the teaching
907 of such profession, with sufficient frequency to establish an appropriate level of
908 knowledge, as determined by the judge, in teaching others how to perform the
909 procedure, diagnose the condition, or render the treatment which is alleged to have been
910 performed or rendered negligently by the defendant whose conduct is at issue; and

911 (C) Except as provided in subparagraph (D) of this paragraph:

912 (i) Is a member of the same profession;

913 (ii) Is a medical doctor testifying as to the standard of care of a defendant who is a
914 doctor of osteopathy; or

915 (iii) Is a doctor of osteopathy testifying as to the standard of care of a defendant who
916 is a medical doctor; and

917 (D) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Code section, an expert who is a
918 physician and, as a result of having, during at least three of the last five years
919 immediately preceding the time the act or omission is alleged to have occurred,
920 supervised, taught, or instructed nurses, nurse practitioners, certified registered nurse
921 anesthetists, nurse midwives, physician assistants, physical therapists, occupational
922 therapists, or medical support staff, has knowledge of the standard of care of that health
923 care provider under the circumstances at issue shall be competent to testify as to the

924 standard of that health care provider. However, a nurse, nurse practitioner, certified
 925 registered nurse anesthetist, nurse midwife, physician assistant, physical therapist,
 926 occupational therapist, or medical support staff shall not be competent to testify as to
 927 the standard of care of a physician.

928 (d) Upon motion of a party, the court may hold a pretrial hearing to determine whether the
 929 witness qualifies as an expert and whether the expert's testimony satisfies the requirements
 930 of subsections (a) and (b) of this Code section. Such hearing and ruling shall be completed
 931 no later than the final pretrial conference contemplated under Code Section 9-11-16.

932 (e) An affiant shall meet the requirements of this Code section in order to be deemed
 933 qualified to testify as an expert by means of the affidavit required under Code Section
 934 9-11-9.1.

935 (f) It is the intent of the legislature that, in all civil proceedings, the courts of the State of
 936 Georgia not be viewed as open to expert evidence that would not be admissible in other
 937 states. Therefore, in interpreting and applying this Code section, the courts of this state
 938 may draw from the opinions of the United States Supreme Court in Daubert v. Merrell
 939 Dow Pharmaceuticals, Inc., 509 U.S. 579 (1993); General Electric Co. v. Joiner, 522 U.S.
 940 136 (1997); Kumho Tire Co. Ltd. v. Carmichael, 526 U.S. 137 (1999); and other cases in
 941 federal courts applying the standards announced by the United States Supreme Court in
 942 these cases.

943 (g) This Code section shall not be strictly applied in proceedings conducted pursuant to
 944 Chapter 9 of Title 34 or in administrative proceedings conducted pursuant to Chapter 13
 945 of Title 50.

946 24-7-703.

947 The facts or data in the particular proceeding upon which an expert bases an opinion or
 948 inference may be those perceived by or made known to the expert at or before the hearing.
 949 If of a type reasonably relied upon by experts in the particular field in forming opinions or
 950 inferences upon the subject, such facts or data need not be admissible in evidence in order
 951 for the opinion or inference to be admitted. Such facts or data that are otherwise
 952 inadmissible shall not be disclosed to the jury by the proponent of the opinion or inference
 953 unless the court determines that their probative value in assisting the jury to evaluate the
 954 expert's opinion substantially outweighs their prejudicial effect.

955 24-7-704.

956 (a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this Code section, testimony in the form of an
 957 opinion or inference otherwise admissible shall not be objectionable because it embraces
 958 an ultimate issue to be decided by the trier of fact.

959 (b) No expert witness testifying with respect to the mental state or condition of an accused
 960 in a criminal proceeding shall state an opinion or inference as to whether the accused did
 961 or did not have the mental state or condition constituting an element of the crime charged
 962 or of a defense thereto. Such ultimate issues are matters for the trier of fact alone.

963 24-7-705.

964 An expert may testify in terms of opinion or inference and give reasons therefor without
 965 first testifying to the underlying facts or data, unless the court requires otherwise. An
 966 expert may in any event be required to disclose the underlying facts or data on
 967 cross-examination.

968 24-7-706.

969 Except as provided in Chapter 7 of Title 9 or Code Section 17-7-130.1, 17-10-66, 29-4-11,
 970 29-5-11, 31-14-3, 31-20-3, or 44-6-166.1, the following procedures shall govern the
 971 appointment, compensation, and presentation of testimony of court appointed experts:

972 (1) The court on its own motion or on the motion of any party may enter an order to
 973 show cause why any expert witness should not be appointed and may request the parties
 974 to submit nominations. The court may appoint any expert witnesses agreed upon by the
 975 parties and may appoint expert witnesses of its own selection. An expert witness shall
 976 not be appointed by the court unless the witness consents to act. Each appointed expert
 977 witness shall be informed of his or her duties by the court in writing, a copy of which
 978 shall be filed with the clerk, or at a conference in which the parties shall have opportunity
 979 to participate. Each appointed expert witness shall advise the parties of his or her
 980 findings, if any. Except as provided in Article 3 of Chapter 12 or Article 6 of Chapter 13
 981 of this title, such witness's deposition may be taken by any party. Such witness may be
 982 called to testify by the court or any party. Each expert witness shall be subject to
 983 cross-examination by each party, including a party calling the witness;

984 (2) Appointed expert witnesses shall be entitled to reasonable compensation in whatever
 985 sum the court allows. The compensation fixed shall be payable from funds which may
 986 be provided by law in criminal proceedings and civil proceedings and proceedings
 987 involving just compensation for the taking of property. In other civil proceedings, the
 988 compensation shall be paid by the parties in such proportion and at such time as the court
 989 directs and thereafter charged in like manner as other costs;

990 (3) In the exercise of its discretion, the court may authorize disclosure to the jury of the
 991 fact that the court appointed the expert witness; and

992 (4) Nothing in this Code section shall limit a party in calling expert witnesses of the
 993 party's own selection.

994 24-7-707.

995 In criminal proceedings, the opinions of experts on any question of science, skill, trade, or
 996 like questions shall always be admissible; and such opinions may be given on the facts as
 997 proved by other witnesses.

998 CHAPTER 8

999 ARTICLE 1

1000 24-8-801.

1001 As used in this chapter, the term:

1002 (a) 'Statement' means:

1003 (1) An oral or written assertion; or

1004 (2) Nonverbal conduct of a person, if it is intended by the person as an assertion.

1005 (b) 'Declarant' means a person who makes a statement.

1006 (c) 'Hearsay' means a statement, other than one made by the declarant while testifying at
 1007 the trial or hearing, offered in evidence to prove the truth of the matter asserted.

1008 (d) 'Hearsay' shall be subject to the following exclusions and conditions:

1009 (1) *Prior statement by witness.*

1010 (A) An out-of-court statement shall not be hearsay if the declarant testifies at the trial
 1011 or hearing, is subject to cross-examination concerning the statement, and the statement
 1012 is admissible as a prior inconsistent statement or a prior consistent statement under
 1013 Code Section 24-6-613 or is otherwise admissible under this chapter.

1014 (B) If a hearsay statement is admitted and the declarant does not testify at the trial or
 1015 hearing, other out-of-court statements of the declarant shall be admissible for the
 1016 limited use of impeaching or rehabilitating the credibility of the declarant, and not as
 1017 substantive evidence, if the other statements qualify as prior inconsistent statements or
 1018 prior consistent statements under Code Section 24-6-613.

1019 (C) A statement shall not be hearsay if the declarant testifies at the trial or hearing and
 1020 is subject to cross-examination concerning the statement, and the statement is one of
 1021 identification of a person made after perceiving the person; and

1022 (2) *Admissions by party-opponent.*

1023 Admissions shall not be excluded by the hearsay rule. An admission is a statement
 1024 offered against a party which is:

1025 (A) The party's own statement, in either an individual or representative capacity;

1026 (B) A statement of which the party has manifested an adoption or belief in its truth;

1027 (C) A statement by a person authorized by the party to make a statement concerning
 1028 the subject;

1029 (D) A statement by the party's agent or employee, but not including any agent of the
 1030 state in a criminal proceeding, concerning a matter within the scope of the agency or
 1031 employment, made during the existence of the relationship; or

1032 (E) A statement by a coconspirator of a party during the course and in furtherance of
 1033 the conspiracy, including a statement made during the concealment phase of a
 1034 conspiracy. A conspiracy need not be charged in order to make a statement admissible
 1035 under this subparagraph.

1036 The contents of the statement shall be considered but shall not alone be sufficient to
 1037 establish the declarant's authority under subparagraph (C) of this paragraph, the agency
 1038 or employment relationship and scope thereof under subparagraph (D) of this paragraph,
 1039 or the existence of the conspiracy and the participation therein of the declarant and the
 1040 party against whom the statement is offered under subparagraph (E) of this paragraph.

1041 (e) 'Public office' means:

1042 (1) Every state department, agency, board, bureau, commission, division, public
 1043 corporation, and authority;

1044 (2) Every county, municipal corporation, school district, or other political subdivision
 1045 of this state;

1046 (3) Every department, agency, board, bureau, commission, authority, or similar body of
 1047 each such county, municipal corporation, or other political subdivision of this state; and

1048 (4) Every city, county, regional, or other authority established pursuant to the laws of this
 1049 state.

1050 (f) 'Public official' means an elected or appointed official.

1051 (g) 'Public record' means information that is inscribed on a tangible medium or that is
 1052 stored in an electronic or other medium and is retrievable in perceivable form and created
 1053 in the course of the operation of a public office.

1054 24-8-802.

1055 Hearsay shall not be admissible except as provided by this article; provided, however, that
 1056 if a party does not properly object to hearsay, the objection shall be deemed waived, and
 1057 the hearsay evidence shall be legal evidence and admissible.

1058 24-8-803.

1059 The following shall not be excluded by the hearsay rule, even though the declarant is
 1060 available as a witness:

1061 (1) Present sense impression. A statement describing or explaining an event or condition
 1062 made while the declarant was perceiving the event or condition or immediately thereafter;

1063 (2) Excited utterance. A statement relating to a startling event or condition made while
1064 the declarant was under the stress of excitement caused by the event or condition;
1065 (3) Then existing mental, emotional, or physical condition. A statement of the
1066 declarant's then existing state of mind, emotion, sensation, or physical condition, such as
1067 intent, plan, motive, design, mental feeling, pain, and bodily health, but not including a
1068 statement of memory or belief to prove the fact remembered or believed unless such
1069 statements relate to the execution, revocation, identification, or terms of the declarant's
1070 will and not including a statement of belief as to the intent of another person;
1071 (4) Statements for purposes of medical diagnosis or treatment. Statements made for
1072 purposes of medical diagnosis or treatment and describing medical history, or past or
1073 present symptoms, pain, or sensations, or the inception or general character of the cause
1074 or external source thereof insofar as reasonably pertinent to diagnosis or treatment;
1075 (5) Recorded recollection. A memorandum or record concerning a matter about which
1076 a witness once had knowledge but now has insufficient recollection to enable the witness
1077 to testify fully and accurately shown to have been made or adopted by the witness when
1078 the matter was fresh in the witness's memory and to reflect that knowledge correctly. If
1079 admitted, the memorandum or record may be read into evidence but shall not itself be
1080 received as an exhibit unless offered by an adverse party;
1081 (6) Records of regularly conducted activity. Unless the source of information or the
1082 method or circumstances of preparation indicate lack of trustworthiness and subject to the
1083 provisions of Chapter 7 of this title, a memorandum, report, record, or data compilation,
1084 in any form, of acts, events, conditions, opinions, or diagnoses, if (A) made at or near the
1085 time of the described acts, events, conditions, opinions, or diagnoses; (B) made by, or
1086 from information transmitted by, a person with personal knowledge and a business duty
1087 to report; (C) kept in the course of a regularly conducted business activity; and (D) it was
1088 the regular practice of that business activity to make the memorandum, report, record, or
1089 data compilation, all as shown by the testimony of the custodian or other qualified
1090 witness or by certification that complies with paragraph (11) or (12) of Code Section
1091 24-9-902 or by any other statute permitting certification. The term 'business' as used in
1092 this paragraph includes any business, institution, association, profession, occupation, and
1093 calling of every kind, whether or not conducted for profit. Public records and reports
1094 shall be admissible under paragraph (8) of this Code section and shall not be admissible
1095 under this paragraph;
1096 (7) Absence of entry in records kept in accordance with paragraph (6) of this Code
1097 section. Evidence that a matter is not included in the memoranda, reports, records, or
1098 data compilations, in any form, kept in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (6)
1099 of this Code section, to prove the nonoccurrence or nonexistence of the matter, if the

1100 matter was of a kind of which a memorandum, report, record, or data compilation was
 1101 regularly made and preserved, unless the sources of information or other circumstances
 1102 indicate lack of trustworthiness;

1103 (8) *Public records and reports.* Except as otherwise provided by law, public records,
 1104 reports, statements, or data compilations, in any form, of public offices, setting forth:

1105 (A) The activities of the public office;

1106 (B) Matters observed pursuant to duty imposed by law as to which matters there was
 1107 a duty to report, excluding, however, against the accused in criminal proceedings,
 1108 matters observed by police officers and other law enforcement personnel in connection
 1109 with an investigation; or

1110 (C) In civil proceedings and against the state in criminal proceedings, factual findings
 1111 resulting from an investigation made pursuant to authority granted by law, unless the
 1112 sources of information or other circumstances indicate lack of trustworthiness;

1113 (9) *Records of vital statistics.* Records or data compilations, in any form, of births, fetal
 1114 deaths, deaths, or marriages, if the report thereof was made to a public office pursuant to
 1115 requirements of law;

1116 (10) *Absence of public record or entry.* To prove the absence of a record, report,
 1117 statement, or data compilation, in any form, or the nonoccurrence or nonexistence of a
 1118 matter of which a record, report, statement, or data compilation, in any form, was
 1119 regularly made and preserved by a public office, evidence in the form of a certification
 1120 in accordance with Code Section 24-9-902, or testimony, that diligent search failed to
 1121 disclose the record, report, statement, or data compilation, or entry;

1122 (11) *Records of religious organizations.* Statements of birth, marriages, divorces, deaths,
 1123 legitimacy, ancestry, relationship by blood or marriage, or other similar facts of personal
 1124 or family history, contained in a regularly kept record of a religious organization;

1125 (12) *Marriage, baptismal, and similar certificates.* Statements of fact contained in a
 1126 certificate that the maker performed a marriage or other ceremony or administered a
 1127 sacrament, made by a clergyman, public official, or other person authorized by the rules
 1128 or practices of a religious organization or by law to perform the act certified and
 1129 purporting to have been issued at the time of the act or within a reasonable time
 1130 thereafter;

1131 (13) *Family records.* Statements of fact concerning personal or family history contained
 1132 in family Bibles, genealogies, charts, engravings on rings, inscriptions on family portraits,
 1133 engravings on urns, crypts, or tombstones, or the like;

1134 (14) *Records of documents affecting an interest in property.* The record of a document
 1135 purporting to establish or affect an interest in property, as proof of the content of the
 1136 original recorded document and its execution and delivery by each person by whom it

1137 purports to have been executed, if the record is a record of a public office and an
1138 applicable law authorizes the recording of documents of that kind in such office;
1139 (15) Statements in documents affecting an interest in property. A statement contained
1140 in a document purporting to establish or affect an interest in property if the matter stated
1141 was relevant to the purpose of the document, unless dealings with the property since the
1142 document was made have been inconsistent with the truth of the statement or the purport
1143 of the document;
1144 (16) Statements in ancient documents. Statements in a document in existence 20 years
1145 or more the authenticity of which is established;
1146 (17) Market reports and commercial publications. Market quotations, tabulations, lists,
1147 directories, or other published compilations generally used and relied upon by the public
1148 or by persons in the witness's particular occupation;
1149 (18) Learned treatises. To the extent called to the attention of an expert witness upon
1150 cross-examination, statements contained in published treatises, periodicals, or pamphlets,
1151 whether published electronically or in print, on a subject of history, medicine, or other
1152 science or art, established as a reliable authority by the testimony or admission of the
1153 witness, by other expert testimony, or by judicial notice. If admitted, the statements may
1154 be used for cross-examination of an expert witness and read into evidence but shall not
1155 be received as exhibits;
1156 (19) Reputation concerning personal or family history. Reputation among members of
1157 a person's family by blood, adoption, or marriage or among a person's associates or in the
1158 community concerning a person's birth, adoption, marriage, divorce, death, legitimacy,
1159 relationship by blood, adoption, or marriage, ancestry, or other similar fact of the person's
1160 personal or family history;
1161 (20) Reputation concerning boundaries or general history. Reputation in a community,
1162 arising before the controversy, as to boundaries of or customs affecting lands in the
1163 community and reputation as to events of general history important to the community or
1164 state or nation in which such lands are located;
1165 (21) Reputation as to character. Reputation of a person's character among associates or
1166 in the community;
1167 (22) Judgment of previous conviction. Evidence of a final judgment, entered after a trial
1168 or upon a plea of guilty but not upon a plea of nolo contendere, adjudging a person guilty
1169 of a crime punishable by death or imprisonment in excess of one year to prove any fact
1170 essential to sustain the judgment, but not including, when offered by the state in a
1171 criminal prosecution for purposes other than impeachment, judgments against persons
1172 other than the accused. The pendency of an appeal may be shown but shall not affect
1173 admissibility; or

1174 (23) Judgment as to personal, family, or general history or boundaries. Judgments as
 1175 proof of matters of personal, family, or general history or boundaries essential to the
 1176 judgment, if the same would be provable by evidence of reputation.

1177 24-8-804.

1178 (a) As used in this Code section, the term 'unavailable as a witness' includes situations in
 1179 which the declarant:

1180 (1) Is exempted by ruling of the court on the ground of privilege from testifying
 1181 concerning the subject matter of the declarant's statement;

1182 (2) Persists in refusing to testify concerning the subject matter of the declarant's
 1183 statement despite an order of the court to do so;

1184 (3) Testifies to a lack of memory of the subject matter of the declarant's statement;

1185 (4) Is unable to be present or to testify at the hearing because of death or then existing
 1186 physical or mental illness or infirmity; or

1187 (5) Is absent from the hearing and the proponent of the statement has been unable to
 1188 procure the declarant's attendance or, in the case of exceptions under paragraph (2), (3),
 1189 or (4) of subsection (b) of this Code section, the declarant's attendance or testimony, by
 1190 process or other reasonable means.

1191 A declarant shall not be deemed unavailable as a witness if the declarant's exemption,
 1192 refusal, claim of lack of memory, inability, or absence is due to the procurement or
 1193 wrongdoing of the proponent of a statement for the purpose of preventing the witness from
 1194 attending or testifying.

1195 (b) The following shall not be excluded by the hearsay rule if the declarant is unavailable
 1196 as a witness:

1197 (1) Testimony given as a witness at another hearing of the same or a different
 1198 proceeding, or in a deposition taken in compliance with law in the course of the same or
 1199 another proceeding, if the party against whom the testimony is now offered, or, in a civil
 1200 proceeding, a predecessor in interest, had an opportunity and similar motive to develop
 1201 the testimony by direct, cross, or redirect examination. If deposition testimony is
 1202 admissible under either the rules stated in Code Section 9-11-32 or this Code section, it
 1203 shall be admissible at trial in accordance with the rules under which it was offered;

1204 (2) In a prosecution for homicide or in a civil proceeding, a statement made by a
 1205 declarant while believing that his or her death was imminent, concerning the cause or
 1206 circumstances of what the declarant believed to be impending death;

1207 (3) A statement against interest. A statement against interest is a statement:

1208 (A) Which a reasonable person in the declarant's position would have made only if the
 1209 person believed it to be true because, when made, it was so contrary to the declarant's

1210 proprietary or pecuniary interest or had so great a tendency to invalidate a claim by the
 1211 declarant against another or to expose the declarant to civil or criminal liability; and
 1212 (B) Supported by corroborating circumstances that clearly indicate the trustworthiness
 1213 of the statement if it is offered in a criminal case as a statement that tends to expose the
 1214 declarant to criminal liability;

1215 (4) A statement concerning the declarant's own birth, adoption, marriage, divorce,
 1216 legitimacy, relationship by blood, adoption, or marriage, ancestry, or other similar fact
 1217 of personal or family history, even though the declarant had no means of acquiring
 1218 personal knowledge of the matter stated or a statement concerning the foregoing matters
 1219 and death also of another person, if the declarant was related to the other by blood,
 1220 adoption, or marriage or was so intimately associated with the other's family as to be
 1221 likely to have accurate information concerning the matter declared; or

1222 (5) A statement offered against a party that has engaged or acquiesced in wrongdoing
 1223 that was intended to, and did, procure the unavailability of the declarant as a witness.

1224 24-8-805.

1225 Hearsay included within hearsay shall not be excluded under the hearsay rule if each part
 1226 of the combined statements conforms with an exception to the hearsay rule.

1227 24-8-806.

1228 When a hearsay statement has been admitted in evidence, the credibility of the declarant
 1229 may be attacked and, if attacked, may be supported by any evidence which would be
 1230 admissible for those purposes if the declarant had testified as a witness. Evidence of a
 1231 statement or conduct by the declarant at any time, inconsistent with the declarant's hearsay
 1232 statement, shall not be subject to any requirement that the declarant may have been
 1233 afforded an opportunity to deny or explain. If the party against whom a hearsay statement
 1234 has been admitted calls the declarant as a witness, the party shall be entitled to examine the
 1235 declarant on the statement as if under cross-examination.

1236 24-8-807.

1237 A statement not specifically covered by any law but having equivalent circumstantial
 1238 guarantees of trustworthiness shall not be excluded by the hearsay rule, if the court
 1239 determines that:

1240 (1) The statement is offered as evidence of a material fact;

1241 (2) The statement is more probative on the point for which it is offered than any other
 1242 evidence which the proponent can procure through reasonable efforts; and

1243 (3) The general purposes of the rules of evidence and the interests of justice will best be
1244 served by admission of the statement into evidence.
1245 However, a statement may not be admitted under this Code section unless the proponent
1246 of it makes known to the adverse party, sufficiently in advance of the trial or hearing to
1247 provide the adverse party with a fair opportunity to prepare to meet it, the proponent's
1248 intention to offer the statement and the particulars of it, including the name and address of
1249 the declarant.

1250 ARTICLE 2

1251 24-8-820.

1252 A statement made by a child under the age of 14 years describing any act of sexual contact
1253 or physical abuse performed with or on the child by another shall be admissible in evidence
1254 by the testimony of the person to whom made if the child is available to testify in the
1255 proceedings and the court finds that the circumstances of the statement provide sufficient
1256 indicia of reliability.

1257 24-8-821.

1258 Without offering the same in evidence, either party may avail himself or herself of
1259 allegations or admissions made in the pleadings of the other.

1260 24-8-822.

1261 When an admission is given in evidence by one party, it shall be the right of the other party
1262 to have the whole admission and all the conversation connected therewith admitted into
1263 evidence.

1264 24-8-823.

1265 All admissions shall be scanned with care, and confessions of guilt shall be received with
1266 great caution. A confession alone, uncorroborated by any other evidence, shall not justify
1267 a conviction.

1268 24-8-824.

1269 To make a confession admissible, it shall have been made voluntarily, without being
1270 induced by another by the slightest hope of benefit or remotest fear of injury.

1271 24-8-825.

1272 The fact that a confession has been made under a spiritual exhortation, a promise of
 1273 secrecy, or a promise of collateral benefit shall not exclude it.

1274 24-8-826.

1275 (a) Upon the trial of any civil proceeding involving injury or disease, any medical report
 1276 in narrative form which has been signed and dated by an examining or treating licensed
 1277 physician, dentist, orthodontist, podiatrist, physical or occupational therapist, doctor of
 1278 chiropractic, psychologist, advanced practice registered nurse, social worker, professional
 1279 counselor, or marriage and family therapist shall be admissible and received in evidence
 1280 insofar as it purports to represent the history, examination, diagnosis, treatment, prognosis,
 1281 or interpretation of tests or examinations, including the basis therefor, by the person signing
 1282 the report, the same as if that person were present at trial and testifying as a witness;
 1283 provided, however, that such report and notice of intention to introduce such report shall
 1284 first be provided to the adverse party at least 60 days prior to trial. A statement of the
 1285 qualifications of the person signing such report may be included as part of the basis for
 1286 providing the information contained therein, and the opinion of the person signing the
 1287 report with regard to the etiology of the injury or disease may be included as part of the
 1288 diagnosis. Any adverse party may object to the admissibility of any portion of the report,
 1289 other than on the ground that it is hearsay, within 15 days of being provided with the report.
 1290 Further, any adverse party shall have the right to cross-examine the person signing the
 1291 report and provide rebuttal testimony. The party tendering the report may also introduce
 1292 testimony of the person signing the report for the purpose of supplementing the report or
 1293 otherwise.

1294 (b) The medical narrative shall be presented to the jury as depositions are presented to the
 1295 jury and shall not go out with the jury as documentary evidence.

1296 CHAPTER 9

1297 ARTICLE 1

1298 24-9-901.

1299 (a) The requirement of authentication or identification as a condition precedent to
 1300 admissibility shall be satisfied by evidence sufficient to support a finding that the matter
 1301 in question is what its proponent claims.

1302 (b) By way of illustration only, and not by way of limitation, the following are examples
 1303 of authentication or identification conforming with the requirements of this Code section:

1304 (1) Testimony of a witness with knowledge that a matter is what it is claimed to be;

- 1305 (2) Nonexpert opinion as to the genuineness of handwriting, based upon familiarity not
 1306 acquired for purposes of the litigation;
- 1307 (3) Comparison by the trier of fact or by expert witnesses with specimens which have
 1308 been authenticated. Such specimens shall be furnished to the opposite party no later than
 1309 ten days prior to trial;
- 1310 (4) Appearance, contents, substance, internal patterns, or other distinctive characteristics,
 1311 taken in conjunction with circumstances;
- 1312 (5) Identification of a voice, whether heard firsthand or through mechanical or electronic
 1313 transmission or recording, by opinion based upon hearing the voice at any time under
 1314 circumstances connecting it with the alleged speaker;
- 1315 (6) Telephone conversations, by evidence that a call was made to the number assigned
 1316 at the time by a telephone service provider to a particular person or business, if:
- 1317 (A) In the case of a person, circumstances, including self-identification, show the
 1318 person answering to be the one called; or
- 1319 (B) In the case of a business, the call was made to a place of business and the
 1320 conversation related to business reasonably transacted over the telephone;
- 1321 (7) Evidence that a document authorized by law to be recorded or filed and in fact
 1322 recorded or filed in a public office or a purported public record, report, statement, or data
 1323 compilation, in any form, is from the public office where items of this nature are kept;
- 1324 (8) Evidence that a document or data compilation, in any form:
- 1325 (A) Is in such condition as to create no suspicion concerning its authenticity;
- 1326 (B) Was in a place where it, if authentic, would likely be; and
- 1327 (C) Has been in existence 20 years or more at the time it is offered;
- 1328 (9) Evidence describing a process or system used to produce a result and showing that
 1329 the process or system produces an accurate result; or
- 1330 (10) Any method of authentication or identification provided by law.

1331 24-9-902.

1332 Extrinsic evidence of authenticity as a condition precedent to admissibility shall not be
 1333 required with respect to the following:

- 1334 (1) A document bearing a seal purporting to be that of the United States or of any state,
 1335 district, commonwealth, territory, or insular possession thereof or the Panama Canal Zone
 1336 or the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands or of a political subdivision, department,
 1337 officer, or agency thereof or of a municipal corporation of this state and bearing a
 1338 signature purporting to be an attestation or execution;
- 1339 (2) A document purporting to bear the signature in the official capacity of an officer or
 1340 employee of any entity included in paragraph (1) of this Code section having no seal, if

1341 a public officer having a seal and having official duties in the district or political
1342 subdivision of the officer or employee certifies under seal that the signer has the official
1343 capacity and that the signature is genuine;

1344 (3) A document purporting to be executed or attested in an official capacity by a person
1345 authorized by the laws of a foreign country to make such execution or attestation and
1346 accompanied by a final certification as to the genuineness of the signature, official
1347 position of the executing or attesting person, or of any foreign official whose certificate
1348 of genuineness of signature and official position relates to such execution or attestation
1349 or is in a chain of certificates of genuineness of signature and official position relating to
1350 such execution or attestation. A final certification may be made by a secretary of
1351 embassy or legation, consul general, consul, vice consul, or consular agent of the United
1352 States or a diplomatic or consular official of the foreign country assigned or accredited
1353 to the United States. If reasonable opportunity has been given to all parties to investigate
1354 the authenticity and accuracy of official documents, the court may, for good cause shown,
1355 order that such documents be treated as presumptively authentic without final
1356 certification or permit such documents to be evidenced by an attested summary with or
1357 without final certification;

1358 (4) A duplicate of an official record or report or entry therein or of a document
1359 authorized by law to be recorded or filed and actually recorded or filed in a public office,
1360 including data compilations in any form, certified as correct by the custodian or other
1361 person authorized to make the certification by certificate complying with paragraph (1),
1362 (2), or (3) of this Code section or complying with any law of the United States or of this
1363 state, including Code Section 24-9-920;

1364 (5) Books, pamphlets, or other publications purporting to be issued by a public office;

1365 (6) Printed materials purporting to be newspapers or periodicals;

1366 (7) Inscriptions, signs, tags, or labels purporting to have been affixed in the course of
1367 business and indicating ownership, control, or origin;

1368 (8) Documents accompanied by a certificate of acknowledgment executed in the manner
1369 provided by law by a notary public or other officer authorized by law to take
1370 acknowledgments;

1371 (9) Commercial paper, signatures thereon, and documents relating thereto to the extent
1372 provided by general commercial law;

1373 (10) Any signature, document, or other matter declared by any law of the United States
1374 or of this state to be presumptively or prima facie genuine or authentic;

1375 (11) The original or a duplicate of a domestic record of regularly conducted activity that
1376 would be admissible under paragraph (6) of Code Section 24-8-803 if accompanied by
1377 a written declaration of its custodian or other qualified person certifying that the record:

- 1378 (A) Was made at or near the time of the occurrence of the matters set forth by, or from
 1379 information transmitted by, a person with knowledge of such matters;
 1380 (B) Was kept in the course of the regularly conducted activity; and
 1381 (C) Was made by the regularly conducted activity as a regular practice.

1382 A party intending to offer a record into evidence under this paragraph shall provide
 1383 written notice of such intention to all adverse parties and shall make the record and
 1384 declaration available for inspection sufficiently in advance of their offer into evidence to
 1385 provide an adverse party with a fair opportunity to challenge such record and declaration;
 1386 or

1387 (12) In a civil proceeding, the original or a duplicate of a foreign record of regularly
 1388 conducted activity that would be admissible under paragraph (6) of Code Section
 1389 24-8-803 if accompanied by a written declaration by its custodian or other qualified
 1390 person certifying that the record:

- 1391 (A) Was made at or near the time of the occurrence of the matters set forth by, or from
 1392 information transmitted by, a person with knowledge of those matters;
 1393 (B) Was kept in the course of the regularly conducted activity; and
 1394 (C) Was made by the regularly conducted activity as a regular practice.

1395 The declaration shall be signed in a manner that, if falsely made, would subject the maker
 1396 to criminal penalty under the laws of the country where the declaration is signed. A party
 1397 intending to offer a record into evidence under this paragraph shall provide written notice
 1398 of such intention to all adverse parties and shall make the record and declaration available
 1399 for inspection sufficiently in advance of their offer into evidence to provide an adverse
 1400 party with a fair opportunity to challenge such record and declaration.

1401 24-9-903.

1402 The testimony of a subscribing witness shall not be necessary to authenticate a writing
 1403 unless required by the laws of the jurisdiction whose laws govern the validity of the
 1404 writing.

1405 24-9-904.

1406 As used in this article, the term:

- 1407 (1) 'Public office' shall have the same meaning as set forth in Code Section 24-8-801.
 1408 (2) 'Public officer' means any person appointed or elected to be the head of any entity
 1409 included in paragraph (1) of Code Section 24-9-902.
 1410 (3) 'Telephone service provider' shall have the same meaning as 'voice service provider'
 1411 as set forth in Code Section 46-5-231.

1412 ARTICLE 21413 24-9-920.

1414 The certificate or attestation of any public officer either of this state or any county thereof
1415 or any clerk or keeper of county, consolidated government, or municipal records in this
1416 state shall give sufficient validity or authenticity to any copy or transcript of any record,
1417 document, paper or file, or other matter or thing in such public officer's respective office,
1418 or pertaining thereto, to admit the same in evidence.

1419 24-9-921.

1420 (a) Upon the trial of any civil proceeding involving injury or disease, the patient or the
1421 member of his or her family or other person responsible for the care of the patient shall be
1422 a competent witness to identify bills for expenses incurred in the treatment of the patient
1423 upon a showing by such a witness that the expenses were incurred in connection with the
1424 treatment of the injury, disease, or disability involved in the subject of litigation at trial and
1425 that the bills were received from:

1426 (1) A hospital;1427 (2) An ambulance service;1428 (3) A pharmacy, drugstore, or supplier of therapeutic or orthopedic devices; or

1429 (4) A licensed practicing physician, dentist, orthodontist, podiatrist, physical or
1430 occupational therapist, doctor of chiropractic, psychologist, advanced practice registered
1431 nurse, social worker, professional counselor, or marriage and family therapist.

1432 (b) Such items of evidence need not be identified by the one who submits the bill, and it
1433 shall not be necessary for an expert witness to testify that the charges were reasonable and
1434 necessary. However, nothing in this Code section shall be construed to limit the right of
1435 a thorough and sifting cross-examination as to such items of evidence.

1436 24-9-922.

1437 The acts of the legislature of any other state, territory, or possession of the United States,
1438 the records and judicial proceedings of any court of any such state, territory, or possession,
1439 and the nonjudicial records or books kept in the public offices in any such state, territory,
1440 or possession, if properly authenticated, shall have the same full faith and credit in every
1441 court within this state as they have by law or usage in the courts of such state, territory, or
1442 possession from which they are taken.

1443 24-9-923.

1444 (a) As used in this Code section, the term 'unavailability of a witness' includes situations
1445 in which the authenticating witness:

1446 (1) Is exempted by ruling of the court on the ground of privilege from testifying
1447 concerning the subject matter of the authentication;

1448 (2) Persists in refusing to testify concerning the subject matter of the authentication
1449 despite an order of the court to do so;

1450 (3) Testifies to a lack of memory of the subject matter of the authentication;

1451 (4) Is unable to be present or to testify at the hearing because of death or then existing
1452 physical or mental illness or infirmity; or

1453 (5) Is absent from the hearing and the proponent of the authentication has been unable
1454 to procure the attendance of the authenticating witness by process or other reasonable
1455 means.

1456 An authenticating witness shall not be deemed unavailable as a witness if his or her
1457 exemption, refusal, claim of lack of memory, inability, or absence is due to the
1458 procurement or wrongdoing of the proponent of an authentication for the purpose of
1459 preventing the witness from attending or testifying.

1460 (b) Subject to any other valid objection, photographs, motion pictures, video recordings,
1461 and audio recordings shall be admissible in evidence when necessitated by the
1462 unavailability of a witness who can provide personal authentication and when the court
1463 determines, based on competent evidence presented to the court, that such items tend to
1464 show reliably the fact or facts for which the items are offered.

1465 (c) Subject to any other valid objection, photographs, motion pictures, video recordings,
1466 and audio recordings produced at a time when the device producing the items was not
1467 being operated by an individual person or was not under the personal control or in the
1468 presence of an individual operator shall be admissible in evidence when the court
1469 determines, based on competent evidence presented to the court, that such items tend to
1470 show reliably the fact or facts for which the items are offered, provided that, prior to the
1471 admission of such evidence, the date and time of such photograph, motion picture, or video
1472 recording shall be contained on such evidence, and such date and time shall be shown to
1473 have been made contemporaneously with the events depicted in such photograph, motion
1474 picture, or video recording.

1475 (d) This Code section shall not be the exclusive method of introduction into evidence of
1476 photographs, motion pictures, video recordings, and audio recordings but shall be
1477 supplementary to any other law and lawful methods existing in this state.

1478 24-9-924.

1479 (a) Any court may receive and use as evidence in any proceeding information otherwise
 1480 admissible from the records of the Department of Public Safety or the Department of
 1481 Driver Services obtained from any terminal lawfully connected to the Georgia Crime
 1482 Information Center without the need for additional certification of such records.

1483 (b) Any court may receive and use as evidence for the purpose of imposing a sentence in
 1484 any criminal proceeding information otherwise admissible from the records of the
 1485 Department of Driver Services obtained from a request made in accordance with a contract
 1486 with the Georgia Technology Authority for immediate on-line electronic furnishing of
 1487 information.

1488 CHAPTER 10

1489 24-10-1001.

1490 As used in this chapter, the term:

1491 (1) 'Writing' or 'recording' means letters, words, or numbers, or their equivalent, set down
 1492 by handwriting, typewriting, printing, photostating, magnetic impulse, or mechanical or
 1493 electronic recording or other form of data compilation.

1494 (2) 'Photograph' includes still photographs, X-ray films, video recordings, and motion
 1495 pictures.

1496 (3) 'Original' means the writing or recording itself or any counterpart intended to have
 1497 the same effect by a person executing or issuing it. An original of a photograph includes
 1498 the negative or any print therefrom. If data are stored in a computer or similar device,
 1499 any printout or other output readable by sight, shown to reflect the data accurately, is an
 1500 original.

1501 (4) 'Duplicate' means a counterpart produced by the same impression as the original or
 1502 from the same matrix or by means of photography, including enlargements and
 1503 miniatures, or by mechanical or electronic rerecording, chemical reproduction, or other
 1504 equivalent techniques which accurately reproduce the original.

1505 (5) 'Public record' shall have the same meaning as set forth in Code Section 24-8-801.

1506 24-10-1002.

1507 To prove the contents of a writing, recording, or photograph, the original writing,
 1508 recording, or photograph shall be required.

1509 24-10-1003.

1510 A duplicate shall be admissible to the same extent as an original unless:

1511 (1) A genuine question is raised as to the authenticity of the original; or
1512 (2) A circumstance exists where it would be unfair to admit the duplicate in lieu of the
1513 original.

1514 24-10-1004.

1515 The original shall not be required and other evidence of the contents of a writing,
1516 recording, or photograph shall be admissible if:

1517 (1) All originals are lost or have been destroyed, unless the proponent lost or destroyed
1518 them in bad faith;

1519 (2) No original can be obtained by any available judicial process or procedure;

1520 (3) At a time when an original was under the control of the party against whom offered,
1521 that party was put on notice, by the pleadings or otherwise, that the contents would be a
1522 subject of proof at the hearing, and that party does not produce the original at the hearing;

1523 or

1524 (4) The writing, recording, or photograph is not closely related to a controlling issue.

1525 24-10-1005.

1526 The contents of a public record, or of a document authorized to be recorded or filed and
1527 actually recorded or filed, including data compilations in any form, if otherwise admissible,
1528 may be proved by duplicate, certified as correct in accordance with Code Section 24-9-902
1529 or Code Section 24-9-920 or testified to be correct by a witness who has compared it with
1530 the original. If a duplicate which complies with this Code section cannot be obtained by
1531 the exercise of reasonable diligence, then other evidence of the contents may be given.

1532 24-10-1006.

1533 The contents of otherwise admissible voluminous writings, recordings, or photographs
1534 which cannot conveniently be examined in court may be presented in the form of a chart,
1535 summary, or calculation. The originals, or duplicates, shall be made available for
1536 examination or copying, or both, by other parties at a reasonable time and place. The court
1537 may order that the contents of such writings, recordings, or photographs be produced in
1538 court.

1539 24-10-1007.

1540 The contents of writings, recordings, or photographs may be proved by the testimony or
1541 deposition of the party against whom offered or by that party's written admission, without
1542 accounting for the nonproduction of the original.

1543 24-10-1008.

1544 When the admissibility of other evidence of the contents of writings, recordings, or
 1545 photographs under the rules of evidence depends upon the fulfillment of a condition of fact,
 1546 the question of whether the condition has been fulfilled is ordinarily for the court to
 1547 determine in accordance with the provisions of Code Section 24-1-104; provided, however,
 1548 that when an issue is raised as to:

1549 (1) Whether the asserted writing, recording, or photograph ever existed;

1550 (2) Whether another writing, recording, or photograph produced at the trial is the
 1551 original; or

1552 (3) Whether other evidence of the contents correctly reflects the contents,
 1553 the issue is for the trier of fact to determine as in the case of other issues of fact.

1554 CHAPTER 11

1555 ARTICLE 1

1556 24-11-1.

1557 As used in this chapter, the term:

1558 (1) 'Custodian' means the person charged with the duty of maintaining public records.

1559 (2) 'Duplicate' means a counterpart which accurately reproduces the original.

1560 (3) 'Public record' shall have the same meaning as set forth in Code Section 24-8-801.

1561 24-11-2.

1562 (a) Where any original public records have been lost, mutilated, stolen, or destroyed, the
 1563 custodian may establish duplicates in accordance with the provisions of this article. When
 1564 such public records are established by duplicates, they shall have all of the effect in
 1565 evidence as the original records would have had.

1566 (b) The custodian of the lost, mutilated, stolen, or destroyed public records shall bring a
 1567 petition to establish such records in the superior court of the county in which the public
 1568 records were located.

1569 (c) The petition shall set forth the fact that some portion of the public records has been
 1570 lost, mutilated, stolen, or destroyed, specifying as nearly as may be possible the books or
 1571 parts of the books in which those records existed, and shall pray for the establishment of
 1572 such records.

1573 24-11-3.

1574 (a) The court shall either appoint an auditor for such petition in accordance with Chapter
 1575 7 of Title 9 or shall conduct a hearing on the petition. If an auditor is appointed, the

1576 provisions of Code Sections 9-7-1 through 9-7-16 and Code Section 9-7-21 shall apply to
 1577 such proceedings. An auditor shall receive compensation for services rendered as may be
 1578 allowed by the court, to be paid out of the funds of the office of the custodian whose
 1579 records were lost, mutilated, stolen, or destroyed.

1580 (b) If the court hears the petition, after receiving evidence, the court shall determine
 1581 whether the purported duplicate is, in fact, the same as the original record which has been
 1582 lost, mutilated, stolen, or destroyed, and it shall be discretionary with the court to order the
 1583 whole or any part of such records established. The court shall give precedence to a petition
 1584 filed pursuant to this article and hear the petition as speedily as possible.

1585 (c) The duplicates which are established pursuant to this Code section, as nearly as may
 1586 be possible, shall specify and conform to the original book and pages of the same on which
 1587 they originally existed.

1588 ARTICLE 2

1589 24-11-20.

1590 (a) Upon the loss of any original pleading, declaration, bill of indictment, special
 1591 presentment, accusation, or other office paper, a duplicate may be established instanter on
 1592 motion.

1593 (b) As used in this article, the term 'office paper' means the instrument upon which a
 1594 proceeding has been brought after the case has gone to trial.

1595 24-11-21.

1596 (a) The owner, agent of the owner, or legal representative of the owner of any bond, bill,
 1597 note, draft, check, or other evidence of indebtedness which has been lost or destroyed may
 1598 establish a duplicate of the same in a summary manner by filing a petition with the judge
 1599 of the probate court of the county of the residence of the alleged debtor or maker, if he or
 1600 she is a resident of this state; and the judge of the probate court shall be deemed a judicial
 1601 officer for the purpose of this Code section. The petition shall be sworn to by the party
 1602 applying and shall contain as full and accurate a description as possible of the lost paper,
 1603 of the loss and mode of loss, and of the inability to find the same and why, along with a
 1604 prayer for the establishment of a duplicate setting forth the duplicate desired to be
 1605 established.

1606 (b) Upon the filing of a petition, the judge shall issue a citation or notice to the alleged
 1607 debtor or maker requiring the debtor or maker to appear at a day not more than ten days
 1608 distant and show cause, if he or she has any, why the duplicate should not be established

1609 in lieu of the lost original. The citation or notice shall be personally served in the manner
 1610 provided in Code Section 9-11-4 at least five days before the time of the hearing.

1611 (c) If no successful defense is made at the time and place appointed, the judge shall
 1612 proceed to establish, by an order entered on the petition, the duplicate so prayed to be
 1613 established, which shall have all the effect of the original. The petition, notice, and order
 1614 shall be entered in a book of record specially prepared for this purpose.

1615 (d) If the debtor or maker files a defense under oath to the effect that the original never
 1616 existed as claimed, the judge shall decide the case, after giving the parties time for
 1617 preparation and hearing, not to exceed 20 days. If the judge's decision is in favor of the
 1618 applicant and no appeal is entered as provided in subsection (e) of this Code section, the
 1619 decision shall be entered on the petition, and the duplicate so established shall have the
 1620 same effect as an original. If the judge's decision is in favor of the alleged debtor or maker,
 1621 the judge shall also enter his or her decision on the petition. In all cases, the proceedings
 1622 shall be recorded as provided in subsection (c) of this Code section.

1623 (e) Except as provided in Article 6 of Chapter 9 of Title 15, if either party to the
 1624 proceedings provided for in this Code section is dissatisfied, such party may appeal upon
 1625 giving the usual bond and security for costs, as in cases of appeal from the probate court
 1626 to the superior court. The appeal shall be tried in the superior court from all the pleadings
 1627 and proceedings as were before the judge of the probate court. In the superior court, the
 1628 case shall be tried and determined as provided in Code Sections 24-11-23 through
 1629 24-11-26.

1630 (f) This Code section shall not apply to evidences of indebtedness to which Title 11, the
 1631 'Uniform Commercial Code,' is applicable.

1632 24-11-22.

1633 When the person alleged to be a debtor or maker of a lost or destroyed paper as set forth
 1634 in Code Section 24-11-21 does not reside in this state, the alleged debtor or maker may be
 1635 made a party to the proceedings by publication, in a newspaper to be designated by the
 1636 judge of the probate court, twice a month for two months. When the person has been made
 1637 a party, this article shall apply in his or her case.

1638 24-11-23.

1639 (a) The owner of a lost or destroyed paper which is not an office paper, as defined in Code
 1640 Section 24-11-20, who desires to establish such paper shall present to the clerk of the
 1641 superior court of the county where the maker of the paper resides, if the maker is a resident
 1642 of this state, a petition in writing, together with a duplicate, in substance, of the paper lost

1643 or destroyed, as nearly as he or she can recollect, which duplicate shall be sworn to by the
1644 petitioner, the petitioner's agent, or the petitioner's attorney.

1645 (b) The clerk shall issue a rule nisi in the name of the judge of the superior court calling
1646 upon the opposite party to show cause, if he or she has any, why the duplicate sworn to
1647 should not be established in lieu of the lost or destroyed original. If the respondent is found
1648 in this state, the rule nisi shall be served personally upon the respondent in the manner
1649 provided by Code Section 9-11-4 at least 20 days before the sitting of the court to which
1650 the rule nisi is made returnable. If the respondent cannot be found in this state, the rule nisi
1651 shall be served upon the respondent by publication in the manner provided in Code Section
1652 9-11-4 before the final hearing of the rule nisi.

1653 24-11-24.

1654 In a proceeding to establish lost papers under Code Section 24-11-23, no continuance shall
1655 be granted unless it appears reasonable and just to the court; nor shall a continuance be
1656 allowed to the same party more than once, except for providential cause.

1657 24-11-25.

1658 When a rule nisi has been served as provided in Code Section 24-11-23, the court shall
1659 grant a rule absolute establishing the duplicate of the lost or destroyed paper sworn to,
1660 unless good and sufficient cause is shown why the rule absolute should not be granted.

1661 24-11-26.

1662 When the duplicate of the lost or destroyed paper is established, the clerk of the court in
1663 which it is done shall furnish the duplicate to the party who had it established, with a
1664 certified endorsement thereon of the day and term of the court when the rule absolute was
1665 granted, provided all costs of the proceeding have been paid.

1666 24-11-27.

1667 (a) If the paper which has been lost or destroyed is a note, bill, bond, or other instrument
1668 upon which a proceeding may be brought, the owner may institute a proceeding thereon
1669 as soon as the rule nisi has been issued as provided for in Code Section 24-11-23. The
1670 complaint shall set forth that the paper upon which the proceeding is based is lost or
1671 destroyed. In no case shall a judgment be entered in the proceeding until it is determined
1672 whether the application to establish the paper is granted or not. If the application is
1673 granted, then judgment shall be entered as in other proceedings.

1674 (b) In a proceeding as provided for in subsection (a) of this Code section, production of
1675 the paper upon which the proceeding is based shall not be demanded until the time for

1676 rendition of judgment in the proceeding; at that time, if the plaintiff produces a duplicate
 1677 of the paper with a certified endorsement thereon by the clerk of the court in which it was
 1678 established, as provided in Code Section 24-11-26, it shall be taken and considered as the
 1679 original.

1680 (c) This Code section shall not apply to instruments to which Title 11, the 'Uniform
 1681 Commercial Code,' is applicable.

1682 24-11-28.

1683 In all proceedings for the purpose of establishing any lost or destroyed paper other than an
 1684 office paper, as defined in Code Section 24-11-20, any person whose interest will be
 1685 affected by the establishment of the lost paper shall, upon motion, by order of the court, be
 1686 made a party respondent in the proceeding and shall be allowed all the rights of defense
 1687 against the establishment of the paper as fully as if he or she was the maker of the lost
 1688 paper.

1689 24-11-29.

1690 Other than Code Section 24-11-20, this article shall not apply to lost or destroyed papers
 1691 to which Title 11, the 'Uniform Commercial Code,' is applicable.

1692 CHAPTER 12

1693 ARTICLE 1

1694 24-12-1.

1695 (a) No physician licensed under Chapter 34 of Title 43 and no hospital or health care
 1696 facility, including those operated by an agency or bureau of this state or other governmental
 1697 unit, shall be required to release any medical information concerning a patient except to the
 1698 Department of Community Health, its divisions, agents, or successors when required in the
 1699 administration of public health programs pursuant to Code Section 31-12-2 and where
 1700 authorized or required by law, statute, or lawful regulation; or on written authorization or
 1701 other waiver by the patient, or by his or her parents or duly appointed guardian ad litem in
 1702 the case of a minor, or on appropriate court order or subpoena; provided, however, that any
 1703 physician, hospital, or health care facility releasing information under written authorization
 1704 or other waiver by the patient, or by his or her parents or guardian ad litem in the case of
 1705 a minor, or pursuant to law, statute, or lawful regulation, or under court order or subpoena
 1706 shall not be liable to the patient or any other person; provided, further, that the privilege
 1707 shall be waived to the extent that the patient places his or her care and treatment or the
 1708 nature and extent of his or her injuries at issue in any judicial proceeding. This Code

1709 section shall not apply to psychiatrists or to hospitals in which the patient is being or has
1710 been treated solely for mental illness.

1711 (b) No pharmacist licensed under Chapter 4 of Title 26 shall be required to release any
1712 medical information concerning a patient except on written authorization or other waiver
1713 by the patient, or by his or her parents or duly appointed guardian ad litem in the case of
1714 a minor, or upon appropriate court order or subpoena; provided, however, that any
1715 pharmacist releasing information under written authorization or other waiver by the patient,
1716 or by his or her parents or duly appointed guardian ad litem in the case of a minor, or upon
1717 appropriate court order or subpoena shall not be liable to the patient or any other person;
1718 provided, further, that the privilege shall be waived to the extent that the patient places his
1719 or her care and treatment or the nature and extent of his or her injuries at issue in any
1720 judicial proceeding.

1721 24-12-2.

1722 (a) The General Assembly finds and declares that protecting the confidentiality of research
1723 data from disclosure in judicial and administrative proceedings is essential to safeguarding
1724 the integrity of research in this state, guaranteeing the privacy of individuals who
1725 participate in research projects, and ensuring the continuation of research in science,
1726 medicine, and other fields that benefits the citizens and institutions of Georgia and other
1727 states. The protection of such research data has more than local significance, is of equal
1728 importance to all citizens of this state, is of state-wide concern, and consequently is
1729 properly a matter for regulation under the police power of this state.

1730 (b) As used in this Code section, the term 'confidential raw research data' means medical
1731 information, interview responses, reports, statements, memoranda, or other data relating
1732 to the condition, treatment, or characteristics of any person which are gathered by or
1733 provided to a researcher:

1734 (1) In support of a research study approved by an appropriate research oversight
1735 committee of a hospital, health care facility, or educational institution; and

1736 (2) With the objective to develop, study, or report aggregate or anonymous information
1737 not intended to be used in any way in which the identity of an individual is material to the
1738 results.

1739 The term shall not include published compilations of the raw research data created by the
1740 researcher or the researcher's published summaries, findings, analyses, or conclusions
1741 related to the research study.

1742 (c) Confidential raw research data in a researcher's possession shall not be subject to
1743 subpoena, otherwise discoverable, or deemed admissible as evidence in any judicial or

1744 administrative proceeding in any court except as otherwise provided in subsection (d) of
1745 this Code section.

1746 (d) Confidential raw research data may be released, disclosed, subject to subpoena,
1747 otherwise discoverable, or deemed admissible as evidence in a judicial or administrative
1748 proceeding as follows:

1749 (1) Confidential raw research data related to a person may be disclosed to that person or
1750 to another person on such person's behalf where the authority is otherwise specifically
1751 provided by law;

1752 (2) Confidential raw research data related to a person may be disclosed to any person or
1753 legal entity designated to receive that information when that designation is made in
1754 writing by the research participant or where a designation is made in writing by a person
1755 authorized by law to act for the participant;

1756 (3) Confidential raw research data related to a person may be disclosed to any agency or
1757 department of the federal government, this state, or any political subdivision of this state
1758 if such data are required by law or regulation to be reported to such agency or
1759 department;

1760 (4) Confidential raw research data may be disclosed in any proceeding in which a party
1761 was a participant, researcher, or sponsor in the underlying research study, including, but
1762 not limited to, any judicial or administrative proceeding in which a research participant
1763 places his or her care, treatment, injuries, insurance coverage, or benefit plan coverage
1764 at issue; provided, however, that the identity of any research participant other than the
1765 party to the judicial or administrative proceeding shall not be disclosed, unless the
1766 researcher or sponsor is a defendant in such proceeding;

1767 (5) Confidential raw research data may be disclosed in any judicial or administrative
1768 proceeding in which the researcher has either volunteered to testify or has been hired to
1769 testify as an expert by one of the parties to such proceeding; and

1770 (6) In a criminal proceeding, the court shall order the production of confidential raw
1771 research data if the data are relevant to any issue in the proceeding, impose appropriate
1772 safeguards against unauthorized disclosure of the data, and admit confidential raw
1773 research data into evidence if the data are material to the defense or prosecution.

1774 (e) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to permit, require, or prohibit the
1775 disclosure of confidential raw research data in any setting other than a judicial or
1776 administrative proceeding that is governed by the requirements of this title.

1777 (f) Any disclosure of confidential raw research data authorized or required by this Code
1778 section or any other law shall in no way destroy the confidential nature of that data except
1779 for the purpose for which the authorized or required disclosure is made.

1780

ARTICLE 21781 24-12-10.1782 As used in this article, the term:

1783 (1) 'Confidential or privileged' means the protection afforded by law from unauthorized
 1784 disclosure, whether the protection is afforded by law as developed and applied by the
 1785 courts, by statute or lawful regulations, or by the requirements of the Constitutions of the
 1786 State of Georgia or the United States. The term 'confidential or privileged' also includes
 1787 protection afforded by law from compulsory process or testimony.

1788 (2) 'Disclosure' means the act of transmitting or communicating medical matter to a
 1789 person who would not otherwise have access thereto.

1790 (3) 'Health care facility' means any institution or place in which health care is rendered
 1791 to persons, which health care includes, but is not limited to, medical, psychiatric, acute,
 1792 intermediate, rehabilitative, and long-term care.

1793 (4) 'Laws requiring disclosure' means laws and statutes of the State of Georgia and of the
 1794 United States and lawful regulations issued by any department or agency of the State of
 1795 Georgia or of the United States which require the review, analysis, or use of medical
 1796 matter by persons not originally having authorized access thereto. The term 'laws
 1797 requiring disclosure' also includes any authorized practice of disclosure for purposes of
 1798 evaluating claims for reimbursement for charges or expenses under any public or private
 1799 reimbursement or insurance program.

1800 (5) 'Limited consent to disclosure' means proper authorization given by or on behalf of
 1801 a person entitled to protection from disclosure of medical matter and given for a specific
 1802 purpose related to such person's health or related to such person's application for
 1803 insurance or like benefits.

1804 (6) 'Medical matter' means information respecting the medical or psychiatric condition,
 1805 including without limitation the physical and the mental condition, of a natural person or
 1806 persons, however recorded, obtained, or communicated.

1807 (7) 'Nurse' means a person authorized by license issued under Chapter 26 of Title 43 as
 1808 a registered professional nurse or licensed practical nurse to practice nursing.

1809 (8) 'Physician' means any person lawfully licensed in this state to practice medicine and
 1810 surgery pursuant to Chapter 34 of Title 43.

1811 24-12-11.

1812 The disclosure of confidential or privileged medical matter constituting all or part of a
 1813 record kept by a health care facility, a nurse, or a physician, pursuant to laws requiring
 1814 disclosure or pursuant to limited consent to disclosure, shall not serve to destroy or in any

1815 way abridge the confidential or privileged character thereof, except for the purpose for
 1816 which such disclosure is made.

1817 24-12-12.

1818 Persons to whom confidential or privileged medical matter is disclosed in the
 1819 circumstances described in Code Section 24-12-11 shall utilize such matter only in
 1820 connection with the purpose or purposes of such disclosure and thereafter shall keep such
 1821 matter in confidence. However, nothing in this article shall prohibit the use of such matter
 1822 where otherwise authorized by law.

1823 24-12-13.

1824 Any person, corporation, authority, or other legal entity acting in good faith shall be
 1825 immune from liability for the transmission, receipt, or use of medical matter disclosed
 1826 pursuant to laws requiring disclosure or pursuant to limited consent to disclosure.

1827 24-12-14.

1828 Nothing in this article shall be construed to prevent the customary and usual audit,
 1829 discussion, and presentation of cases in connection with medical and public education.

1830 ARTICLE 3

1831 24-12-20.

1832 AIDS confidential information as defined in Code Section 31-22-9.1 and disclosed or
 1833 discovered within the patient-physician relationship shall be confidential and shall not be
 1834 disclosed except as otherwise provided in Code Section 24-12-21.

1835 24-12-21.

1836 (a) Any term used in this Code section and defined in Code Section 31-22-9.1 shall have
 1837 the meaning provided for such term in Code Section 31-22-9.1.

1838 (b) Except as otherwise provided in this Code section:

1839 (1) No person or legal entity which receives AIDS confidential information pursuant to
 1840 this Code section or which is responsible for recording, reporting, or maintaining AIDS
 1841 confidential information shall:

1842 (A) Intentionally or knowingly disclose that information to another person or legal
 1843 entity; or

1844 (B) Be compelled by subpoena, court order, or other judicial process to disclose that
 1845 information to another person or legal entity; and

1846 (2) No person or legal entity which receives AIDS confidential information which that
1847 person or legal entity knows was disclosed in violation of paragraph (1) of this subsection
1848 shall:

1849 (A) Intentionally or knowingly disclose that information to another person or legal
1850 entity; or

1851 (B) Be compelled by subpoena, court order, or other judicial process to disclose that
1852 information to another person or legal entity.

1853 (c) AIDS confidential information shall be disclosed to the person identified by that
1854 information or, if that person is a minor or incompetent person, to that person's parent or
1855 legal guardian.

1856 (d) AIDS confidential information shall be disclosed to any person or legal entity
1857 designated to receive that information when that designation is made in writing by the
1858 person identified by that information or, if that person is a minor or incompetent person,
1859 by that person's parent or legal guardian.

1860 (e) AIDS confidential information shall be disclosed to any agency or department of the
1861 federal government, this state, or any political subdivision of this state if that information
1862 is authorized or required by law to be reported to that agency or department.

1863 (f) The results of an HIV test shall be disclosed to the person, or that person's designated
1864 representative, who ordered such tests of the body fluids or tissue of another person.

1865 (g) When the patient of a physician has been determined to be infected with HIV and that
1866 patient's physician reasonably believes that the spouse or sexual partner or any child of the
1867 patient, spouse, or sexual partner is a person at risk of being infected with HIV by that
1868 patient, the physician may disclose to that spouse, sexual partner, or child that the patient
1869 has been determined to be infected with HIV, after first attempting to notify the patient that
1870 such disclosure is going to be made.

1871 (h)(1) An administrator of an institution licensed as a hospital by the Department of
1872 Community Health or a physician having a patient who has been determined to be
1873 infected with HIV may disclose to the Department of Community Health:

1874 (A) The name and address of that patient;

1875 (B) That such patient has been determined to be infected with HIV; and

1876 (C) The name and address of any other person whom the disclosing physician or
1877 administrator reasonably believes to be a person at risk of being infected with HIV by
1878 that patient.

1879 (2) When mandatory and nonanonymous reporting of confirmed positive HIV tests to
1880 the Department of Community Health is determined by that department to be reasonably
1881 necessary, that department shall establish by regulation a date on and after which such
1882 reporting shall be required. On and after the date so established, each health care

1883 provider, health care facility, or any other person or legal entity which orders an HIV test
 1884 for another person shall report to the Department of Community Health the name and
 1885 address of any person thereby determined to be infected with HIV. No such report shall
 1886 be made regarding any confirmed positive HIV test provided at any anonymous HIV test
 1887 site operated by or on behalf of the Department of Community Health.

1888 (3) The Department of Community Health may disclose that a person has been reported,
 1889 under paragraph (1) or (2) of this subsection, to have been determined to be infected with
 1890 HIV to the board of health of the county in which that person resides or is located if
 1891 reasonably necessary to protect the health and safety of that person or other persons who
 1892 may have come in contact with the body fluids of the HIV infected person. The
 1893 Department of Community Health or county board of health to which information is
 1894 disclosed pursuant to this paragraph or paragraph (1) or (2) of this subsection:

1895 (A) May contact any person named in such disclosure as having been determined to
 1896 be an HIV infected person for the purpose of counseling that person and requesting
 1897 therefrom the name of any other person who may be a person at risk of being infected
 1898 with HIV by that HIV infected person;

1899 (B) May contact any other person reasonably believed to be a person at risk of being
 1900 infected with HIV by that HIV infected person for the purposes of disclosing that such
 1901 infected person has been determined to be infected with HIV and counseling such
 1902 person to submit to an HIV test; and

1903 (C) Shall contact and provide counseling to the spouse of any HIV infected person
 1904 whose name is thus disclosed if both persons are reasonably likely to have engaged in
 1905 sexual intercourse or any other act determined by the Department of Community Health
 1906 likely to have resulted in the transmission of HIV between such persons within the
 1907 preceding seven years and if that spouse may be located and contacted without undue
 1908 difficulty.

1909 (i) Any health care provider authorized to order an HIV test may disclose AIDS
 1910 confidential information regarding a patient thereof if that disclosure is made to a health
 1911 care provider or health care facility which has provided, is providing, or will provide any
 1912 health care service to that patient and as a result of such provision of service that health
 1913 care provider or facility:

1914 (1) Has personnel or patients who may be persons at risk of being infected with HIV by
 1915 that patient, if that patient is an HIV infected person and such disclosure is reasonably
 1916 necessary to protect any such personnel or patients from that risk; or

1917 (2) Has a legitimate need for that information in order to provide that health care service
 1918 to that patient.

1919 (j) A health care provider or any other person or legal entity authorized but not required
1920 to disclose AIDS confidential information pursuant to this Code section shall have no duty
1921 to make such disclosure and shall not be liable to the patient or any other person or legal
1922 entity for failing to make such disclosure. A health care provider or any other person or
1923 legal entity which discloses information as authorized or required by this Code section or
1924 as authorized or required by law or rules or regulations made pursuant thereto shall have
1925 no civil or criminal liability therefor.

1926 (k) When any person or legal entity is authorized or required by this Code section or any
1927 other law to disclose AIDS confidential information to a person at risk of being infected
1928 with HIV and that person at risk is a minor or incompetent person, such disclosure may be
1929 made to any parent or legal guardian of the minor or incompetent person, to the minor or
1930 incompetent person, or to both the minor or incompetent person and any parent or legal
1931 guardian thereof.

1932 (l) When an institutional care facility is the site at which a person is at risk of being
1933 infected with HIV and as a result of that risk a disclosure of AIDS confidential information
1934 to any person at risk at that site is authorized or required under this Code section or any
1935 other law, such disclosure may be made to the person at risk or to that institutional care
1936 facility's chief administrative or executive officer, or such officer's designee, in which case
1937 that officer or designee shall be authorized to make such disclosure to the person at risk.

1938 (m) When a disclosure of AIDS confidential information is authorized or required by this
1939 Code section to be made to a physician, health care provider, or legal entity, that disclosure
1940 may be made to employees of that physician, health care provider, or legal entity who have
1941 been designated thereby to receive such information on behalf thereof. Those designated
1942 employees may thereafter disclose to and provide for the disclosure of that information
1943 among such other employees of that physician, health care provider, or legal entity, but
1944 such disclosures among those employees shall only be authorized when reasonably
1945 necessary in the ordinary course of business to carry out the purposes for which that
1946 disclosure is authorized or required to be made to that physician, health care provider, or
1947 legal entity.

1948 (n) Any disclosure of AIDS confidential information authorized or required by this Code
1949 section or any other law and any unauthorized disclosure of such information shall in no
1950 way destroy the confidential nature of that information except for the purpose for which
1951 the authorized or required disclosure is made.

1952 (o) Any person or legal entity which violates subsection (b) of this Code section shall be
1953 guilty of a misdemeanor.

1954 (p) Nothing in this Code section or any other law shall be construed to authorize the
1955 disclosure of AIDS confidential information if that disclosure is prohibited by federal law.

1956 or regulations promulgated thereunder, nor shall anything in this Code section or any other
 1957 law be construed to prohibit the disclosure of information which would be AIDS
 1958 confidential information except that such information does not permit the identification of
 1959 any person.

1960 (q) A public safety agency or prosecuting attorney may obtain the results from an HIV test
 1961 to which the person named in the request has submitted under Code Section 15-11-66.1,
 1962 17-10-15, 42-5-52.1, or 42-9-42.1, notwithstanding that the results may be contained in a
 1963 sealed record.

1964 (r) Any person or legal entity required by an order of a court to disclose AIDS confidential
 1965 information in the custody or control of such person or legal entity shall disclose that
 1966 information as required by that order.

1967 (s) AIDS confidential information shall be disclosed as medical information pursuant to
 1968 Code Section 24-12-1 or pursuant to any other law which authorizes or requires the
 1969 disclosure of medical information if:

1970 (1) The person identified by that information:

1971 (A) Has consented in writing to that disclosure; or

1972 (B) Has been notified of the request for disclosure of that information at least ten days
 1973 prior to the time the disclosure is to be made and does not object to such disclosure
 1974 prior to the time specified for that disclosure in that notice; or

1975 (2) A superior court in an in camera hearing finds by clear and convincing evidence a
 1976 compelling need for the information which cannot be accommodated by other means. In
 1977 assessing compelling need, the court shall weigh the public health, safety, or welfare
 1978 needs or any other public or private need for the disclosure against the privacy interest
 1979 of the person identified by the information and the public interest which may be disserved
 1980 by disclosures which may deter voluntary HIV tests. If the court determines that
 1981 disclosure of that information is authorized under this paragraph, the court shall order that
 1982 disclosure and impose appropriate safeguards against any unauthorized disclosure. The
 1983 records of that hearing otherwise shall be under seal.

1984 (t)(1) A superior court of this state may order a person or legal entity to disclose AIDS
 1985 confidential information in its custody or control to:

1986 (A) A prosecutor in connection with a prosecution for the alleged commission of
 1987 reckless conduct under subsection (c) of Code Section 16-5-60;

1988 (B) Any party in a civil proceeding; or

1989 (C) A public safety agency or the Department of Community Health if that agency or
 1990 department has an employee thereof who has, in the course of that employment, come
 1991 in contact with the body fluids of the person identified by the AIDS confidential
 1992 information sought in such a manner reasonably likely to cause that employee to

1993 become an HIV infected person and provided the disclosure is necessary for the health
 1994 and safety of that employee,
 1995 and, for purposes of this subsection, the term 'petitioner for disclosure' means any person
 1996 or legal entity specified in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) of this paragraph.
 1997 (2) An order may be issued against a person or legal entity responsible for recording,
 1998 reporting, or maintaining AIDS confidential information to compel the disclosure of that
 1999 information if the petitioner for disclosure demonstrates by clear and convincing evidence
 2000 a compelling need for the information which cannot be accommodated by other means.
 2001 In assessing compelling need, the court shall weigh the public health, safety, or welfare
 2002 needs or any other public or private need for the disclosure against the privacy interest
 2003 of the person identified by the information and the public interest which may be disserved
 2004 by disclosures which may deter voluntary HIV tests.
 2005 (3) A petition seeking disclosure of AIDS confidential information under this subsection
 2006 shall substitute a pseudonym for the true name of the person concerning whom the
 2007 information is sought. The disclosure to the parties of that person's true name shall be
 2008 communicated confidentially, in documents not filed with the court.
 2009 (4) Before granting any order under this subsection, the court shall provide the person
 2010 concerning whom the information is sought with notice and a reasonable opportunity to
 2011 participate in the proceedings if that person is not already a party.
 2012 (5) Court proceedings as to disclosure of AIDS confidential information under this
 2013 subsection shall be conducted in camera unless the person concerning whom the
 2014 information is sought agrees to a hearing in open court.
 2015 (6) Upon the issuance of an order that a person or legal entity be required to disclose
 2016 AIDS confidential information regarding a person named in that order, that person or
 2017 entity so ordered shall disclose to the ordering court any such information which is in the
 2018 control or custody of that person or entity and which relates to the person named in the
 2019 order for the court to make an in camera inspection thereof. If the court determines from
 2020 that inspection that the person named in the order is an HIV infected person, the court
 2021 shall disclose to the petitioner for disclosure that determination and shall impose
 2022 appropriate safeguards against unauthorized disclosure which shall specify the persons
 2023 who may have access to the information, the purposes for which the information shall be
 2024 used, and appropriate prohibitions on future disclosure.
 2025 (7) The record of the proceedings under this subsection shall be sealed by the court.
 2026 (8) An order may not be issued under this subsection against the Department of
 2027 Community Health, any county board of health, or any anonymous HIV test site operated
 2028 by or on behalf of that department.

2029 (u) A health care provider, health care facility, or other person or legal entity who, in
 2030 violation of this Code section, unintentionally discloses AIDS confidential information,
 2031 notwithstanding the maintenance of procedures thereby which are reasonably adopted to
 2032 avoid risk of such disclosure, shall not be civilly or criminally liable, unless such disclosure
 2033 was due to gross negligence or wanton and willful misconduct.

2034 (v) AIDS confidential information may be disclosed when that disclosure is otherwise
 2035 authorized or required by Code Section 42-1-6, if AIDS or HIV infection is the
 2036 communicable disease at issue, or when that disclosure is otherwise authorized or required
 2037 by any law which specifically refers to 'AIDS confidential information,' 'HIV test results,'
 2038 or any similar language indicating a legislative intent to disclose information specifically
 2039 relating to AIDS or HIV.

2040 (w) A health care provider who has received AIDS confidential information regarding a
 2041 patient from the patient's health care provider directly or indirectly under the provisions of
 2042 subsection (i) of this Code section may disclose that information to a health care provider
 2043 which has provided, is providing, or will provide any health care service to that patient and
 2044 as a result of that provision of service that health care provider:

2045 (1) Has personnel or patients who may be persons at risk of being infected with HIV by
 2046 that patient, if that patient is an HIV infected person and such disclosure is reasonably
 2047 necessary to protect any such personnel or patients from that risk; or

2048 (2) Has a legitimate need for that information in order to provide that health care service
 2049 to that patient.

2050 (x) Neither the Department of Community Health nor any county board of health shall
 2051 disclose AIDS confidential information contained in its records unless such disclosure is
 2052 authorized or required by this Code section or any other law, except that such information
 2053 in those records shall not be a public record and shall not be subject to disclosure through
 2054 subpoena, court order, or other judicial process.

2055 (y) The protection against disclosure provided by Code Section 24-12-20 shall be waived
 2056 and AIDS confidential information may be disclosed to the extent that the person identified
 2057 by such information, his or her heirs, successors, assigns, or a beneficiary of such person,
 2058 including, but not limited to, an executor, administrator, or personal representative of such
 2059 person's estate:

2060 (1) Files a claim or claims other entitlements under any insurance policy or benefit plan
 2061 or is involved in any civil proceeding regarding such claim;

2062 (2) Places such person's care and treatment, the nature and extent of his or her injuries,
 2063 the extent of his or her damages, his or her medical condition, or the reasons for his or her
 2064 death at issue in any judicial proceeding; or

2065 (3) Is involved in a dispute regarding coverage under any insurance policy or benefit
2066 plan.

2067 (z) AIDS confidential information may be collected, used, and disclosed by an insurer in
2068 accordance with the provisions of Chapter 39 of Title 33.

2069 (aa) In connection with any judicial proceeding in which AIDS confidential information
2070 is disclosed as authorized or required by this Code section, the party to whom that
2071 information is thereby disclosed may subpoena any person to authenticate such AIDS
2072 confidential information, establish a chain of custody relating thereto, or otherwise testify
2073 regarding that information, including, but not limited to, testifying regarding any
2074 notifications to the patient regarding results of an HIV test. The provisions of this
2075 subsection shall apply as to records, personnel, or both of the Department of Community
2076 Health or a county board of health notwithstanding Code Section 50-18-72, but only as to
2077 test results obtained by a prosecutor under subsection (q) of this Code section and to be
2078 used thereby in a prosecution for reckless conduct under subsection (c) of Code Section
2079 16-5-60.

2080 (bb) AIDS confidential information may be disclosed as a part of any proceeding or
2081 procedure authorized or required pursuant to Chapter 3, 4, or 7 of Title 37, regarding a
2082 person who is alleged to be or who is mentally ill, developmentally disabled, or alcoholic
2083 or drug dependent, or as a part of any proceeding or procedure authorized or required
2084 pursuant to Title 29, regarding the guardianship of a person or that person's estate, as
2085 follows:

2086 (1) Any person who files or transmits a petition or other document which discloses AIDS
2087 confidential information in connection with any such proceeding or procedure shall
2088 provide a cover page which contains only the type of proceeding or procedure, the court
2089 in which the proceeding or procedure is or will be pending, and the words
2090 'CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION' without in any way otherwise disclosing thereon
2091 the name of any individual or that such petition or other document specifically contains
2092 AIDS confidential information;

2093 (2) AIDS confidential information shall only be disclosed pursuant to this subsection
2094 after disclosure to and with the written consent of the person identified by that
2095 information, or that person's parent or guardian if that person is a minor or has previously
2096 been adjudicated as being incompetent, or by order of court obtained in accordance with
2097 subparagraph (C) of paragraph (3) of this subsection;

2098 (3) If any person files or transmits a petition or other document in connection with any
2099 such proceeding or procedure which discloses AIDS confidential information without
2100 obtaining consent as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, the court receiving such

2101 information shall either obtain written consent as set forth in that paragraph (2) for any
2102 further use or disclosure of such information or:

2103 (A) Return such petition or other document to the person who filed or transmitted
2104 same, with directions against further filing or transmittal of such information in
2105 connection with such proceeding or procedure except in compliance with this
2106 subsection;

2107 (B) Delete or expunge all references to such AIDS confidential information from the
2108 particular petition or other document; or

2109 (C)(i) If the court determines there is a compelling need for such information in
2110 connection with the particular proceeding or procedure, petition a superior court of
2111 competent jurisdiction for permission to obtain or disclose that information. If the
2112 person identified by the information is not yet represented by an attorney in the
2113 proceeding or procedure in connection with which the information is sought, the
2114 petitioning court shall appoint an attorney for such person. The petitioning court shall
2115 have both that person and that person's attorney personally served with notice of the
2116 petition and time and place of the superior court hearing thereon. Such hearing shall
2117 not be held sooner than 72 hours after service, unless the information is to be used in
2118 connection with an emergency guardianship proceeding under Code Section 29-4-14,
2119 in which event the hearing shall not be held sooner than 48 hours after service.

2120 (ii) The superior court in which a petition is filed pursuant to division (i) of this
2121 subparagraph shall hold an in camera hearing on such petition. The purpose of the
2122 hearing shall be to determine whether there is clear and convincing evidence of a
2123 compelling need for the AIDS confidential information sought in connection with the
2124 particular proceeding or procedure which cannot be accommodated by other means.
2125 In assessing compelling need, the superior court shall weigh the public health, safety,
2126 or welfare needs or any other public or private need for the disclosure against the
2127 privacy interest of the person identified by the information and the public interest
2128 which may be disserved by disclosures which may deter voluntary HIV tests. If the
2129 court determines that disclosure of that information is authorized under this
2130 subparagraph, the court shall order that disclosure and impose appropriate safeguards
2131 against any unauthorized disclosure. The records of that hearing otherwise shall be
2132 under seal; and

2133 (4) The court having jurisdiction over such proceeding or procedure, when it becomes
2134 apparent that AIDS confidential information will likely be or has been disclosed in
2135 connection with such proceeding or procedure, shall take such measures as the court
2136 determines appropriate to preserve the confidentiality of the disclosed information to the
2137 maximum extent possible. Such measures shall include, without being limited to, closing

2138 the proceeding or procedure to the public and sealing all or any part of the records of the
 2139 proceeding or procedure containing AIDS confidential information. The records of any
 2140 appeals taken from any such proceeding or procedure shall also be sealed. Furthermore,
 2141 the court may consult with and obtain the advice of medical experts or other counsel or
 2142 advisers as to the relevance and materiality of such information in such proceedings or
 2143 procedures, provided that the identity of the person identified by such information is not
 2144 thereby revealed.

2145 ARTICLE 4

2146 24-12-30.

2147 (a) Circulation and similar records of a library which identify the user of library materials
 2148 shall not be public records but shall be confidential and shall not be disclosed except:

2149 (1) To members of the library staff in the ordinary course of business;

2150 (2) Upon written consent of the user of the library materials or the user's parents or
 2151 guardian if the user is a minor or ward; or

2152 (3) Upon appropriate court order or subpoena.

2153 (b) Any disclosure authorized by subsection (a) of this Code section or any unauthorized
 2154 disclosure of materials made confidential by subsection (a) of this Code section shall not
 2155 in any way destroy the confidential nature of that material, except for the purpose for which
 2156 an authorized disclosure is made. A person disclosing material as authorized by subsection
 2157 (a) of this Code section shall not be liable therefor.

2158 24-12-31.

2159 No veterinarian licensed under Chapter 50 of Title 43 shall be required to disclose any
 2160 information concerning the veterinarian's care of an animal except on written authorization
 2161 or other waiver by the veterinarian's client or on appropriate court order or subpoena. Any
 2162 veterinarian releasing information under written authorization or other waiver by the client
 2163 or under court order or subpoena shall not be liable to the client or any other person. The
 2164 confidentiality provided by this Code section shall be waived to the extent that the
 2165 veterinarian's client places the veterinarian's care and treatment of the animal or the nature
 2166 and extent of injuries to the animal at issue in any judicial proceeding. As used in this
 2167 Code section, the term 'client' means the owner of the animal; or if the owner of the animal
 2168 is unknown, client means the person who presents the animal to the veterinarian for care
 2169 and treatment.

CHAPTER 13ARTICLE 1

2172 24-13-1.

2173 A witness shall not be arrested on any civil process while attending any court to which he
2174 or she is subpoenaed or otherwise required to attend as a witness or while going to or
2175 returning from such court. An officer who holds such witness imprisoned after seeing his
2176 or her subpoena or being satisfied of the fact that such person was a witness shall be liable
2177 for false imprisonment.

2178 24-13-2.

2179 A witness in making a claim or proof of a claim for witness fees for attendance shall
2180 indicate the date on which he or she attended and, in the event of a continuance, shall not
2181 claim or receive witness fees for any day after the date to which the docket shows the
2182 proceeding was continued nor for any day before the continuance was granted on which
2183 he or she did not attend.

2184 24-13-3.

2185 (a) A witness shall not receive any witness fees for attendance on a subpoena if such
2186 witness is absent from the proceeding, or if the proceeding is continued at any time due to
2187 his or her absence, where such absence did not arise from providential cause.

2188 (b) No witness shall receive witness fees from both parties in the same proceeding; the
2189 fees of a witness for both parties shall be apportioned equally between the parties unless
2190 the costs are all taxed against one party.

2191 24-13-4.

2192 A witness who claims more than is due to such witness shall forfeit all witness fees and
2193 shall pay to the injured party, in addition thereto, four times the amount so unjustly
2194 claimed.

2195 24-13-5.

2196 When any person is served with a subpoena for the production of evidence or a notice to
2197 produce, seeking books in his or her possession to be used as testimony on the trial of any
2198 cause, if the person makes oath that he or she cannot produce the books required without
2199 suffering a material injury in his or her business and also makes or causes to be made out
2200 a full transcript from the books of all the accounts and dealings with the opposite party, has
2201 the transcript examined and sworn to by an impartial witness, and produces the same in

2202 court, the witness shall be deemed to have complied with the notice to produce or subpoena
2203 for the production of evidence.

2204 24-13-6.

2205 When the transcript provided for in Code Section 24-13-5 is produced in court, if the
2206 adverse party is dissatisfied therewith and swears that he or she believes that the books
2207 contain entries material to the adverse party which do not appear in the transcript, the court
2208 shall grant him or her a commission directed to certain persons named by the parties and
2209 approved by the court. The commission shall cause the person with possession of the
2210 books to produce the books required with the person swearing that the books produced are
2211 all that he or she has or had that answer to the description in the subpoena or notice to
2212 produce. The commission shall examine the books and transmit to the court a full and fair
2213 statement of the accounts and entries between the parties under their hand. When received
2214 by the court, the statement of the commission shall be deemed a compliance with the notice
2215 to produce or subpoena for the production of evidence.

2216 24-13-7.

2217 Parties interested and participating in the trial of all cases tried in the courts are authorized
2218 and empowered, on the order of the court trying the case, to withdraw from the court and
2219 record of the case all original deeds, maps, blueprints, notes, papers, and documents
2220 belonging to the parties and which are introduced in evidence on the trial, on substituting
2221 therefor, when required by the court, duplicates thereof, verified as such by the parties or
2222 their agents, representatives, or attorneys. However, if any such deeds, maps, blueprints,
2223 notes, papers, or documents shall be attacked by any party to the case as forgeries, or as not
2224 being genuine originals, it shall be in the discretion of the court to require the original
2225 deeds, maps, blueprints, notes, papers, or documents so attacked to remain on file in the
2226 court as a part of the record in the case.

2227 ARTICLE 2

2228 24-13-20.

2229 This article shall apply to all civil proceedings and, insofar as consistent with the
2230 Constitution, to all criminal proceedings.

2231 24-13-21.

2232 (a) As used in this Code section, the term 'subpoena' includes a witness subpoena and a
2233 subpoena for the production of evidence.

2234 (b) A subpoena shall state the name of the court, the name of the clerk, and the title of the
 2235 proceeding and shall command each person to whom it is directed to attend and give
 2236 testimony or produce evidence at a time and place specified by the subpoena.

2237 (c) The clerk of court shall make subpoenas in blank available on demand by electronic
 2238 or other means to parties or their counsel or to the grand jury.

2239 (d) An attorney who is counsel of record in a proceeding may issue and sign a subpoena
 2240 obtained by electronic or other means from the clerk of court as an officer of a court for
 2241 any deposition, hearing, or trial held in conjunction with such proceeding.

2242 (e) A district attorney may issue, and upon the request of the grand jury shall issue, a
 2243 subpoena in grand jury proceedings.

2244 (f) A subpoena shall be completed prior to being served.

2245 (g) Subpoenas are enforceable as provided in Code Section 24-13-26.

2246 (h) If an individual misuses a subpoena, he or she shall be subject to punishment for
 2247 contempt of court and shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$300.00 or not more
 2248 than 20 days imprisonment, or both.

2249 24-13-22.

2250 At the request of any party, subpoenas for attendance at a hearing or trial shall be issued
 2251 under the authority of the clerk of the court in which the hearing or trial is held. A
 2252 subpoena requiring the attendance of a witness at a hearing or trial may be served at any
 2253 place within this state.

2254 24-13-23.

2255 (a) A subpoena may also command the person to whom it is directed to produce the
 2256 evidence designated therein.

2257 (b) The court, upon written motion made promptly and in any event at or before the time
 2258 specified in the subpoena for compliance therewith, may:

2259 (1) Quash or modify the subpoena if it is unreasonable and oppressive; or

2260 (2) Condition denial of the motion upon the advancement by the person in whose behalf
 2261 the subpoena is issued of the reasonable cost of producing the evidence.

2262 24-13-24.

2263 A subpoena may be served by any sheriff, by his or her deputy, or by any other person not
 2264 less than 18 years of age. Proof may be shown by return or certificate endorsed on a copy
 2265 of the subpoena. Subpoenas may also be served by registered or certified mail or statutory
 2266 overnight delivery, and the return receipt shall constitute prima-facie proof of service.
 2267 Service upon a party may be made by serving his or her counsel of record.

2268 24-13-25.

2269 Except as provided in Code Section 24-13-28, the witness fee shall be \$25.00 per diem, and
2270 execution shall be issued by the clerk upon affidavit of the witness to enforce payment
2271 thereof. The payment of witness fees shall not be demanded as a condition precedent to
2272 attendance; but, when a witness resides outside the county where the testimony is to be
2273 given, service of the subpoena, to be valid, shall be accompanied by tender of the witness
2274 fee for one day's attendance plus mileage of 45¢ per mile for traveling expenses for going
2275 from and returning to his or her place of residence by the nearest practical route. Tender
2276 of witness fees and mileage may be made by United States currency, postal money order,
2277 cashier's check, certified check, or the check of an attorney or law firm. When the
2278 subpoena is issued on behalf of this state, or an officer, agency, or political subdivision
2279 thereof, or an accused in a criminal proceeding, witness fees and mileage need not be
2280 tendered.

2281 24-13-26.

2282 (a) Subpoenas may be enforced by attachment for contempt and by a fine of not more than
2283 \$300.00 or not more than 20 days imprisonment, or both. In all proceedings under this
2284 Code section, the court shall consider whether under the circumstances of each proceeding
2285 the subpoena was served within a reasonable time, but in any event not less than 24 hours
2286 prior to the time that appearance thereunder was required.

2287 (b) The court may also in appropriate proceedings grant continuance of the proceeding.
2288 Where subpoenas were issued in blank, no continuance shall be granted because of failure
2289 to respond thereto when the party obtaining such subpoenas fails to present to the clerk the
2290 name and address of the witness so subpoenaed at least six hours before appearance is
2291 required.

2292 (c) When evidence is unsuccessfully sought, secondary evidence thereof shall be
2293 admissible.

2294 24-13-27.

2295 Where a party desires to compel production of evidence in the possession, custody, or
2296 control of another party, in lieu of serving a subpoena under this article, the party desiring
2297 the production may serve a notice to produce upon counsel for the other party. Service
2298 may be perfected in accordance with Code Section 24-13-24, but no witness fees or
2299 mileage shall be allowed therefor. Such notices may be enforced in the manner prescribed
2300 by Code Section 24-13-26, and Code Section 24-13-23 shall also apply to such notices.
2301 The notice shall be in writing, signed by the party seeking production of the evidence, or
2302 the party's attorney, and shall be directed to the opposite party or his or her attorney.

2303 24-13-28.

2304 (a) As used in this Code section, the term:

2305 (1) 'Director' means the appropriate chief of police, sheriff, director of public safety of
 2306 a college or university, local fire chief, director of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation,
 2307 the commanding officer of the Georgia State Patrol, the commissioner of natural
 2308 resources, the superintendent of a correctional institution, or the state fire marshal.

2309 (2) 'Law enforcement officer' means any member of a municipal or county police force,
 2310 any deputy sheriff, any campus policeman as defined in Code Section 20-8-1, any
 2311 member of a local fire department, any member of the Georgia State Patrol or Georgia
 2312 Bureau of Investigation, any correctional officer, any person employed by the
 2313 Department of Natural Resources as a law enforcement officer, or any arson investigator
 2314 of the state fire marshal's office.

2315 (3) 'Regular duty hours' means the daily shift of duty to which a law enforcement officer
 2316 is assigned and shall not include paid or unpaid vacation, paid or unpaid sick leave, paid
 2317 or unpaid holiday leave, or any other paid or unpaid leave status established pursuant to
 2318 the personnel regulations or scheduling practices of the employing agency.

2319 (b) Any law enforcement officer who shall be required by subpoena to attend any superior
 2320 court, other courts having jurisdiction to enforce the penal laws of this state, municipal
 2321 court having jurisdiction to enforce the penal laws of this state as provided by Code Section
 2322 40-13-21, juvenile court, grand jury, hearing or inquest held or called by a coroner, or
 2323 magistrate court involving any criminal matter, as a witness on behalf of the state during
 2324 any hours except the regular duty hours to which the officer is assigned, shall be paid for
 2325 such attendance at a fixed rate to be established by the governing authority, but not less
 2326 than \$25.00 per diem. The claim for the witness fees shall be endorsed on the subpoena
 2327 showing the dates of attendance and stating that attendance was required during the hours
 2328 other than the regular duty hours to which the claimant was assigned. The claimant shall
 2329 verify this statement. The dates of attendance shall be certified by the judge or the
 2330 prosecuting attorney of the court attended. The director or his or her designee shall certify
 2331 that the claimant has not received any overtime pay for his or her attendance and that his
 2332 or her attendance was required during hours other than regular duty hours. The amount due
 2333 shall be paid by the governing body authorized to dispense public funds for the operation
 2334 of the court. However, no such law enforcement officer shall claim or receive more than
 2335 one witness fee per day for attendance in any court or before the grand jury regardless of
 2336 the number of subpoenas which the law enforcement officer may have received requiring
 2337 such officer to appear in such court or before the grand jury on any one day.

2338 (c)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, any law enforcement
 2339 officer who shall be required by subpoena to attend any court of this state with respect

2340 to any civil proceeding, as a witness concerning any matter relative to the law
 2341 enforcement duties of such law enforcement officer during any hours except the regular
 2342 duty hours to which the law enforcement officer is assigned, shall be paid for such
 2343 attendance at a fixed rate to be established by the governing authority, but not less than
 2344 \$25.00 per diem. Any such law enforcement officer shall also be entitled to the mileage
 2345 allowance provided in Code Section 24-13-25 when such law enforcement officer resides
 2346 outside the county where the testimony is to be given. The claim for the witness fees
 2347 shall be endorsed on the subpoena showing the dates of attendance and stating that
 2348 attendance was required during the hours other than the regular duty hours to which the
 2349 claimant was assigned. The claimant shall verify such statement. The dates of
 2350 attendance shall be certified by the party obtaining the subpoena. The director or his or
 2351 her designee shall certify that the claimant has not received any overtime pay for the law
 2352 enforcement officer's attendance and that such law enforcement officer's attendance was
 2353 required during hours other than regular duty hours.

2354 (2) Any law enforcement officer covered by paragraph (1) of this subsection who is
 2355 required by subpoena to attend any court with respect to any civil proceeding, as a
 2356 witness concerning any matter which is not related to the duties of such law enforcement
 2357 officer, shall be compensated as provided in Code Section 24-13-25.

2358 (d) The fee specified by subsections (b) and (c) of this Code section shall not be paid if the
 2359 law enforcement officer receives any overtime pay for time spent attending such court
 2360 pursuant to the subpoena.

2361 24-13-29.

2362 No member of the General Assembly of Georgia shall be compelled to attend and give
 2363 testimony at any hearing or trial or to produce evidence while the General Assembly is in
 2364 regular or extraordinary session.

2365 ARTICLE 3

2366 24-13-60.

2367 (a) When a prisoner confined in any state prison, county correctional institution, or other
 2368 penal institution under the jurisdiction of the Board of Corrections, other than a prisoner
 2369 under a death sentence, is needed as a witness in any judicial proceeding in any court of
 2370 record in this state or when it is desired that such person stand trial on an indictment or
 2371 accusation charging the prisoner with commission of a felony or misdemeanor, the judge
 2372 of the court wherein the proceeding is pending shall be authorized to and shall issue an ex
 2373 parte order, directed to the commissioner of corrections, requiring the prisoner's delivery

2374 to the sheriff of the county where the prisoner is desired as a witness or accused. The
2375 sheriff or his or her deputies shall take custody of the prisoner on the date named in the
2376 order, safely keep the prisoner pending the proceeding, and return him or her to the original
2377 place of detention after the prisoner's discharge by the trial judge.

2378 (b) If the prisoner was desired as a witness by this state in a criminal proceeding or if the
2379 prisoner's release to the sheriff was for the purpose of standing trial on criminal charges,
2380 the county wherein the proceeding was pending shall pay all expenses of transportation and
2381 keeping, including per diem and mileage of the sheriff, jail fees, and any other proper
2382 expense approved by the trial judge.

2383 (c) If the prisoner was desired as a witness by the accused in a criminal proceeding or by
2384 either party to a civil proceeding, the costs and expenses referred to in subsection (b) of this
2385 Code section shall be borne by the party requesting the prisoner as a witness. The court
2386 shall require a deposit of money sufficient to defray same, except where the judge, after
2387 examining into the matter, determines that the prisoner's presence is required by the
2388 interests of justice and that the party requesting it is financially unable to make the deposit,
2389 in which case the expenses shall be taxed as costs of court.

2390 (d) If a prisoner under a death sentence is needed as a witness for either the prosecution
2391 or the defense in any felony case, the requesting party may interview the proposed witness.
2392 Following such interview, the requesting party may move for a writ of habeas corpus ad
2393 testificandum. Such motion shall be accompanied by a proffer of the testimony of the
2394 proposed witness. The requesting party shall make such motion and proffer as soon as
2395 possible but shall not make such motion later than 20 days prior to the date of the trial.
2396 Nothing in this Code section shall limit the right of a party from presenting a material
2397 witness at a hearing or trial and to have compulsory process for that purpose.

2398 24-13-61.

2399 Any judge of the superior court may issue an order to any officer having a lawfully
2400 imprisoned person in his or her custody, requiring the production of such person before the
2401 court for the purpose of giving evidence in any criminal cause pending therein, without any
2402 formal application or writ of habeas corpus ad testificandum for that purpose.

2403 24-13-62.

2404 The writ of habeas corpus ad testificandum may be issued by the superior court to cause
2405 the production in court of any witness under legal imprisonment.

2406

ARTICLE 42407 24-13-90.

2408 This article shall be known and may be cited as "The Uniform Act to Secure the Attendance
2409 of Witnesses from Without the State.'

2410 24-13-91.2411 As used in this article, the term:

2412 (1) 'Penal institution' means a jail, prison, penitentiary, house of correction, or other
2413 place of penal detention.

2414 (2) 'State' means any state or territory of the United States and the District of Columbia.

2415 (3) 'Summons' means a subpoena, order, or other notice requiring the appearance of a
2416 witness.

2417 (4) 'Witness' means a person whose testimony is desired in any proceeding or
2418 investigation by a grand jury or in a criminal prosecution or proceeding held by the
2419 prosecution or the defense, including a person who is confined in a penal institution in
2420 any state.

2421 24-13-92.

2422 (a) If a judge of a court of record in any state which by its laws has made provision for
2423 commanding persons within that state to attend and testify in this state certifies under the
2424 seal of such court that there is a criminal prosecution pending in such court or that a grand
2425 jury investigation has commenced or is about to commence, that a person within this state
2426 is a material witness in such prosecution or grand jury investigation, and that the witness's
2427 presence will be required for a specified number of days, upon presentation of such
2428 certificate to any judge of a court of record in the county in which the person is found, such
2429 judge shall fix a time and place for a hearing and shall make an order directing the witness
2430 to appear at a time and place certain for the hearing. The witness shall at all times be
2431 entitled to counsel.

2432 (b) If at a hearing the judge determines that the witness is material and necessary, that it
2433 will not cause undue hardship to the witness to be compelled to attend and testify in the
2434 prosecution or a grand jury investigation in the other state, and the laws of the state in
2435 which the prosecution is pending or grand jury investigation has commenced or is about
2436 to commence will give to such witness protection from arrest and the service of civil and
2437 criminal process, the judge shall issue a summons, with a copy of the certificate attached,
2438 directing the witness to attend and testify in the court where the prosecution is pending or
2439 where a grand jury investigation has commenced or is about to commence at a time and

2440 place specified in the summons. In any such hearing, the certificate shall be prima-facie
2441 evidence of all the facts stated therein.

2442 (c) If such certificate recommends that the witness be taken into immediate custody and
2443 delivered to an officer of the requesting state to assure the witness's attendance in the
2444 requesting state, such judge may, in lieu of notification of the hearing, direct that the
2445 witness be forthwith brought before him or her for the hearing; and the judge at the hearing
2446 being satisfied of the desirability of such custody and delivery, for which determination the
2447 certificate shall be prima-facie proof of such desirability, may, in lieu of issuing subpoena
2448 or summons, order that the witness be forthwith taken into custody and delivered to an
2449 officer of the requesting state.

2450 (d) If the witness, who is summoned as above provided, after being paid or tendered by
2451 some properly authorized person the sum of 45¢ a mile for each mile by the ordinarily
2452 traveled route to and from the court where the prosecution is pending and \$25.00 for each
2453 day that the witness is required to travel and attend as a witness, fails without good cause
2454 to attend and testify as directed in the summons, the witness shall be punished in the
2455 manner provided for in Code Section 24-13-26.

2456 24-13-93.

2457 (a) A judge of a state court of record in another state which by its laws has made provision
2458 for commanding persons confined in penal institutions within that state to attend and testify
2459 in this state may certify that there is a criminal proceeding or investigation by a grand jury
2460 or a criminal proceeding pending in the court, that a person who is confined in a penal
2461 institution in this state is a material witness in the proceeding or investigation, and that the
2462 witness's presence will be required during a specified time. Upon presentation of the
2463 certificate to any judge having jurisdiction over the person confined and upon notice to the
2464 Attorney General, the judge in this state shall fix a time and place for a hearing and shall
2465 make an order directed to the person having custody of the prisoner requiring that the
2466 prisoner be produced before him or her at the hearing.

2467 (b) If at the hearing the judge determines that the witness is material and necessary, that
2468 the witness attending and testifying are not adverse to the interest of this state or to the
2469 health and legal rights of the witness, that the laws of the state in which the witness is
2470 required to testify will give the witness protection from arrest and the service of civil and
2471 criminal process because of any act committed prior to the witness's arrival in the state
2472 under the order, and that as a practical matter the possibility is negligible that the witness
2473 may be subject to arrest or to the service of civil or criminal process in any state through
2474 which the witness will be required to pass, the judge shall issue an order, with a copy of the
2475 certificate attached, directing the witness to attend and testify, directing the person having

2476 custody of the witness to produce the witness in the court where the criminal proceeding
2477 is pending or where the grand jury investigation is pending at a time and place specified
2478 in the order, and prescribing such conditions as the judge shall determine. The judge, in
2479 lieu of directing the person having custody of the witness to produce the witness in the
2480 requesting jurisdiction's court, may direct and require in the court's order that the requesting
2481 jurisdiction shall come to the Georgia penal institution in which the witness is confined to
2482 accept custody of the witness for physical transfer to the requesting jurisdiction; that the
2483 requesting jurisdiction shall provide proper safeguards on the witness's custody while in
2484 transit; that the requesting jurisdiction shall be liable for and shall pay all expenses incurred
2485 in producing and returning the witness, including, but not limited to, food, lodging,
2486 clothing, and medical care; and that the requesting jurisdiction shall promptly deliver the
2487 witness back to the same or another Georgia penal institution as specified by the
2488 Department of Corrections at the conclusion of his or her testimony.

2489 (c) The order to the witness and to the person having custody of the witness shall provide
2490 for the return of the witness at the conclusion of his or her testimony, proper safeguards on
2491 his or her custody, and proper financial reimbursement or prepayment by the requesting
2492 jurisdiction of all expenses incurred in the production and return of the witness and may
2493 prescribe such other conditions as the judge thinks proper or necessary. If the judge directs
2494 and requires the requesting jurisdiction to accept custody of the witness at the Georgia
2495 penal institution in which the witness is confined and to deliver the witness back to the
2496 same or another Georgia penal institution at the conclusion of the witness's testimony, no
2497 prepayment of expenses shall be necessary. The order shall not become effective until the
2498 judge of the state requesting the witness enters an order directing compliance with the
2499 conditions prescribed.

2500 (d) This Code section shall not apply to any person in this state confined as insane or
2501 mentally ill or under sentence of death.

2502 24-13-94.

2503 (a) If a person in any state which by its laws has made provision for commanding persons
2504 within its borders to attend and testify in criminal prosecutions or grand jury investigations
2505 commenced or about to commence in this state is a material witness in a prosecution
2506 pending in a court of record in this state or in a grand jury investigation which has
2507 commenced or is about to commence a judge of such court may issue a certificate under
2508 the seal of the court stating these facts and specifying the number of days the witness will
2509 be required. The certificate may include a recommendation that the witness be taken into
2510 immediate custody and delivered to an officer of this state to assure attendance in this state.

2511 This certificate shall be presented to a judge of a court of record in the county in which the
2512 witness is found.

2513 (b) If the witness is summoned to attend and testify in this state, the witness shall be
2514 tendered the sum of 45¢ a mile for each mile by the ordinarily traveled route to and from
2515 the court where the prosecution is pending and \$25.00 for each day that the witness is
2516 required to travel and attend as a witness. A witness who has appeared in accordance with
2517 the provisions of the summons shall not be required to remain within this state for a longer
2518 period of time than the period mentioned in the certificate, unless otherwise ordered by the
2519 court. If such witness, after coming into this state, fails without good cause to attend and
2520 testify as directed in the summons, the witness shall be punished in the manner provided
2521 for in Code Section 24-13-26.

2522 24-13-95.

2523 (a) If a person confined in a penal institution in any other state is a material witness in a
2524 criminal proceeding pending in a court of record or in a grand jury investigation in this
2525 state, a judge of the court may certify that there is a criminal proceeding or investigation
2526 by a grand jury or a criminal proceeding pending in the court, that a person who is confined
2527 in a penal institution in the other state is a material witness in the proceeding or
2528 investigation, and that the witness's presence will be required during a specified time. The
2529 certificate shall be presented to a judge of a court of record in the other state having
2530 jurisdiction over the confined prisoner, and a notice shall be given to the attorney general
2531 of the state in which the prisoner is confined.

2532 (b) The judge of the court in this state may enter an order directing compliance with the
2533 terms and conditions prescribed by the judge of the state in which the witness is confined.

2534 24-13-96.

2535 (a) If a person comes into this state in obedience to a summons directing him or her to
2536 attend and testify in this state, such person shall not while in this state pursuant to such
2537 summons be subject to arrest or the service of process, civil or criminal, in connection with
2538 matters which arose before such person's entrance into this state under the summons.

2539 (b) If a person passes through this state while going to another state in obedience to a
2540 summons to attend and testify in that state or while returning therefrom, he or she shall not
2541 while so passing through this state be subject to arrest or the service of process, civil or
2542 criminal, in connection with matters which arose before such person's entrance into this
2543 state under the summons.

2544 24-13-97.

2545 This article shall be interpreted and construed so as to effectuate its general purpose to
 2546 make uniform the laws of the states which enact it and shall be applicable only to such
 2547 states as shall enact reciprocal powers to this state relative to the matter of securing
 2548 attendance of witnesses as provided in this article.

2549 ARTICLE 5

2550 24-13-110.

2551 This article shall be known and may be cited as the 'Uniform Foreign Depositions Act.'

2552 24-13-111.

2553 Whenever any mandate, writ, or commission is issued out of any court of record in any
 2554 other state, territory, district, or foreign jurisdiction, or whenever upon notice or agreement
 2555 such court of record is required to take the testimony of a witness in this state, such witness
 2556 may be compelled to appear and testify in the same manner and by the same process and
 2557 proceeding as may be employed for the purpose of taking testimony in proceedings
 2558 pending in this state.

2559 24-13-112.

2560 This article shall be interpreted and construed so as to effectuate its general purposes to
 2561 make uniform the laws of those states which enact it.

2562 ARTICLE 6

2563 24-13-130.

2564 (a)(1) At any time after an accused has been charged with an offense against the laws of
 2565 this state or an ordinance of any political subdivision or authority thereof, upon motion
 2566 of the state or the accused, the court having jurisdiction to try the offense charged may,
 2567 after notice to the parties, order that the testimony of a prospective material witness of a
 2568 party be taken by deposition and that any designated evidence not privileged be produced
 2569 at the same time and place.

2570 (2) At any time after an accused has been charged with an offense of child molestation,
 2571 aggravated child molestation, or physical or sexual abuse of a child, upon motion of the
 2572 state or the accused, the court having jurisdiction to try the offense charged may, after
 2573 notice to the parties, order that the testimony of any physician whose testimony is

2574 relevant to such charge be taken by deposition and that any designated evidence not
2575 privileged be produced at the same time and place.

2576 (b) The court shall not order the taking of the witness's testimony, except as provided in
2577 paragraph (2) of subsection (a) of this Code section, unless it appears to the satisfaction of
2578 the court that the testimony of the witness is material to the proceeding and the witness:

2579 (1) Is in imminent danger of death;
2580 (2) Has been threatened with death or great bodily harm because of the witness's status
2581 as a potential witness in a criminal trial or proceeding;
2582 (3) Is about to leave this state and there are reasonable grounds to believe that such
2583 witness will be unable to attend the trial;
2584 (4) Is so sick or infirm as to afford reasonable grounds to believe that such witness will
2585 be unable to attend the trial; or
2586 (5) Is being detained as a material witness and there are reasonable grounds to believe
2587 that the witness will flee if released from detention.

2588 (c) A motion to take a deposition of a material witness, or a physician as provided in
2589 paragraph (2) of subsection (a) of this Code section, shall be verified and shall state:

2590 (1) The nature of the offense charged;
2591 (2) The status of the criminal proceedings;
2592 (3) The name of the witness and an address in Georgia where the witness may be
2593 contacted;
2594 (4) That the testimony of the witness is material to the proceeding or that the witness is
2595 a physician as provided in paragraph (2) of subsection (a) of this Code section; and
2596 (5) The basis for taking the deposition as provided in subsection (b) of this Code section.

2597 (d) A motion to take a deposition shall be filed in the court having jurisdiction to try the
2598 accused for the offense charged; provided, however, that if the accused is charged with
2599 multiple offenses, only the court having jurisdiction to try the most serious charge against
2600 the accused shall have jurisdiction to hear and decide the motion to take a deposition.

2601 (e) The party moving the court for an order pursuant to this Code section shall give not
2602 less than one day's notice of the hearing to the opposite party. A copy of the motion shall
2603 be sent to the opposing party or his or her counsel by any means which will reasonably
2604 ensure timely delivery, including transmission by facsimile or by digital or electronic
2605 means. A copy of the notice shall be attached to the motion and filed with the clerk of
2606 court.

2607 (f) If the court is satisfied that the examination of the witness is authorized by law and
2608 necessary, the court shall enter an order setting a time period of not more than 30 days
2609 during which the deposition shall be taken.

2610 (g) On motion of either party, the court may designate a judge who shall be available to
2611 rule on any objections to the interrogation of the witness or before whom the deposition
2612 shall be taken. The judge so designated may be a judge of any court of this state who is
2613 otherwise qualified to preside over the trial of criminal proceedings in the court having
2614 jurisdiction over the offense charged.

2615 24-13-131.

2616 (a) The party at whose instance a deposition is to be taken shall give to every party
2617 reasonable written notice of the time and place for taking the deposition. The notice shall
2618 state the name and address of each person to be examined.

2619 (b) On motion of a party upon whom the notice is served, the court for cause shown may
2620 extend or shorten the time or change the place for taking the deposition.

2621 (c) The officer having custody of an accused shall be notified of the time and place set for
2622 the examination and shall, unless the accused waives in writing the right to be present,
2623 produce the accused at the examination and keep the accused in the presence of the witness
2624 during the examination unless, after being warned by the judge that disruptive conduct will
2625 cause the accused's removal from the place where the deposition is being taken, the accused
2626 persists in conduct which would justify exclusion from that place.

2627 (d) An accused not in custody shall have the right to be present at the examination; but
2628 failure of the accused to appear, absent good cause shown, after notice and tender of
2629 expenses, shall constitute a waiver of that right and of any objection to the taking and use
2630 of the deposition based upon that right.

2631 (e) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (c) and (d) of this Code section, if the
2632 witness is a child, the court may order that the deposition be taken in accordance with Code
2633 Section 17-8-55.

2634 24-13-132.

2635 (a) If an accused is financially unable to employ counsel, the court shall appoint counsel
2636 as provided in Chapter 12 of Title 17, unless the accused elects to proceed without counsel.

2637 (b) Whenever a deposition is taken at the instance of the state, the cost of any such
2638 deposition shall be paid by the state by the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of the State of
2639 Georgia out of such funds as may be appropriated for the operations of the district
2640 attorneys.

2641 (c) Depositions taken at the instance of an accused shall be paid for by the accused;
2642 provided, however, that, whenever a deposition is taken at the instance of an accused who
2643 is eligible for the appointment of counsel as provided in Chapter 12 of Title 17, the court
2644 shall direct that the reasonable expenses for the taking of the deposition and of travel and

2645 subsistence of the accused and the accused's attorney for attendance at the examination, not
2646 to exceed the limits established pursuant to Article 2 of Chapter 7 of Title 45, be paid for
2647 out of the fine and forfeiture fund of the county where venue is laid.

2648 24-13-133.

2649 Except as provided in Code Section 24-13-137, a deposition shall be taken and filed in the
2650 manner provided in civil proceedings, provided that (1) in no event shall a deposition be
2651 taken of an accused party without his or her consent and (2) the scope of examination and
2652 cross-examination shall be such as would be allowed in the trial itself. On request or
2653 waiver by the accused, the court may direct that a deposition be taken on written
2654 interrogatories in the manner provided in civil proceedings. Such request shall constitute
2655 a waiver by the accused of any objection to the taking and use of the deposition based upon
2656 its being so taken. If a judge has been designated to rule on objections or to preside over
2657 the deposition, objections to interrogation of the witness shall be made to and ruled on by
2658 such judge in the same manner as at the trial of a criminal proceeding.

2659 24-13-134.

2660 The state or the accused shall make available to each other, for examination and use at the
2661 taking of a deposition pursuant to this article, any statement of the witness being deposed
2662 which is in the possession of the state or the accused and which would be required to be
2663 made available if the witness were testifying at the trial.

2664 24-13-135.

2665 At the trial or upon any hearing, a part or all of a deposition, so far as otherwise admissible
2666 under the rules of evidence, may be used if the witness is unavailable. Any deposition may
2667 also be used by any party for the purpose of contradicting or impeaching the testimony of
2668 the deponent as a witness. If only a part of a deposition is offered in evidence by a party,
2669 an adverse party may require the offering of all of it which is relevant to the part offered,
2670 and any party may offer other parts. A witness is not unavailable if the exemption, refusal
2671 to testify, claim of lack of memory, inability, or absence of such witness is due to the
2672 procurement or wrongdoing of the party offering the deposition at the hearing or trial for
2673 the purpose of preventing the witness from attending or testifying.

2674 24-13-136.

2675 Objections to receiving in evidence a deposition or part thereof may be made as provided
2676 in civil proceedings.

2677 24-13-137.

2678 (a) Any party shall have the right to require that the deposition be recorded and preserved
2679 by the use of audio-visual equipment in addition to a stenographic record. The audio-visual
2680 recording shall be transmitted to the clerk of the court which ordered the deposition and
2681 shall be made available for viewing and copying only to the prosecuting attorney and
2682 accused's attorney prior to trial. An audio-visual recording made pursuant to this Code
2683 section shall not be available for inspection or copying by the public until such audio-visual
2684 recording has been admitted into evidence during a trial or hearing in the case in which
2685 such deposition is made.

2686 (b) An audio-visual recording made pursuant to this Code section may be admissible at a
2687 trial or hearing as an alternative to the stenographic record of the deposition.

2688 (c) A stenographic record of the deposition contemplated in this Code section shall be
2689 made pursuant to Code Section 9-11-28.

2690 24-13-138.

2691 Nothing in this article shall preclude the taking of a deposition, orally or upon written
2692 questions, or the use of a deposition by agreement of the parties with the consent of the
2693 court.

2694 24-13-139.

2695 It is the intent of the General Assembly that depositions shall be taken in criminal
2696 proceedings only in exceptional circumstances when it is in the interests of justice that the
2697 testimony of a prospective witness be taken and preserved for use at trial. If the court finds
2698 that any party or counsel for a party is using the procedures set forth in this article for the
2699 purpose of harassment or delay, such conduct may be punished as contempt of court.

2700 ARTICLE 7

2701 24-13-150.

2702 Superior courts may entertain proceedings for the perpetuation of testimony in all
2703 proceedings in which the fact to which the testimony relates cannot immediately be made
2704 the subject of investigation at law and in which, for any cause, the common-law proceeding
2705 authorized under this title is not as available, or as completely available, as a proceeding
2706 in equity.

2707 24-13-151.

2708 A petition for discovery merely or to perpetuate testimony shall not be sustained unless
2709 some reason is shown why the usual proceeding at law is inadequate.

2710 24-13-152.

2711 The possession of the property is immaterial; nor shall the proceeding be denied though all
2712 parties in interest cannot be ascertained or reached.

2713 24-13-153.

2714 Testimony taken in the proceedings contemplated under Code Section 24-13-150 shall be
2715 used only from the necessity of the case, but in such case may be used against all persons,
2716 whether parties to the proceeding or not.

2717 24-13-154.

2718 The complainant shall in all cases be taxed with the costs of proceedings to perpetuate
2719 testimony.

2720 CHAPTER 14

2721 ARTICLE 1

2722 24-14-1.

2723 The burden of proof generally lies upon the party who is asserting or affirming a fact and
2724 to the existence of whose case or defense the proof of such fact is essential. If a negation
2725 or negative affirmation is essential to a party's case or defense, the proof of such negation
2726 or negative affirmation shall lie on the party so affirming it.

2727 24-14-2.

2728 What amount of evidence will change the onus or burden of proof shall be a question to be
2729 decided in each case by the sound discretion of the court.

2730 24-14-3.

2731 Moral and reasonable certainty is all that can be expected in legal investigation. Except as
2732 provided in Code Section 51-1-29.5 or Code Section 51-12-5.1, in all civil proceedings, a
2733 preponderance of evidence shall be considered sufficient to produce mental conviction.
2734 In criminal proceedings, a greater strength of mental conviction shall be held necessary to
2735 justify a verdict of guilty.

2736 24-14-4.

2737 In determining where the preponderance of evidence lies, the jury may consider all the
2738 facts and circumstances of the case, the witnesses' manner of testifying, their intelligence,
2739 their means and opportunity for knowing the facts to which they testified, the nature of the
2740 facts to which they testified, the probability or improbability of their testimony, their
2741 interest or want of interest, and their personal credibility so far as the same may
2742 legitimately appear from the trial. The jury may also consider the number of the witnesses,
2743 though the preponderance is not necessarily with the greater number.

2744 24-14-5.

2745 Whether dependent upon direct or circumstantial evidence, the true question in criminal
2746 cases is not whether it is possible that the conclusion at which the evidence points may be
2747 false, but whether there is sufficient evidence to satisfy the mind and conscience beyond
2748 a reasonable doubt.

2749 24-14-6.

2750 To warrant a conviction on circumstantial evidence, the proved facts shall not only be
2751 consistent with the hypothesis of guilt, but shall exclude every other reasonable hypothesis
2752 save that of the guilt of the accused.

2753 24-14-7.

2754 The existence of a fact testified to by one positive witness is to be believed, rather than that
2755 such fact did not exist because many other witnesses who had the same opportunity of
2756 observation swear that they did not see or know of its having existed. This rule shall not
2757 apply when two parties have equal facilities for seeing or hearing a thing and one swears
2758 that it occurred while the other swears that it did not.

2759 24-14-8.

2760 The testimony of a single witness is generally sufficient to establish a fact. However, in
2761 certain cases, including prosecutions for treason, prosecutions for perjury, and felony cases
2762 where the only witness is an accomplice, the testimony of a single witness shall not be
2763 sufficient. Nevertheless, corroborating circumstances may dispense with the necessity for
2764 the testimony of a second witness, except in prosecutions for treason.

2765 24-14-9.

2766 In arriving at a verdict, the jury, from facts proved, and sometimes from the absence of
2767 counter evidence, may infer the existence of other facts reasonably and logically
2768 consequent on those proved.

2769 ARTICLE 2

2770 24-14-20.

2771 Presumptions are either of law or of fact. Presumptions of law are conclusions and
2772 inferences which the law draws from given facts. Presumptions of fact shall be exclusively
2773 questions for the jury, to be decided by the ordinary test of human experience.

2774 24-14-21.

2775 Certain presumptions of law, such as the presumption of innocence, in some cases the
2776 presumption of guilt, the presumption of continuance of life for seven years, the
2777 presumption of a mental state once proved to exist, and all similar presumptions, may be
2778 rebutted by proof.

2779 24-14-22.

2780 If a party has evidence in such party's power and within such party's reach by which he or
2781 she may repel a claim or charge against him or her but omits to produce it or if such party
2782 has more certain and satisfactory evidence in his or her power but relies on that which is
2783 of a weaker and inferior nature, a presumption arises that the charge or claim against such
2784 party is well founded; but this presumption may be rebutted.

2785 24-14-23.

2786 In the ordinary course of business, when good faith requires an answer, it is the duty of the
2787 party receiving a letter from another to answer within a reasonable time. Otherwise, the
2788 party shall be presumed to admit the propriety of the acts mentioned in the letter of the
2789 party's correspondent and to adopt them.

2790 24-14-24.

2791 In any proceeding to establish a right, title, or interest in or to real property that is a part of
2792 a railroad right of way, including a right of ingress or egress, where such proceeding is
2793 based upon occupancy of the railroad right of way by a person or entity other than the
2794 railroad corporation or railroad company, there shall be a presumption that any such

2795 occupancy of the railroad right of way is with the permission of the railroad corporation
 2796 or railroad company. Such presumption may be rebutted.

2797 24-14-25.

2798 (a) As used in this Code section:

2799 (1) 'Bank' means any person engaged in the business of banking and includes, in addition
 2800 to a commercial bank, a savings and loan association, savings bank, or credit union.

2801 (2) 'Check' means a draft, other than a documentary draft, payable on demand and drawn
 2802 on a bank, even though it is described by another term, such as 'share draft' or 'negotiable
 2803 order of withdrawal.'

2804 (b) In any dispute concerning payment by means of a check, a duplicate of the check
 2805 produced in accordance with Code Section 24-10-1003, together with the original bank
 2806 statement that reflects payment of the check by the bank on which it was drawn or a
 2807 duplicate thereof produced in the same manner, shall create a presumption that the check
 2808 has been paid.

2809 24-14-26.

2810 (a) Conclusive presumptions of law are termed estoppels; averments to the contrary of
 2811 such presumptions shall not be allowed. Estoppels are not generally favored.

2812 (b) Estoppels include presumptions in favor of:

2813 (1) A record or judgment unreversed;

2814 (2) The proper conduct of courts and judicial officers acting within their legitimate
 2815 spheres;

2816 (3) The proper conduct of other officers of the law after the lapse of time has rendered
 2817 it dangerous to open the investigation of their acts in regard to mere formalities of the
 2818 law;

2819 (4) Ancient deeds and other instruments more than 30 years old, when they come from
 2820 proper custody and possession has been held in accordance with them;

2821 (5) Recitals in deeds, except payment of purchase money, as against a grantor, sui juris,
 2822 acting in his or her own right, and his or her privies in estate, in blood, and in law;

2823 (6) A landlord's title as against his or her tenant in possession;

2824 (7) Solemn admissions made in judicio; or

2825 (8) Admissions upon which other parties have acted, either to their own injury or to the
 2826 benefit of the persons making the admissions.

2827 Estoppels also include all similar cases where it would be more unjust and productive of
 2828 evil to hear the truth than to forbear investigation.

2829 24-14-27.

2830 (a) Where an estoppel relates to the title to real estate, the party claiming to have been
2831 influenced by the other party's acts or declarations shall not only have been ignorant of the
2832 true title, but also ignorant of any convenient means of acquiring such knowledge.

2833 (b) Where both parties have equal knowledge or equal means of obtaining the truth, there
2834 shall be no estoppel.

2835 24-14-28.

2836 Trustees and other representatives with custody of papers have ample opportunities to
2837 discover defects in the title of property in their care and shall be estopped from setting up
2838 title adverse to their trust.

2839 24-14-29.

2840 In order for an equitable estoppel to arise, there shall generally be some intended deception
2841 in the conduct or declarations of the party to be estopped, or such gross negligence as to
2842 amount to constructive fraud, by which another has been misled to his or her injury.

2843 ARTICLE 3

2844 24-14-40.

2845 (a) Concordance of name alone is some evidence of identity. Residence, vocation,
2846 ownership of property, and other like facts may be proved. Reasonable certainty shall be
2847 all that is be required.

2848 (b) In civil proceedings, parties shall generally be relieved from the onus of proving
2849 identity, as it is a fact generally more easily disproved than established.

2850 24-14-41.

2851 An officer de facto may be proved to be such by his or her acts, without the production of
2852 his or her commission or appointment.

2853 24-14-42.

2854 A judgment shall be admissible between any parties to show the fact of the rendition
2855 thereof; between parties and privies it is conclusive as to the matter directly in issue, until
2856 reversed or set aside.

2857 24-14-43.

2858 Stern's United States calendar and Stafford's office calendar shall be admissible in proof
2859 of dates for the space of time covered by them respectively without further proof.

2860 24-14-44.

2861 In all civil proceedings where the life expectancy of a person shall be an issue, the
2862 American Experience Mortality Tables shall be admissible as evidence of the life
2863 expectancy of such person.

2864 24-14-45.

2865 (a) In addition to any other lawful methods of computing the value of the life of a decedent
2866 in wrongful death cases or of determining the present value of future due earnings or
2867 amounts in proceedings involving permanent personal injuries, there shall be admissible
2868 in evidence, as competent evidence in such proceedings, either or both of the following
2869 mortality tables:

2870 (1) The Commissioners 1958 Standard Ordinary Mortality Table; or

2871 (2) Annuity Mortality Table for 1949, Ultimate.

2872 (b) In addition to the provisions set out in subsection (a) of this Code section, the jury or
2873 court shall be authorized in cases of wrongful death or permanent personal injuries to use
2874 any table determined by the jury or court, whichever is the trier of fact, to be accurate in
2875 showing the value of annuities on single lives according to the mortality tables listed in
2876 subsection (a) of this Code section.

2877 (c) The admissible evidence provided for in subsections (a) and (b) of this Code section
2878 shall not be the exclusive method which the jury or court is required to use in such
2879 proceedings but shall be supplementary to other lawful and allowable evidence and
2880 methods for such purpose.

2881 24-14-46.

2882 All inspection certificates issued by the United States Department of Agriculture over the
2883 signature of any inspector thereof which are admissible in courts of the United States as
2884 prima-facie evidence of the truth of the statements therein contained shall be admissible
2885 in all courts of the State of Georgia as prima-facie evidence of the truth of the statements
2886 therein contained.

2887 24-14-47.

2888 (a) A written finding of presumed death made by officers or employees of the United
2889 States authorized to make such findings pursuant to any law of the United States or a duly

2890 certified copy of such finding shall be received in any court, office, or other place in this
 2891 state as evidence of the death of the person therein found to be dead and the date,
 2892 circumstances, and place of his or her disappearance.

2893 (b) An official written report, record, or duly certified copy thereof that a person is
 2894 missing, missing in action, interned in a neutral country, beleaguered, besieged, or captured
 2895 by an enemy, dead or alive, made by an officer or employee of the United States authorized
 2896 by any law of the United States to make the same shall be received in any court, office, or
 2897 other place in this state as evidence that such person is missing, missing in action, interned
 2898 in a neutral country, beleaguered, besieged, or captured by an enemy, dead or alive, as the
 2899 case may be.

2900 (c) For the purposes of subsections (a) and (b) of this Code section, any finding, report,
 2901 record, or duly certified copy thereof purporting to have been signed by an officer or
 2902 employee of the United States as is described in this Code section shall prima facie be
 2903 deemed to have been signed and issued by such an officer or employee pursuant to law, and
 2904 the person signing same shall prima facie be deemed to have acted within the scope of his
 2905 or her authority."

2906 **SECTION 3.**

2907 Code Section 4-11-17 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to filing a report
 2908 regarding animal cruelty, is amended by revising subsection (a) as follows:

2909 "(a) Notwithstanding Code Section ~~24-9-29~~ 24-12-31 or any other provision of law to the
 2910 contrary, any licensed veterinarian or veterinary technician having reasonable cause to
 2911 believe that an animal has been subjected to animal cruelty in violation of Code Section
 2912 16-12-4 or an act prohibited under Code Section 16-12-37 may make or cause to be made
 2913 a report of such violation to the Commissioner, his or her designee, an animal control
 2914 officer, a law enforcement agency, or a prosecuting attorney and may appear and testify in
 2915 any judicial or administrative proceeding concerning the care of an animal."

2916 **SECTION 4.**

2917 Article 1 of Chapter 1 of Title 7 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
 2918 provisions applicable to the Department of Banking and Finance and financial institutions
 2919 generally, is amended by revising Code Section 7-1-63, relating to retention of records, as
 2920 follows:

2921 "7-1-63.

2922 (a) The department shall issue regulations classifying records kept by financial institutions
 2923 and prescribing the period, if any, for which records of each class shall be retained and the
 2924 form in which such records shall be maintained. Such periods may be permanent or for a

2925 lesser term of years. In issuing such regulations, consideration shall be given to the
2926 objectives of this chapter and to:

- 2927 (1) Evidentiary effect in actions at law and administrative proceedings in which the
2928 production of records of financial institutions might be necessary or desirable;
- 2929 (2) State and federal statutes of limitation applicable to such actions or proceedings;
- 2930 (3) Availability of information contained in the records of the financial institution from
2931 other sources;
- 2932 (4) Requirements of electronic systems of transferring funds; and
- 2933 (5) Other pertinent matters;

2934 so that financial institutions will be required to retain records for as short a period as is
2935 commensurate with interests of customers, shareholders, and the people of this state.

2936 (b) The regulations of the department shall not require financial institutions to maintain
2937 originals of checks or items for the payment of money or original computer tapes or
2938 original records with respect to accounts which have been inactive for a period of 12
2939 successive months. Where a financial institution employs computers, its records may
2940 consist of legible products of computer operations.

2941 ~~(c) Any copy of a record or of a reproduction of a record stored in an electronic or
2942 photographic medium permitted to be kept in lieu of the original, under this Code section
2943 or the regulations of the department, including legible products of computer operations,
2944 shall be admissible in evidence as though it were the original."~~

2945 SECTION 5.

2946 Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 7-1-94, relating to evidential value
2947 of results of examinations or investigations, as follows:

2948 "7-1-94.

2949 ~~(a) The~~ When the record of any examination or investigation of a financial institution by
2950 the department or the report by the examiner or employee of the department who conducted
2951 such examination or investigation ~~or a copy of either, when duly certified by the
2952 department, shall, in the absence of any applicable privilege, be is admissible and constitute
2953 prima-facie in evidence of facts therein stated, but not of conclusions drawn by the
2954 examiner from such facts, in any action at law or equity in which one of the parties is the
2955 department or any officer or employee thereof, either in his official capacity or otherwise,
2956 or the financial institution subjected to examination or investigation under Title 24, the
2957 department, with the permission of the court, may edit out of the record or report any
2958 portion thereof which is not pertinent to the issue in question before the court or which
2959 would tend unnecessarily to affect adversely the public confidence in the financial
2960 institution.~~

2961 ~~(b) The department, with the permission of the court, may edit out of any report to be~~
 2962 ~~admitted as evidence pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section any portion of the~~
 2963 ~~report which is not pertinent to the issue in question before the court or which would tend~~
 2964 ~~unnecessarily to affect adversely the public confidence in the financial institution."~~

2965 **SECTION 6.**

2966 Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 7-1-95, relating to the admissibility
 2967 of department's certificates and copies, as follows:

2968 "7-1-95.

2969 ~~When duly certified by the department, a copy of any book, paper, or document on file with~~
 2970 ~~it or a certificate under its seal shall be prima-facie evidence of the facts therein stated in~~
 2971 ~~any court of law or equity or in any investigation or proceeding authorized by law or for~~
 2972 ~~any other purpose and shall be admissible without any additional authentication, but in any~~
 2973 ~~proceeding the court or public body having jurisdiction may, on cause shown, require~~
 2974 ~~production of the original Reserved."~~

2975 **SECTION 7.**

2976 Article 1 of Chapter 3 of Title 8 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
 2977 housing authorities, is amended by revising Code Section 8-3-6, relating to resolution as
 2978 conclusive evidence of authority's establishment and authority, as follows:

2979 "8-3-6.

2980 In any action or proceeding involving the validity or enforcement of, or otherwise relating
 2981 to, any contract of an authority, the authority shall be conclusively deemed to have become
 2982 established and authorized to transact business and exercise its powers under this article
 2983 upon proof of the adoption of a resolution by the governing body declaring the need for the
 2984 authority. Such resolution shall be deemed sufficient if it declares that there is need for an
 2985 authority and finds in substantially such terms as appear in subsection (a) of Code Section
 2986 8-3-5, no further detail being necessary, that either or both of the conditions enumerated
 2987 in that subsection exist in the city or county, as the case may be. ~~A copy of such resolution~~
 2988 ~~duly certified by the clerk shall be admissible in evidence in any action or proceeding."~~

2989 **SECTION 8.**

2990 Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 8-3-104, relating to resolution as
 2991 conclusive evidence of an authority's establishment, as follows:

2992 "8-3-104.

2993 In any suit, action, or proceeding involving the validity or enforcement of or relating to any
 2994 contract of the regional housing authority, the regional housing authority shall be

2995 conclusively deemed to have become created as a public body corporate and politic and to
 2996 have become established and authorized to transact business and exercise its powers under
 2997 this part upon proof of the adoption of a resolution by the governing body of each of the
 2998 counties creating the regional housing authority declaring the need for the regional housing
 2999 authority. Each such resolution shall be deemed sufficient if it declares that there is need
 3000 for the regional housing authority and finds in substantially such terms as appear in
 3001 paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a) of Code Section 8-3-102, no further detail being
 3002 necessary, that the conditions enumerated in those paragraphs exist. ~~A copy of such~~
 3003 ~~resolution of the governing body of a county duly certified by the clerk of such county shall~~
 3004 ~~be admissible in evidence in any suit, action, or proceeding."~~

3005 **SECTION 9.**

3006 Title 9 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to civil practice, is amended by
 3007 revising Code Section 9-10-6, relating to juror's private knowledge, as follows:

3008 "9-10-6.

3009 A juror shall not act on his or her private knowledge respecting the facts, witnesses, or
 3010 parties ~~unless sworn and examined as a witness in the case."~~

3011 **SECTION 10.**

3012 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 9-10-9, relating to jurors' affidavits
 3013 permitted to uphold but not impeach a verdict, as follows:

3014 "9-10-9.

3015 ~~The affidavits of jurors may be taken to sustain but not to impeach their verdict Reserved."~~

3016 **SECTION 11.**

3017 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 9-11-44, relating to official records,
 3018 as follows:

3019 "9-11-44.

3020 ~~(a) *Proof of lack of record.* A written statement, signed by an officer having the custody~~
 3021 ~~of an official record or by his deputy, that after diligent search no record or entry of a~~
 3022 ~~specified tenor is found to exist in the records of his office, accompanied by a certificate~~
 3023 ~~attesting to his custody of the official record relating to such matters, is admissible as~~
 3024 ~~evidence that the records of his office contain no such record or entry.~~

3025 ~~(b) *Other proof.* This Code section does not prevent the proof of official records or of~~
 3026 ~~entry or lack of entry therein by any method authorized by any applicable statutes or by the~~
 3027 ~~rules of evidence at common law Reserved."~~

3028 **SECTION 12.**

3029 Title 10 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to commerce and trade, is
3030 amended by revising Code Section 10-1-157, relating to collecting and testing samples of
3031 petroleum products and analyses as evidence, as follows:

3032 "10-1-157.

3033 The Commissioner of Agriculture shall, from time to time, collect or cause to be collected
3034 samples of all petroleum products subject to regulation under this part which are sold,
3035 offered, or exposed for sale in this state and cause such samples to be tested or analyzed
3036 by the state oil chemist. ~~The state oil chemist shall certify, under oath, an analysis of each~~
3037 ~~such sample and such certificate shall be competent evidence of the composition of such~~
3038 ~~petroleum product in any legal proceeding.~~ The Department of Agriculture shall have the
3039 power to implement rules and regulations necessary to carry out inspection of gasoline
3040 samples as provided for by this Code section."

3041 **SECTION 13.**

3042 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 10-1-188, relating to certified analyses
3043 as evidence, as follows:

3044 "10-1-188.

3045 ~~A copy of the analysis made by the state oil chemist of any brake fluid certified by him~~
3046 ~~shall be admitted as evidence in any court of this state on the trial of any issue involving~~
3047 ~~the analysis, standards, or specifications of brake fluid as defined and covered by this part~~
3048 Reserved."

3049 **SECTION 14.**

3050 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 10-1-208, relating to certified analyses
3051 as evidence, as follows:

3052 "10-1-208.

3053 ~~A copy of the analysis made by the state oil chemist of the Department of Agriculture of~~
3054 ~~any antifreeze and certified by him shall be admitted as evidence in any court of this state~~
3055 ~~upon trial of any issue involving the merits of antifreeze as defined and covered by this part~~
3056 Reserved."

3057 **SECTION 15.**

3058 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 10-1-444, relating to registration of
3059 marks, certificate, and use as evidence, as follows:

3060 "10-1-444.

3061 Upon compliance by the applicant with the requirements of this part, the Secretary of State
 3062 shall cause a certificate of registration to be issued and delivered to the applicant. The
 3063 certificate of registration shall be issued under the signature of the Secretary of State and
 3064 the seal of the state and it shall show the name and business address and, if a corporation,
 3065 the state of incorporation, of the person claiming ownership of the trademark or service
 3066 mark; the date claimed for the first use of the trademark or service mark anywhere and the
 3067 date claimed for the first use of the trademark or service mark in this state; the class of
 3068 goods or services and a description of the goods or services on which the trademark or
 3069 service mark is used; a reproduction of the trademark or service mark; the registration date;
 3070 and the term of the registration.

3071 ~~Any certificate of registration issued by the Secretary of State under the provisions of this~~
 3072 ~~Code section or a copy thereof duly certified by the Secretary of State shall be admissible~~
 3073 ~~in evidence as competent and sufficient proof of the registration of such trademark or~~
 3074 ~~service mark in any action or judicial proceedings in any court of this state."~~

3075 **SECTION 16.**

3076 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 10-4-15, relating to inspections of
 3077 warehouses and reports as evidence, as follows:

3078 "10-4-15.

3079 In addition to the general powers conferred by Code Section 10-4-5, the Commissioner and
 3080 his or her duly authorized agents or employees shall have full power and authority to
 3081 inspect public warehouses operated under this article, to inventory, and to check the
 3082 agricultural products stored so as to ascertain the conditions of such products and to
 3083 determine whether or not the business is conducted in such a manner as to protect the
 3084 interest of persons who are storing or may store such products. The inspectors shall make
 3085 sworn reports of their findings to the Commissioner, who shall hold and keep such reports
 3086 in the records of his or her office. ~~Such reports when sworn to shall be public records and~~
 3087 ~~shall be admissible as evidence.~~ Such inspections shall be made as often as deemed
 3088 necessary by the Commissioner, but not less than twice during any license period and, in
 3089 addition, as often as requested by the warehouseman."

3090 **SECTION 17.**

3091 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 10-6-64, relating to agent may be a
 3092 witness, credibility, and admissibility of agent's declarations, as follows:

3093 "10-6-64.

3094 ~~The agent shall be a competent witness either for or against his principal. His interest shall~~
 3095 ~~go to his credit. The declarations of the agent as to the business transacted by him shall not~~
 3096 ~~be admissible against his principal unless they were a part of the negotiation constituting~~
 3097 ~~the res gestae, or else the agent is dead Reserved."~~

3098 **SECTION 18.**

3099 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 10-14-27, relating to evidence in civil
 3100 or criminal actions under Chapter 14, as follows:

3101 "10-14-27.

3102 ~~(a) In any action, civil or criminal, a certificate signed and sealed by the Secretary of State,~~
 3103 ~~stating compliance or noncompliance with the provisions of this chapter, shall constitute~~
 3104 ~~prima-facie evidence of such compliance or noncompliance with the provisions of this~~
 3105 ~~chapter and shall be admissible in any such action.~~

3106 ~~(b) In any action, civil or criminal, copies, photostatic or otherwise, certified by the~~
 3107 ~~Secretary of State of any documents filed in his or her office and of any of his or her~~
 3108 ~~records shall be admissible with the same effect as the original of such documents or~~
 3109 ~~records would have if actually produced Reserved."~~

3110 **SECTION 19.**

3111 Code Section 14-9A-117 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to certified
 3112 copies admissible in evidence, is amended as follows:

3113 "14-9A-117.

3114 ~~A certified copy of the certificate, power of attorney, and affidavits required to be filed~~
 3115 ~~under Code Sections 14-9A-115 and 14-9A-116 shall be admissible in evidence in all~~
 3116 ~~courts and places whatever Reserved."~~

3117 **SECTION 20.**

3118 Title 15 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to courts, is amended by revising
 3119 Code Section 15-1-14, relating to participation in the Consortium for State Court Interpreter
 3120 Certification, as follows:

3121 "15-1-14.

3122 (a) The Supreme Court of Georgia shall establish rules and requirements for foreign
 3123 language interpreters and interpreters for the hearing impaired utilized in the courts of this
 3124 state and provide for the administration and enforcement of such rules. The Administrative
 3125 Office of the Courts shall administer such rules, requirements, and enforcement.

3126 (b) The Supreme Court may establish fees to be paid by persons desiring certification to
 3127 cover the costs of certifying, regulating, and training court qualified interpreters.

3128 (c) The Supreme Court may enter into and participate in the Consortium for State Court
 3129 Interpreter Certification established August 2, 1997, as amended August 1, 1998; Language
 3130 Access in the Courts and in other similar multistate agreements and cooperative programs
 3131 for the training, testing, and certification of interpreters. Such consortia, multistate
 3132 agreements, and cooperative programs may:

- 3133 (1) Utilize the auspices and services of the National Center for State Courts;
 3134 (2) Provide for the common development, sharing, and distribution of tests, standards,
 3135 educational materials, and programs and related work, and further provide for the
 3136 copyright and other protection of intellectual property;
 3137 (3) Charge fees for membership and other services and retain funds;
 3138 (4) Provide for governance and management; and
 3139 (5) Perform such other services and functions as may be reasonably related to such
 3140 purposes and functions."

3141 **SECTION 21.**

3142 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 15-11-79.1, relating to the use and
 3143 disposition of evidence, as follows:

3144 "15-11-79.1.

3145 Except as provided in subsection (d) of Code Section 24-6-609, the ~~The~~ disposition of a
 3146 child and evidence adduced in a hearing in the juvenile court may not be used against such
 3147 child in any proceeding in any court other than for a proceeding for delinquency or
 3148 unruliness, whether before or after reaching majority, except in the establishment of
 3149 conditions of bail, plea negotiations, and sentencing in felony offenses; and, in such
 3150 excepted cases, such records of dispositions and evidence shall be available to district
 3151 attorneys and superior court judges and the accused and may be used in the same manner
 3152 as adult records."

3153 **SECTION 22.**

3154 Said title is further amended by revising subsection (b) of Code Section 15-11-84, relating
 3155 to sharing of confidential information, as follows:

3156 "(b) Governmental entities and state, county, municipal, or consolidated government
 3157 departments, boards, or agencies shall exchange with each other all information not held
 3158 as confidential pursuant to federal law and relating to a child which may aid a
 3159 governmental entity in the assessment, treatment, intervention, or rehabilitation of a child,
 3160 notwithstanding Code Section 15-1-15; or 15-11-9.1, subsection (d) of Code Section

3161 15-11-10, or Code Section 15-11-66.1, 15-11-75, 15-11-81, 15-11-82, 15-11-174,
 3162 20-2-751.2, 20-14-40, ~~24-9-40.1, 24-9-41, 24-9-42~~ 24-12-10, 24-12-11, 24-12-20, 26-4-5,
 3163 26-4-80, 26-5-17, 31-5-5, 31-33-6, 37-1-53, 37-2-9.1, 42-5-36, 42-8-40, 42-8-106, 49-5-40,
 3164 49-5-41, 49-5-41.1, 49-5-44, 49-5-45, 49-5-183, 49-5-184, 49-5-185, or 49-5-186, in order
 3165 to serve the best interest of the child. Information which is shared pursuant to this
 3166 subsection shall not be utilized to assist in the prosecution of the child in juvenile court or
 3167 superior court or utilized to the detriment of the child."

3168 **SECTION 23.**

3169 Said title is further amended by revising paragraph (2) of subsection (c) of Code Section
 3170 15-18-14.1, relating to district attorney investigators, as follows:

3171 "(2) Assist victims and witnesses of crimes through the complexities of the criminal
 3172 justice system and ensure that victims of crime are apprised of the rights afforded them
 3173 under Chapter 14 of Title 17, ~~relating to restitution to victims of crime~~; Chapter 17 of
 3174 Title 17, the 'Crime Victims' Bill of Rights'; Chapter 18 of Title 17, ~~relating to providing~~
 3175 ~~a written statement of information to victims of rape or forcible sodomy~~; and Code
 3176 Section ~~24-6-616~~ 24-9-61.1, ~~relating to the presence of crime victims in the courtroom~~;"

3177 **SECTION 24.**

3178 Said title is further amended by revising paragraph (2) of subsection (b) of Code Section
 3179 15-18-15, relating to chief assistant district attorney, as follows:

3180 "(2) If the district attorney will be temporarily absent from the judicial circuit such that
 3181 he or she is not available to perform the duties of his or her office, the district attorney
 3182 may authorize, in writing, the chief assistant district attorney to exercise any of the
 3183 powers, duties, and responsibilities of the district attorney during such absence, including
 3184 but not limited to such powers and duties as the district attorney may have pursuant to
 3185 this title, Code Section 16-11-64, and Code Section ~~24-9-28~~ 24-5-507 and the laws of this
 3186 state relating to the validation of bonds."

3187 **SECTION 25.**

3188 Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to crimes and offenses, is
 3189 amended by revising subsection (e) of Code Section 16-5-27, relating to female genital
 3190 mutilation, as follows:

3191 "(e) The statutory privileges provided by Chapter ~~9~~ 5 of Title 24 shall not apply to
 3192 proceedings in which one of the parties to the privilege is charged with a crime against a
 3193 female under 18 years of age, but such person shall be compellable to give evidence only
 3194 on the specific act for which the ~~defendant~~ accused is charged."

3195 **SECTION 26.**

3196 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 16-12-55, relating to certification of
3197 tax-exempt status of organization and evidentiary nature of certificate, is amended as
3198 follows:

3199 "16-12-55.

3200 The director shall upon the request of any prosecuting attorney or his or her designee
3201 certify the status of any organization as to that organization's exemption from payment of
3202 state income taxes as a nonprofit organization. The director shall also upon request issue
3203 a certificate indicating whether any particular organization holds a currently valid license
3204 to operate a bingo game. ~~Such certificates properly executed shall be admissible in~~
3205 ~~evidence in any prosecution and~~ Code Section 48-7-60, relative to the disclosure of income
3206 tax information, shall not apply to the furnishing of such certificate."

3207 **SECTION 27.**

3208 Title 17 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to criminal procedure, is
3209 amended by adding a new Code section to Article 2 of Chapter 4, relating to arrest by law
3210 enforcement officers generally, to read as follows:

3211 "17-4-30.

3212 In the event a hearing impaired person is arrested for any alleged violation of a criminal
3213 law of this state, the arresting officer shall comply with the provisions of Article 3 of
3214 Chapter 6 of Title 24."

3215 **SECTION 28.**

3216 Said title is further amended by revising paragraph (4) of subsection (b) of Code Section
3217 17-4-40, relating to persons who may issue warrants for arrest of offenders against penal
3218 laws, as follows:

3219 "(4) At the warrant application hearing, the rules ~~regarding admission~~ of evidence at a
3220 commitment hearing shall apply as set forth in paragraph (1) of subsection (d) of Code
3221 Section 24-1-2. The person seeking the warrant shall have the customary rights of
3222 presentation of evidence and cross-examination of witnesses. The person whose arrest
3223 is sought may cross-examine the person or persons applying for the warrant and any other
3224 witnesses testifying in support of the application at the hearing. The person whose arrest
3225 is sought may present evidence that probable cause does not exist for his or her arrest.
3226 The judge or other officer shall have the right to limit the presentation of evidence and
3227 the cross-examination of witnesses to the issue of probable cause."

3228 **SECTION 29.**

3229 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 17-7-25, relating to the power of the
 3230 court to compel attendance of witnesses, as follows:

3231 "17-7-25.

3232 A court of inquiry shall have the same power to compel the attendance of witnesses as in
 3233 other criminal cases, as set forth in and subject to all of the provisions of Chapter ~~10~~ 13 of
 3234 Title 24, at any location where the court shall conduct a hearing, provided that notice is
 3235 given at least 24 hours prior to the hearing. A court of inquiry may order the arrest of
 3236 witnesses if required to compel their attendance."

3237 **SECTION 30.**

3238 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 17-7-28, relating to hearing of
 3239 evidence by court of inquiry and the right of a defendant to testify, as follows:

3240 "17-7-28.

3241 The court of inquiry shall hear all legal evidence submitted by either party. If the
 3242 ~~defendant~~ accused wishes to testify and announces in open court before the court of inquiry
 3243 his or her intention to do so, ~~he~~ the accused may testify in his or her own behalf. If ~~he~~ so
 3244 the accused elects to testify, he or she shall be sworn as any other witness and may be
 3245 examined and cross-examined as any other witness, ~~except that no evidence of general bad~~
 3246 ~~character or prior convictions shall be admissible unless and until the defendant first puts~~
 3247 ~~his character into issue. The rules of evidence shall apply except that hearsay shall be~~
 3248 admissible. The failure of a ~~defendant~~ an accused to testify shall create no presumption
 3249 against ~~him~~ the accused, and no comment may be made because of such failure."

3250 **SECTION 31.**

3251 Said title is further amended by revising subsection (b) of Code Section 17-7-93, relating to
 3252 reading of indictment or accusation and recording of 'guilty' pleas and pronouncement of
 3253 judgment, as follows:

3254 "(b) If the person pleads 'guilty,' the plea shall be immediately recorded on the minutes of
 3255 the court by the clerk, together with the arraignment; and the court shall pronounce the
 3256 judgment of the law upon the person in the same manner as if he or she had been convicted
 3257 of the offense by the verdict of a jury. At any time before judgment is pronounced, the
 3258 accused person may withdraw the plea of 'guilty' and plead 'not guilty,' ~~and the former plea~~
 3259 ~~shall not be admissible as evidence against him at his trial."~~

3260 **SECTION 32.**

3261 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 17-9-20, relating to action by juror on
3262 private knowledge as to facts, witnesses, or parties, as follows:

3263 "17-9-20.

3264 A juror shall not act on his or her private knowledge respecting the facts, witnesses, or
3265 parties ~~unless he is sworn and examined as a witness in the case."~~

3266 **SECTION 33.**

3267 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 17-9-41, relating to the use of
3268 affidavits of jurors relating to verdict, as follows:

3269 "17-9-41.

3270 ~~The affidavits of jurors may be taken to sustain but not to impeach their verdict~~ Reserved."

3271 **SECTION 34.**

3272 Said title is further amended by revising subparagraph (b)(3)(C) of Code Section 17-16-4,
3273 relating to disclosure required by prosecuting attorney and defendant, as follows:

3274 "(C) The defendant shall, no later than five days before the trial commences, serve
3275 upon the prosecuting attorney a list of witnesses that the defendant intends to call as a
3276 witness in the presentence hearing. No later than the announcement of the verdict of
3277 the jury or if the defendant has waived a jury trial at the time the verdict is published
3278 by the court, the defendant shall produce for the opposing party any statement of such
3279 witnesses that is in the possession, custody, or control of the defendants or the
3280 defendant's counsel that relates to the subject matter of the testimony of such witnesses
3281 unless such statement is protected from disclosure by the privilege contained in
3282 paragraph (5), (6), (7), or (8) of subsection (a) of Code Section ~~24-9-21~~ 24-5-501."

3283 **SECTION 35.**

3284 Said title is further amended by revising subsection (b) of Code Section 17-17-9, relating to
3285 exclusion of a testifying victim from criminal proceedings, as follows:

3286 "(b) A victim of a criminal offense who has been or may be subpoenaed to testify at such
3287 hearing or trial shall be exempt from the provisions of Code Section ~~24-9-61~~ 24-6-616
3288 requiring sequestration; provided, however, that the court shall require that the victim be
3289 scheduled to testify as early as practical in the proceedings."

3290

SECTION 36.

3291 Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to education, is amended by
 3292 revising subsection (d) of Code Section 20-2-940, relating to grounds and procedure for
 3293 terminating or suspending contract of employment, as follows:

3294 "*(d) Counsel; testimony.* Any teacher, principal, or other person against whom such
 3295 charges listed in subsection (a) of this Code section have been brought shall be entitled to
 3296 be represented by counsel and, upon request, shall be entitled to have subpoenas or other
 3297 compulsory process issued for attendance of witnesses and the production of documents
 3298 and other evidence. Such subpoenas and compulsory process shall be issued in the name
 3299 of the local board and shall be signed by the ~~chairman~~ chairperson or ~~vice-chairman~~ vice
 3300 chairperson of the local board. In all other respects, such subpoenas and other compulsory
 3301 process shall be subject to ~~Part 1~~ of Article 2 of Chapter ~~10~~ 13 of Title 24, ~~as now or~~
 3302 ~~hereafter amended.~~"

3303

SECTION 37.

3304 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 20-2-991, relating to liability
 3305 insurance for performance of duties authorized and the admissibility of insurance in
 3306 evidence, as follows:

3307 "20-2-991.

3308 In addition to other compensation paid to members of the State Board of Education, the
 3309 State School Superintendent, and employees of the state board, and to members of boards
 3310 of education, school superintendents, teachers, principals, officers, and employees of
 3311 boards of control of cooperative educational service agencies, and other administrators and
 3312 employees of county and other local public school systems, the state board, the boards of
 3313 control of cooperative educational service agencies, and the several boards of education of
 3314 counties, cities, and independent school systems, whenever created, are authorized, in their
 3315 discretion, to purchase policies of liability insurance or contracts of indemnity insuring or
 3316 indemnifying the members of the state board, State School Superintendent, employees of
 3317 the state board, officers and employees of boards of control of cooperative educational
 3318 service agencies, and the members of the boards of education, superintendents, teachers,
 3319 principals, and other administrators and employees against damages arising out of the
 3320 performance of their duties or in any way connected therewith, whether based upon
 3321 negligence, violation of contract rights, or violation of civil, constitutional, common-law,
 3322 or other statutory rights, whether state, federal, or both. Such boards may expend state,
 3323 county, federal, and local funds, or any combination thereof, for such purposes. The
 3324 amount of such insurance or indemnity shall be in the discretion of the respective board.
 3325 No action shall be maintained against the person or company issuing such insurance or

3326 contracting for such indemnity until final judgment has first been entered against the
 3327 individual covered by such policy or contract, ~~and the existence of such insurance or~~
 3328 ~~indemnity shall not be disclosed or suggested in any action brought against such~~
 3329 ~~individual."~~

3330 **SECTION 38.**

3331 Code Section 22-1-14 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to valuation of
 3332 condemned property, is amended as follows:

3333 "22-1-14.

3334 (a) When property is condemned under this title or any other title of this Code, the value
 3335 of the condemned property may be determined through lay or expert testimony and its
 3336 admissibility shall be addressed to the sound discretion of the court.

3337 (b) If any party to a condemnation proceeding seeks to introduce expert testimony as to
 3338 the issue of just and adequate compensation, Code Section ~~24-9-67.1~~ 24-7-702 shall not
 3339 apply."

3340 **SECTION 39.**

3341 Code Section 26-4-80 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to dispensing and
 3342 electronically transmitted drug orders, is amended by revising subsection (d) as follows:

3343 "(d) Information contained in the patient medication record or profile shall be considered
 3344 confidential information as defined in this title. Confidential information may be released
 3345 to the patient or the patient's authorized representative, the prescriber or other licensed
 3346 health care practitioners then caring for the patient, another licensed pharmacist, the board
 3347 or its representative, or any other person duly authorized to receive such information. In
 3348 accordance with Code Section ~~24-9-40~~ 24-12-1, confidential information may be released
 3349 to others only on the written release of the patient, court order, or subpoena."

3350 **SECTION 40.**

3351 Code Section 28-1-16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to issuance of
 3352 subpoenas by the Superior Court of Fulton County on behalf of the Committees on Ethics
 3353 of the Senate and House of Representatives, is amended by revising subsection (e) as
 3354 follows:

3355 "(e) A subpoena issued under this Code section may be served at any place in ~~the~~ this state
 3356 and in any manner authorized in Code Section ~~24-10-23~~ 24-13-24. Fees and mileage shall
 3357 be paid and tendered as provided in Code Section ~~24-10-24~~ 24-13-25, notwithstanding the
 3358 general exemption of the state from tender of fees and mileage, and shall be in the form of

3359 a check issued by the Legislative Fiscal Office upon the written request of the chairperson
3360 or acting chairperson."

3361 **SECTION 41.**

3362 Code Section 29-9-13.1 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to authentication
3363 of documents, is amended as follows:

3364 "29-9-13.1.

3365 Whenever it is required that a document which is to be filed in the court be authenticated
3366 or exemplified, such requirement shall be met by complying with the provisions of Code
3367 Section ~~24-7-24~~ 24-9-922 and paragraphs (1) through (4) of Code Section 24-9-902 and
3368 such full faith and credit shall be given to the document as is provided in that Code
3369 section."

3370 **SECTION 42.**

3371 Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to health, is amended by revising
3372 Code Section 31-5-5, relating to contents of official record as evidence and classification of
3373 privileged materials, as follows:

3374 "31-5-5.

3375 ~~(a) Any order, rule, regulation, or any other document, record, or entry contained in the~~
3376 ~~official record or minutes of the department or of any county board of health shall be~~
3377 ~~admissible in evidence in any proceeding before any court or other tribunal in this state~~
3378 ~~where otherwise admissible and not privileged or confidential under this Code section~~
3379 ~~when certified as true and correct by and duly authorized by the director at the county level~~
3380 ~~and the examiner at the state level. It shall be the duty of the director or examiner, who~~
3381 ~~shall be custodian of such records, to furnish and certify copies of the record or other~~
3382 ~~evidence upon payment of reasonable costs therefor. Nothing in this Code section shall be~~
3383 ~~construed as applying to Code Section 12-5-175.~~

3384 (b) The department and county boards of health are authorized by regulation to classify
3385 as confidential and privileged documents, reports and other information and data obtained
3386 by them from persons, firms, corporations, municipalities, counties, and other public
3387 authorities and political subdivisions, where such matters relate to secret processes,
3388 formulas, and methods or where such matters were obtained or furnished on a confidential
3389 basis. All matters so classified shall not be subject to public inspection or discovery and
3390 shall not be subject to production or disclosure in any court of law or elsewhere until and
3391 unless the judge of the court of competent jurisdiction, after in camera inspection,
3392 determines that the public interest requires such production and disclosure or that such
3393 production and disclosure may be necessary in the ~~interest~~ interests of justice."

SECTION 43.

3394

3395 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 31-10-26, relating to certified copies
3396 of vital records, issuance, evidentiary effect, and use for other purposes, as follows:

3397 "31-10-26.

3398 (a) In accordance with Code Section 31-10-25 and the regulations adopted pursuant
3399 thereto:

3400 (1) The state registrar or local custodian of vital records appointed by the state registrar
3401 to issue certified copies upon receipt of a written application shall issue a certified copy
3402 of a vital record in that registrar's or custodian's custody or abstract thereof to any
3403 applicant having a direct and tangible interest in the vital record, except that certified
3404 copies of certificates shall only be issued to:

3405 (A) The person whose record of birth is registered;

3406 (B) Either parent, guardian, or temporary guardian of the person whose record of birth
3407 or death is registered;

3408 (C) The living legal spouse or next of kin or the legal representative or the person who
3409 in good faith has applied and produced a record of such application to become the legal
3410 representative of the person whose record of birth or death is registered;

3411 (D) The court of competent jurisdiction upon its order or subpoena; or

3412 (E) Any governmental agency, state or federal, provided that such certificate shall be
3413 needed for official purposes.

3414 (2) Each certified copy issued shall show the date of registration and ~~copies~~ duplicates
3415 issued from records marked 'delayed' or 'amended' shall be similarly marked and show
3416 the effective date. The documentary evidence used to establish a delayed certificate of
3417 birth shall be shown on all ~~copies~~ duplicates issued. All forms and procedures used in
3418 the issuance of certified copies of vital records in ~~the~~ this state shall be provided or
3419 approved by the state registrar.

3420 ~~(b) A certified copy of a vital record or any part thereof, issued in accordance with~~
3421 ~~subsection (a) of this Code section, shall be considered for all purposes the same as the~~
3422 ~~original and shall be prima-facie evidence of the facts stated therein, provided that the~~
3423 ~~evidentiary value of a certificate or record filed more than one year after the event, or a~~
3424 ~~record which has been amended, shall be determined by the judicial or administrative body~~
3425 ~~or official before whom the certificate is offered as evidence.~~

3426 ~~(c)~~ The federal agency responsible for national vital statistics may be furnished such
3427 ~~copies~~ duplicates or data from the system of vital records as it may require for national
3428 statistics, provided such federal agency shares in the cost of collecting, processing, and
3429 transmitting such data and provided further that such data shall not be used for other than
3430 statistical purposes by the federal agency unless so authorized by the state registrar.

3431 ~~(d)~~(c) The state registrar may, by agreement, transmit ~~copies~~ duplicates of records and
 3432 other reports required by this chapter to offices of vital records outside this state when such
 3433 records or other reports relate to residents of those jurisdictions or persons born in those
 3434 jurisdictions. The agreement shall require that the ~~copies~~ duplicates be used for statistical
 3435 and administrative purposes only and the agreement shall further provide for the retention
 3436 and disposition of such ~~copies~~ duplicates. ~~Copies~~ Duplicates received by the department
 3437 from offices of vital statistics in other states shall be handled in the same manner as
 3438 prescribed in this Code section.

3439 ~~(e)~~(d) No person shall prepare or issue any certificate which purports to be an original,
 3440 certified copy or ~~copy~~ duplicate of a vital record except as authorized in this chapter or
 3441 regulations adopted under this chapter.

3442 ~~(f)~~(e) No ~~copies~~ duplicates or parts thereof of a vital record shall be reproduced or
 3443 information ~~copies~~ copied for commercial or speculative purposes. This subsection shall
 3444 not apply to published results of research."

3445 **SECTION 44.**

3446 Said title is further amended by revising paragraph (3) of subsection (c) of Code Section
 3447 31-21-3, relating to death of person with infectious or communicable disease, as follows:

3448 "(3) That disclosure is made by a physician pursuant to Code Section ~~24-9-40~~ 24-12-1
 3449 or any other law authorizing a physician to disclose otherwise privileged information;"

3450 **SECTION 45.**

3451 Title 33 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to insurance, is amended by
 3452 revising Code Section 33-2-2, relating to seal of Commissioner and admissibility in evidence
 3453 of sealed documents, as follows:

3454 "33-2-2.

3455 The Commissioner shall have an official seal of such design as he or she shall select with
 3456 the approval of the Governor. ~~Every certificate and other document or paper executed by~~
 3457 ~~the Commissioner in the pursuance of any authority conferred upon him by law and sealed~~
 3458 ~~with the seal of his office and all copies or photographic copies of papers certified by him~~
 3459 ~~and authenticated by said seal shall in all cases be evidence 'in equal and like manner' as~~
 3460 ~~the original thereof and shall in all cases be primary evidence of the contents of the original~~
 3461 ~~and shall be admissible in any court in this state."~~

3462 **SECTION 46.**

3463 Said title is further amended by revising subsection (b) of Code Section 33-20A-37, relating
 3464 to the effect of favorable determinations, as follows:

3465 "(b) A determination by the independent review organization in favor of a managed care
 3466 entity shall create a rebuttable presumption in any subsequent action that the managed care
 3467 entity's prior determination was appropriate and shall constitute a medical record for
 3468 purposes of Code Section 24-7-8."

3469 **SECTION 47.**

3470 Title 34 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to labor and industrial relations,
 3471 is amended by revising subsection (a) of Code Section 34-9-60, relating to rule-making and
 3472 subpoena powers, as follows:

3473 "(a) The board may make rules, not inconsistent with this chapter, for carrying out this
 3474 chapter. Processes and procedure under this chapter shall be as summary and simple as
 3475 reasonably possible; provided, however, that, in any proceeding under this chapter where
 3476 the parties are represented by counsel, the board may require, by rule or regulation, on
 3477 forms provided by the board, the filing of statements of contentions and points of
 3478 agreement. The board may promulgate policies, rules, and regulations concerning the
 3479 electronic submission to and transmission from the board of documents and filings. The
 3480 board, any member of the board, or any administrative law judge shall have the power for
 3481 the purposes of this chapter to issue and enforce subpoenas, to administer or cause to have
 3482 administered oaths, and to examine or cause to be examined such parts of the books and
 3483 records of the parties to a proceeding as relate to questions in dispute. Article 2 of Chapter
 3484 ~~10~~ 13 of Title 24 shall govern the issuance and enforcement of subpoenas pursuant to this
 3485 Code section, except that the board, any member of the board, or any administrative law
 3486 judge shall carry out the functions of the court and the executive director shall carry out the
 3487 functions of the clerk of the court. The board shall not, however, have the power to order
 3488 imprisonment as a means of enforcing a subpoena. The board shall have the power to issue
 3489 writs of fieri facias in order to collect fines imposed pursuant to this Code section and such
 3490 writs may be enforced in the same manner as a similar writ issued by a superior court."

3491 **SECTION 48.**

3492 Said title is further amended by revising paragraph (5) of subsection (e) of Code Section
 3493 34-9-102, relating to hearings before administrative law judges, as follows:

3494 "(5) Code Section ~~24-3-18~~ 24-8-826 shall not apply to workers' compensation claims
 3495 filed under this chapter."

3496 **SECTION 49.**

3497 Said title is further amended by revising paragraph (4) of subsection (b) of Code Section
 3498 34-9-108, relating to approval of attorney's fees by the board, as follows:

3499 "(4) Upon a determination that proceedings have been brought, prosecuted, or defended
 3500 in whole or in part without reasonable grounds, the administrative law judge or the board
 3501 may, in addition to reasonable attorney's fees, award to the adverse party in whole or in
 3502 part reasonable litigation expenses against the offending party. Reasonable litigation
 3503 expenses under this subsection are limited to witness fees and mileage pursuant to Code
 3504 Section ~~24-10-24~~ 24-13-25; reasonable expert witness fees subject to the fee schedule;
 3505 reasonable deposition transcript costs; and the cost of the hearing transcript."

3506 **SECTION 50.**

3507 Chapter 3 of Title 35 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the Georgia
 3508 Bureau of Investigation, is amended by adding a new article to read as follows:

3509 "ARTICLE 6A

3510 35-3-160.

3511 (a) As used in this article, the term:

3512 (1) 'Department' means the Department of Corrections.

3513 (2) 'Division' means the Division of Forensic Services of the Georgia Bureau of
 3514 Investigation.

3515 (3) 'State correctional facility' means a penal institution under the jurisdiction of the
 3516 department, including inmate work camps and inmate boot camps; provided, however,
 3517 that such term shall not include a probation detention center, probation diversion center,
 3518 or probation boot camp under the jurisdiction of the department.

3519 (b) Any person convicted of:

3520 (1) Rape in violation of Code Section 16-6-1;

3521 (2) Sodomy or aggravated sodomy in violation of Code Section 16-6-2;

3522 (3) Statutory rape in violation of Code Section 16-6-3;

3523 (4) Child molestation or aggravated child molestation in violation of Code Section
 3524 16-6-4;

3525 (5) Enticing a child for indecent purposes in violation of Code Section 16-6-5;

3526 (6) Sexual assault against persons in custody, sexual assault against a person detained
 3527 or a patient in a hospital or other institution, or sexual assault by a practitioner of
 3528 psychotherapy against a patient in violation of Code Section 16-6-5.1;

3529 (7) Bestiality in violation of Code Section 16-6-6;

3530 (8) Necrophilia in violation of Code Section 16-6-7; or

3531 (9) Incest in violation of Code Section 16-6-22

3532 shall have a sample of his or her blood, an oral swab, or a sample obtained from a
 3533 noninvasive procedure taken for DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) analysis to determine
 3534 identification characteristics specific to the person. In addition, on and after July 1, 2000,
 3535 any person convicted of a felony and incarcerated in a state correctional facility shall at the
 3536 time of entering the prison system have a sample of his or her blood, an oral swab, or a
 3537 sample obtained from a noninvasive procedure taken for DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid)
 3538 analysis to determine identification characteristics specific to the person. The provisions
 3539 and requirements of this Code section shall also apply to any person who has been
 3540 convicted of a felony prior to July 1, 2000, and who currently is incarcerated in a state
 3541 correctional facility in this state for such offense. The provisions and requirements of this
 3542 Code section shall also apply to any person who has been convicted of a felony in this state
 3543 on or after July 1, 2000, and who is incarcerated in a private correctional facility in this
 3544 state for such offense pursuant to a contract with the department upon entering the facility,
 3545 and for any person convicted of a felony prior to July 1, 2000, and who is incarcerated in
 3546 a private correctional facility in this state pursuant to contract with the department. The
 3547 analysis shall be performed by the division. The division shall be authorized to contract
 3548 with individuals or organizations for services to perform such analysis. The identification
 3549 characteristics of the profile resulting from the DNA analysis shall be stored and
 3550 maintained by the bureau in a DNA data bank and shall be made available only as provided
 3551 in Code Section 35-3-163.

3552 (c)(1) On and after July 1, 2007, any person who is placed on probation shall have a
 3553 sample of his or her blood, an oral swab, or a sample obtained from a noninvasive
 3554 procedure taken for DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) analysis to determine identification
 3555 characteristics specific to the person if such person is convicted of a felony violation of:

3556 (A) Chapter 5 of Title 16;

3557 (B) Rape in violation of Code Section 16-6-1;

3558 (C) Sodomy or aggravated sodomy in violation of Code Section 16-6-2;

3559 (D) Statutory rape in violation of Code Section 16-6-3;

3560 (E) Child molestation or aggravated child molestation in violation of Code Section
 3561 16-6-4;

3562 (F) Enticing a child for indecent purposes in violation of Code Section 16-6-5;

3563 (G) Sexual assault against persons in custody, sexual assault against a person detained
 3564 or a patient in a hospital or other institution, or sexual assault by a practitioner of
 3565 psychotherapy against a patient in violation of Code Section 16-6-5.1;

3566 (H) Bestiality in violation of Code Section 16-6-6;

3567 (I) Necrophilia in violation of Code Section 16-6-7;

3568 (J) Incest in violation of Code Section 16-6-22;

3569 (K) Burglary in violation of Code Section 16-7-1;
 3570 (L) Robbery in violation of Code Section 16-8-40;
 3571 (M) Armed robbery in violation of Code Section 16-8-41;
 3572 (N) Impersonating a peace officer or public officer or employee in violation of Code
 3573 Section 16-10-23;
 3574 (O) Obstruction or hindering any law enforcement officer in violation of Code Section
 3575 16-10-24;
 3576 (P) Article 4 of Chapter 11 of Title 16; or
 3577 (Q) Chapter 13 of Title 16.
 3578 (2) The analysis shall be performed by the division. The division shall be authorized to
 3579 contract with individuals or organizations for services to perform such analysis. The
 3580 identification characteristics of the profile resulting from the DNA analysis shall be
 3581 stored and maintained by the bureau in a DNA data bank and shall be made available
 3582 only as provided in Code Section 35-3-163. The department shall be responsible for
 3583 collecting such sample.

 3584 35-3-161.
 3585 (a) Each sample required pursuant to Code Section 35-3-160 from persons who are to be
 3586 incarcerated shall be withdrawn within the first 30 days of incarceration at the receiving
 3587 unit or at such other place as is designated by the department. Each sample required
 3588 pursuant to Code Section 35-3-160 from persons who are to be released from a state
 3589 correctional facility or private correctional facility shall be withdrawn within the 12 months
 3590 preceding such person's release at a place designated by the department. The required
 3591 samples from persons who are not sentenced to a term of confinement shall be withdrawn
 3592 as a condition of probation. The division shall publish in its quality manuals the
 3593 procedures for the collection and transfer of samples to such division pursuant to Code
 3594 Section 35-3-154. Personnel at a department facility shall implement the provisions of this
 3595 Code section as part of the regular processing of offenders.
 3596 (b) Samples collected by oral swab or by a noninvasive procedure may be collected by any
 3597 individual who has been trained in the procedure. Only a correctional health nurse
 3598 technician, physician, registered professional nurse, licensed practical nurse, graduate
 3599 laboratory technician, or phlebotomist shall withdraw any sample of blood to be submitted
 3600 for analysis. No civil liability shall attach to any person authorized to take a sample as
 3601 provided in this article as a result of the act of taking a sample from any person submitting
 3602 thereto, provided the sample was taken according to recognized medically accepted
 3603 procedures. However, no person shall be relieved from liability for negligence in the
 3604 withdrawing of any blood sample.

3605 (c) Chemically clean sterile disposable needles shall be used for the withdrawal of all
3606 samples of blood. The containers for blood samples, oral swabs, and the samples obtained
3607 by noninvasive procedures shall be sealed and labeled with the subject's name, social
3608 security number, date of birth, race, and gender plus the name of the person collecting the
3609 sample and the date and place of collection. The containers shall be secured to prevent
3610 tampering with the contents. The steps set forth in this subsection relating to the taking,
3611 handling, identification, and disposition of samples are procedural and not substantive.
3612 Substantial compliance therewith shall be deemed to be sufficient. The samples shall be
3613 transported to the division not more than 15 days following withdrawal and shall be
3614 analyzed and stored in the DNA data bank in accordance with Code Sections 35-3-162 and
3615 35-3-163.

3616 35-3-162.

3617 Whether or not the results of an analysis are to be included in the data bank, the bureau
3618 shall conduct the DNA analysis in accordance with procedures adopted by the bureau to
3619 determine identification characteristics specific to the individual whose sample is being
3620 analyzed. The director of the bureau or his or her designated representative shall complete
3621 and maintain on file a form indicating the name of the person whose sample is to be
3622 analyzed, the date and by whom the sample was received and examined, and a statement
3623 that the seal on the container containing the sample had not been broken or otherwise
3624 tampered with. The remainder of a sample submitted for analysis and inclusion in the data
3625 bank pursuant to Code Section 35-3-160 may be divided, if possible, labeled as provided
3626 for the original sample, and securely stored by the bureau in accordance with specific
3627 procedures of the bureau to ensure the integrity and confidentiality of the samples. All or
3628 part of the remainder of that sample may be used only to create a statistical data base
3629 provided no identifying information on the individual whose sample is being analyzed is
3630 included or for retesting by the bureau to validate or update the original analysis. A report
3631 of the results of a DNA analysis conducted by the bureau as authorized, including the
3632 identifying information, shall be made and maintained at the bureau. Except as specifically
3633 provided in this Code section and Code Section 35-3-163, the results of the analysis shall
3634 be securely stored and shall remain confidential.

3635 35-3-163.

3636 (a) It shall be the duty of the bureau to receive samples and to analyze, classify, and file
3637 the results of DNA identification characteristics of samples submitted pursuant to Code
3638 Section 35-3-160 and to make such information available as provided in this Code section.
3639 The results of an analysis and comparison of the identification of the characteristics from

3640 two or more biological samples shall be made available directly to federal, state, and local
3641 law enforcement officers upon a request made in furtherance of an official investigation
3642 of any criminal offense. A request may be made by personal contact, mail, or electronic
3643 means. The name of the requestor and the purpose for which the information is requested
3644 shall be maintained on file with the bureau.

3645 (b) Upon request from a prosecutor or law enforcement agency, the bureau may compare
3646 a DNA profile from an analysis of a sample from a suspect in a criminal investigation
3647 where the sample was obtained through a search warrant, consent of the suspect, court
3648 order, or other lawful means to DNA profiles lawfully collected and maintained by the
3649 bureau. The bureau shall not add a DNA profile of any such suspect to any DNA data bank
3650 except upon conviction as provided in this article.

3651 (c)(1) Upon his or her request, a copy of the request for search shall be furnished to any
3652 person identified and charged with an offense as the result of a search of information in
3653 the data bank. Only when a sample or DNA profile supplied by the requestor
3654 satisfactorily matches the requestor's profile in the data bank shall the existence of data
3655 in the data bank be confirmed or identifying information from the data bank be
3656 disseminated.

3657 (2) The name of the convicted offender whose profile is contained in the data bank may
3658 be related to any other data bases which are constructed for law enforcement purposes
3659 and may be disseminated only for law enforcement purposes.

3660 (3) Upon a showing by the accused in a criminal proceeding that access to the DNA data
3661 bank is material to the investigation, preparation, or presentation of a defense at trial or
3662 in a motion for a new trial, a superior court having proper jurisdiction over such criminal
3663 proceeding shall direct the bureau to compare a DNA profile which has been generated
3664 by the accused through an independent test against the data bank, provided that such
3665 DNA profile has been generated in accordance with standards for forensic DNA analysis
3666 adopted pursuant to 42 U.S.C. Section 14131.

3667 (d) The bureau shall develop procedures governing the methods of obtaining information
3668 from the data bank in accordance with this Code section and procedures for verification of
3669 the identity and authority of the requestor. The bureau shall specify the positions in that
3670 agency which require regular access to the data bank and samples submitted as a necessary
3671 function of the job.

3672 (e) The bureau may create a separate statistical data base comprised of DNA profiles of
3673 samples of persons whose identity is unknown. Nothing in this Code section or Code
3674 Section 35-3-164 shall prohibit the bureau from sharing or otherwise disseminating the
3675 information in the statistical data base with law enforcement or criminal justice agencies
3676 within or outside this state.

3677 (f) The bureau may charge a reasonable fee to search and provide a comparative analysis
 3678 of DNA profiles in the data bank to any authorized law enforcement agency outside of this
 3679 state.

3680 35-3-164.

3681 (a) Any person who, without authority, disseminates information contained in the data
 3682 bank shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. Any person who disseminates, receives, or
 3683 otherwise uses or attempts to so use information in the data bank, knowing that such
 3684 dissemination, receipt, or use is for a purpose other than as authorized by law, shall be
 3685 guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature.

3686 (b) Except for purposes of law enforcement or as authorized by this article, any person
 3687 who, for purposes of having DNA analysis performed, obtains or attempts to obtain any
 3688 sample submitted to the division for analysis shall be guilty of a felony.

3689 35-3-165.

3690 A person whose DNA profile has been included in the data bank pursuant to this article
 3691 may request that it be expunged on the grounds that the conviction on which the authority
 3692 for including his or her DNA profile was based has been reversed and the case dismissed.
 3693 The bureau shall purge all records and identifiable information in the data bank pertaining
 3694 to the person and destroy all samples from the person upon receipt of a written request that
 3695 such data be expunged, pursuant to this Code section, and a certified copy of the court
 3696 order reversing and dismissing the conviction."

3697 **SECTION 51.**

3698 Title 36 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to local government, is amended
 3699 by revising paragraph (2) of Code Section 36-74-25, relating to powers of enforcement
 3700 boards created on or after January 1, 2003, as follows:

3701 "(2) Subpoena alleged violators and witnesses to its hearings, with the approval of the
 3702 court with jurisdiction over a criminal violator of the county or municipal code or
 3703 ordinance. Subpoenas may be served by the sheriff, marshal, or police department of the
 3704 county or by the police department of the municipality or by any other individual
 3705 authorized by Code Section ~~24-10-23~~ 24-13-24 to serve subpoenas;"

3706 **SECTION 52.**

3707 Said title is further amended by revising paragraph (2) of Code Section 36-74-45, relating
 3708 to powers of enforcement boards created prior to January 1, 2003, as follows:

3709 "(2) Subpoena alleged violators and witnesses to its hearings, with the approval of the
 3710 court with jurisdiction over a criminal violator of the county or municipal code or
 3711 ordinance. Subpoenas may be served by the sheriff, marshal, or police department of the
 3712 county or by the police department of the municipality or by any other individual
 3713 authorized by Code Section ~~24-10-23~~ 24-13-24 to serve subpoenas;"

3714 **SECTION 53.**

3715 Title 37 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to mental health, is amended by
 3716 revising subsections (b) and (c) of Code Section 37-3-166, relating to treatment of clinical
 3717 records, when release is permitted, and scope of privileged communications, as follows:

3718 "(b) In connection with any hearing held under this chapter, any physician, including any
 3719 psychiatrist, or any psychologist who is treating or who has treated the patient shall be
 3720 authorized to give evidence as to any matter concerning the patient, including evidence as
 3721 to communications otherwise privileged under Code Section ~~24-9-21, 24-9-40, 24-5-501,~~
 3722 24-12-1, or 43-39-16.

3723 (c) Any disclosure authorized by this Code section or any unauthorized disclosure of
 3724 confidential or privileged patient information or communications shall not in any way
 3725 abridge or destroy the confidential or privileged character thereof, except for the purpose
 3726 for which such authorized disclosure is made. Any person making a disclosure authorized
 3727 by this Code section shall not be liable to the patient or any other person, notwithstanding
 3728 any contrary provision of Code Section ~~24-9-21, 24-9-40, 24-5-501, 24-12-1,~~ or 43-39-16."

3729 **SECTION 54.**

3730 Said title is further amended by revising subsections (b) and (c) of Code Section 37-4-125,
 3731 relating to treatment of clinical records and scope of privileged communications, as follows:

3732 "(b) In connection with any hearing held under this chapter, any physician, including any
 3733 psychiatrist, or any psychologist who is treating or who has treated the client shall be
 3734 authorized to give evidence as to any matter concerning the client, including evidence as
 3735 to communications otherwise privileged under Code Section ~~24-9-21, 24-9-40, 24-5-501,~~
 3736 24-12-1, or 43-39-16.

3737 (c) Any disclosure authorized by this Code section or any unauthorized disclosure of
 3738 confidential or privileged client information or communications shall not in any way
 3739 abridge or destroy the confidential or privileged character thereof, except for the purpose
 3740 for which such authorized disclosure is made. Any person making a disclosure authorized
 3741 by subsection (a) of this Code section shall not be liable to the client or any other person,
 3742 notwithstanding any contrary provision of Code Section ~~24-9-21, 24-9-40, 24-5-501,~~
 3743 24-12-1, or 43-39-16."

3744

SECTION 55.

3745 Said title is further amended by revising subsections (b) and (c) of Code Section 37-7-166,
 3746 relating to maintenance, confidentiality, and release of clinical records and disclosure of
 3747 confidential or privileged patient information, as follows:

3748 "(b) In connection with any hearing held under this chapter, any physician, including any
 3749 psychiatrist, or any psychologist who is treating or who has treated the patient shall be
 3750 authorized to give evidence as to any matter concerning the patient, including evidence as
 3751 to communications otherwise privileged under Code Section ~~24-9-21, 24-9-40,~~ 24-5-501,
 3752 24-12-1, or 43-39-16.

3753 (c) Any disclosure authorized by this Code section or any unauthorized disclosure of
 3754 confidential or privileged patient information or communications shall not in any way
 3755 abridge or destroy the confidential or privileged character thereof, except for the purpose
 3756 for which such authorized disclosure is made. Any person making a disclosure authorized
 3757 by this Code section shall not be liable to the patient or any other person, notwithstanding
 3758 any contrary provision of Code Section ~~24-9-21, 24-9-40,~~ 24-5-501, 24-12-1, or 43-39-16."

3759

SECTION 56.

3760 Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to motor vehicles and traffic, is
 3761 amended by revising subsection (b) of Code Section 40-2-74, relating to special license
 3762 plates for persons with disabilities, as follows:

3763 "(b) A hearing impaired person otherwise qualified under this subsection shall be eligible
 3764 to have issued to him or her a specially designated disabled person's license plate in
 3765 accordance with this Code section. As used in this Code section, 'hearing impaired person'
 3766 shall have the same meaning as defined in Code Section ~~24-9-101~~ 24-6-651, except that
 3767 the term 'hearing impaired person' shall not include any person who is not qualified for a
 3768 driver's license pursuant to Code Section 40-5-35, ~~relating to reports by physicians and~~
 3769 ~~vision specialists in connection with the issuance or revocation of drivers' licenses, as now~~
 3770 ~~or hereafter amended.~~ For purposes of this subsection, presentation of an identification
 3771 card for persons with disabilities issued pursuant to Article 8 of Chapter 5 of this title shall
 3772 constitute proof of hearing impairment."

3773

SECTION 57.

3774 Said title is further amended by revising paragraph (1) of subsection (d) of Code Section
 3775 40-5-2, relating to keeping of records of applications for licenses and information on
 3776 licensees, as follows:

3777 "(d)(1) The commissioner shall designate members of the department to be the official
 3778 custodians of the records of the department. No disclosure or release of operating records

3779 or personal information shall be made without the signed written approval of a designated
 3780 custodian; except that such approval shall not be required for any release or disclosure
 3781 through the GeorgiaNet Division of the Georgia Technology Authority pursuant to the
 3782 signed written consent of the driver, provided that any such signed written consent shall
 3783 be retained for a period of not less than four years by the party requesting the
 3784 information; and except that such approval shall not be required for any release or
 3785 disclosure of information made electronically through the GeorgiaNet Division of the
 3786 Georgia Technology Authority in accordance with a contract authorized by subparagraph
 3787 (c)(1)(B) of this Code section. The custodians may certify copies or compilations,
 3788 including extracts thereof, of the records of the department. ~~When so certified, such~~
 3789 ~~records shall be admissible as evidence in any civil or criminal proceeding as proof of the~~
 3790 ~~contents thereof."~~

3791 **SECTION 58.**

3792 Said title is further amended by revising subsection (d) of Code Section 40-5-58, relating to
 3793 habitual violators, as follows:

3794 "(d) Notwithstanding any contrary provisions of Code Section 17-7-95 or 24-4-410, for the
 3795 purposes of this Code section, any plea of nolo contendere entered and accepted after
 3796 January 1, 1976, shall be considered a conviction."

3797 **SECTION 59.**

3798 Said title is further amended by revising subsection (d) of Code Section 40-6-10, relating to
 3799 insurance requirements for operation of motor vehicles generally, as follows:

3800 "(d) Except for vehicles insured under a fleet policy as defined in Code Section 40-2-137
 3801 or under a plan of self-insurance approved by the Commissioner of Insurance, insurance
 3802 coverage information from records of the department shall be prima-facie evidence of the
 3803 facts stated therein and shall be admissible as evidence in accordance with Code Section
 3804 ~~24-3-17~~ 24-9-924 for the purposes of this Code section."

3805 **SECTION 60.**

3806 Said title is further amended by revising paragraph (1) of subsection (d) of Code Section
 3807 40-6-11, relating to insurance requirements for operation of motorcycles, as follows:

3808 "(d)(1) Insurance coverage information from records of the department shall be
 3809 prima-facie evidence of the facts stated therein and shall be admissible as evidence in
 3810 accordance with Code Section ~~24-3-17~~ 24-9-924 for the purposes of this Code section."

3811 **SECTION 61.**

3812 Title 42 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to penal institutions, is amended
 3813 by revising subsection (c) of Code Section 42-5-52.2, relating to testing of prison inmates for
 3814 HIV, as follows:

3815 "(c) Each person tested as provided in subsection (b) of this Code section shall be notified
 3816 by the department in writing of the results of such testing prior to his or her release. Prior
 3817 to the release of any person testing positive for HIV, the appropriate information as
 3818 required by Code Sections ~~24-9-47~~ 24-12-21 and 31-22-9.2 or other law shall be provided
 3819 by the department to the Department of Community Health. Prior to the release of any
 3820 person testing positive for HIV, the department shall also provide to such person in writing
 3821 contact information regarding medical, educational, and counseling services available
 3822 through the Department of Community Health. Any person testing positive for HIV shall
 3823 be provided instruction relating to living with HIV, the prevention of the spread of such
 3824 virus, and the legal consequences of infecting unknowing partners."

3825 **SECTION 62.**

3826 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 42-6-4, relating to the effect of failure
 3827 to meet time limit for trial after delivery of inmate pursuant to Code Section 24-10-60, as
 3828 follows:

3829 "42-6-4.

3830 If an inmate is not brought to trial upon a pending indictment or accusation within two
 3831 terms of court after delivery of the inmate to the sheriff or a deputy sheriff pursuant to
 3832 subsection (a) of Code Section ~~24-10-60~~ 24-13-60, provided no continuance has been
 3833 granted, all detainers based upon the pending indictments or accusations shall be stricken
 3834 and dismissed from the records of the department."

3835 **SECTION 63.**

3836 Said title is further amended by revising subsection (a) of Code Section 42-6-5, relating to
 3837 the temporary custody of inmate requesting disposition of pending indictment or accusation,
 3838 as follows:

3839 "(a) In response to the request of an inmate for final disposition of any pending indictment
 3840 or accusation made pursuant to Code Section 42-6-3 or pursuant to an order of a court
 3841 entered pursuant to subsection (a) of Code Section ~~24-10-60~~ 24-13-60, the department shall
 3842 offer to deliver temporary custody of the inmate to the sheriff or a deputy sheriff of the
 3843 county in which the indictment or accusation is pending against the inmate. The judge of
 3844 the court in which the proceedings are pending is authorized to and shall issue an ex parte

3845 order directed to the department requiring the delivery of the inmate to the sheriff or a
3846 deputy sheriff of the county in which the trial is to be held."

3847 **SECTION 64.**

3848 Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to professions and businesses,
3849 is amended by revising paragraph (5) of subsection (b) of Code Section 43-3-24, relating to
3850 issuance of permits to practice accountancy, as follows:

3851 "(5) An individual qualifying for the practice privilege under paragraph (1) of this
3852 subsection may provide expert witness services in this state and shall be deemed to be in
3853 compliance with ~~paragraph (1) of subsection (c) of Code Section 24-9-67.1~~ 24-7-702 for
3854 purposes of such services."

3855 **SECTION 65.**

3856 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 43-6-6, relating to The Georgia
3857 Auctioneers Commission seal and receipt of copies of records and papers as evidence, as
3858 follows:

3859 "43-6-6.

3860 The commission shall adopt a seal, which may be either an engraved or ink stamp seal,
3861 with the words 'State Auctioneers Commission, State of Georgia' and such other devices
3862 as the commission may desire included thereon, by which it shall authenticate the acts of
3863 the commission. ~~Copies of all records and papers in the office of the commission certified
3864 by the signature of the commission chairman and the seal of the commission shall be
3865 received in evidence in all cases equally and with like effect as the originals."~~

3866 **SECTION 66.**

3867 Said title is further amended by revising paragraph (11) of subsection (a) of Code Section
3868 43-9-12, relating to The Georgia Board of Chiropractic Examiners' refusal, suspension, or
3869 revocation of licenses, as follows:

3870 "(11)(A) Become unable to practice chiropractic with reasonable skill and safety to
3871 patients by reason of illness or use of alcohol, drugs, narcotics, chemicals, or any other
3872 type of material, or as a result of any mental or physical condition.

3873 (B) In enforcing this paragraph, the board may, upon reasonable grounds, require a
3874 licensee or applicant to submit to a mental or physical examination by licensed health
3875 care providers designated by the board. The results of such examination shall be
3876 admissible in any hearing before the board, notwithstanding any claim of privilege
3877 under a contrary rule of law or statute, including, but not limited to, Code Section
3878 ~~24-9-21~~ 24-5-501. Every person who shall accept the privilege of practicing

3879 chiropractic in this state or who shall file an application for a license to practice
 3880 chiropractic in this state shall be deemed to have given his or her consent to submit to
 3881 such mental or physical examination and to have waived all objections to the
 3882 admissibility of the results in any hearing before the board, upon the grounds that the
 3883 same constitutes a privileged communication. If a licensee or applicant fails to submit
 3884 to such an examination when properly directed to do so by the board, unless such
 3885 failure was due to circumstances beyond his or her control, the board may enter a final
 3886 order upon proper notice, hearing, and proof of such refusal. Any licensee or applicant
 3887 who is prohibited from practicing chiropractic under this paragraph shall at reasonable
 3888 intervals be afforded an opportunity to demonstrate to the board that he or she can
 3889 resume or begin the practice of chiropractic with reasonable skill and safety to patients.
 3890 (C) For the purposes of this paragraph, the board may, upon reasonable grounds, obtain
 3891 any and all records relating to the mental or physical condition of a licensee or
 3892 applicant, including psychiatric records; and such records shall be admissible in any
 3893 hearing before the board, notwithstanding any privilege under a contrary rule of law or
 3894 statute, including, but not limited to, Code Section ~~24-9-21~~ 24-5-501. Every person
 3895 who shall accept the privilege of practicing chiropractic in this state or who shall file
 3896 an application to practice chiropractic in this state shall be deemed to have given his or
 3897 her consent to the board's obtaining any such records and to have waived all objections
 3898 to the admissibility of such records in any hearing before the board, upon the grounds
 3899 that the same constitutes a privileged communication.
 3900 (D) If any licensee or applicant could, in the absence of this paragraph, invoke a
 3901 privilege to prevent the disclosure of the results of the examination provided for in
 3902 subparagraph (B) of this paragraph or the records relating to the mental or physical
 3903 condition of such licensee or applicant obtained pursuant to subparagraph (C) of this
 3904 paragraph, all such information shall be received by the board in camera and shall not
 3905 be disclosed to the public, nor shall any part of the record containing such information
 3906 be used against any licensee or applicant in any other type of proceeding."

3907 **SECTION 67.**

3908 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 43-11-12, relating to public inspection
 3909 of the Georgia Board of Dentistry's records, as follows:

3910 "43-11-12.

3911 It shall be the duty of the division director to keep at his or her office the minutes of the
 3912 board, together with all the books and records of the board, which books and records shall,
 3913 except as provided in subsection (k) of Code Section 43-1-2, be public records open to
 3914 inspection by the public except on Sundays and legal holidays. ~~A copy of all or any part~~

3915 ~~of any record or book certified by the division director, with the seal of the board attached,~~
 3916 ~~shall be primary evidence in any court, and it shall be the duty of the division director to~~
 3917 ~~furnish to any person making application therefor a copy of any part or all of any record~~
 3918 ~~or book of the board upon the applicant's paying a fee prescribed by the division director.~~
 3919 ~~All of such copies shall be certified by the division director and be under the seal of the~~
 3920 ~~board."~~

3921 **SECTION 68.**

3922 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 43-18-8, relating to official records
 3923 and affidavits of the State Board of Registration for Professional Geologists as evidence, as
 3924 follows:

3925 "43-19-8.

3926 ~~All official records of the board, or affidavits by the division director as to the content of~~
 3927 ~~such records, shall be prima-facie evidence of all matters required to be kept therein~~
 3928 Reserved."

3929 **SECTION 69.**

3930 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 43-23-3, relating to the seal of the
 3931 Georgia Board of Landscape Architects and copies of records and papers as evidence, as
 3932 follows:

3933 "43-23-3.

3934 (a) The board shall adopt a seal, which may be either an engraved or an ink stamped seal,
 3935 with the words 'Board of Landscape Architects, State of Georgia' or such other device as
 3936 the board may desire included thereon, by which it shall authenticate the acts of the board.

3937 ~~(b) Copies of all records and papers in the office of the board, certified by the signature~~
 3938 ~~of the chairman of the board, shall be received in evidence in all cases equally and with like~~
 3939 ~~effect as the originals."~~

3940 **SECTION 70.**

3941 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 43-28-6, relating to service of process
 3942 and documents on division director and records of the State Board of Occupational Therapy
 3943 as prima-facie evidence, as follows:

3944 "43-28-6.

3945 (a) All legal process and all documents required by law to be served upon or filed with the
 3946 board shall be served upon or filed with the division director at his or her office.

3947 ~~(b) All official records of the board or affidavits by the division director certifying the~~
 3948 ~~content of such records shall be prima-facie evidence of all matters required to be kept~~
 3949 ~~therein."~~

3950 **SECTION 71.**

3951 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 43-29-4, relating to the State Board
 3952 of Dispensing Opticians' records and seal, as follows:

3953 "43-29-4.

3954 (a) The board shall have an official seal and shall keep a record of its proceedings and a
 3955 register of persons whose licenses have been revoked.

3956 (b) The records of the board shall be open to public inspection, and it shall keep on file all
 3957 examination papers for a period of 90 days after each examination. ~~A transcript of an entry~~
 3958 ~~in such records, certified by the division director under the seal of the board, shall be~~
 3959 ~~evidence of the facts stated therein."~~

3960 **SECTION 72.**

3961 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 43-33-9, relating to the State Board
 3962 of Physical Therapy's records as prima-facie evidence, as follows:

3963 "43-33-9.

3964 The division director shall be secretary of the board and shall perform such other
 3965 administrative duties as may be prescribed by the board. In a contested case, the division
 3966 director on behalf of the board shall have the power to subpoena, throughout ~~the~~ this state,
 3967 witnesses, designated documents, papers, books, accounts, letters, photographs, objects,
 3968 or other tangible things. All legal process and all documents required by law to be served
 3969 upon or filed with the board shall be served upon or filed with the division director at his
 3970 or her office. ~~All official records of the board or affidavits by the division director~~
 3971 ~~certifying the content of such records shall be prima-facie evidence of all matters required~~
 3972 ~~to be kept therein."~~

3973 **SECTION 73.**

3974 Said title is further amended by revising paragraph (2) of subsection (a) of Code Section
 3975 43-33-18, relating to refusal to grant or restore licenses, as follows:

3976 "(2) Displayed an inability or has become unable to practice as a physical therapist or as
 3977 a physical therapist assistant with reasonable skill and safety to patients by reason of
 3978 illness, use of alcohol, drugs, narcotics, chemicals, or any other type of material, or as a
 3979 result of any mental or physical condition:

3980 (A) In enforcing this paragraph the board may, upon reasonable grounds, require a
3981 licensee or applicant to submit to a mental or physical examination by an appropriate
3982 practitioner of the healing arts designated by the board. The expense of such mental or
3983 physical examination shall be borne by the licensee or applicant. The results of such
3984 examination shall be admissible in any hearing before the board, notwithstanding any
3985 claim of privilege under a contrary rule of law or statute, including, but not limited to
3986 Code Section ~~24-9-21~~ 24-5-501. Every person who shall accept the privilege of
3987 practicing physical therapy in this state or who shall file an application for a license to
3988 practice physical therapy in this state shall be deemed to have given his or her consent
3989 to submit to such mental or physical examination and to have waived all objections to
3990 the admissibility of the results in any hearing before the board upon the grounds that
3991 the same constitutes a privileged communication. If a licensee or applicant fails to
3992 submit to such an examination when properly directed to do so by the board, unless
3993 such failure was due to circumstances beyond his or her control, the board may enter
3994 a final order upon proper notice, hearing, and proof of such refusal. Any licensee or
3995 applicant who is prohibited from practicing physical therapy under this paragraph shall
3996 at reasonable intervals be afforded an opportunity to demonstrate to the board that he
3997 or she can resume or begin the practice of physical therapy with reasonable skill and
3998 safety to patients;

3999 (B) For the purposes of this paragraph, the board may, upon reasonable grounds, obtain
4000 any and all records relating to the mental or physical condition of a licensee or
4001 applicant, including psychiatric records; and such records shall be admissible in any
4002 hearing before the board, notwithstanding any privilege under a contrary rule of law or
4003 statute, including, but not limited to, Code Section ~~24-9-21~~ 24-5-501. Every person
4004 who shall accept the privilege of practicing physical therapy in this state or who shall
4005 file an application to practice physical therapy in this state shall be deemed to have
4006 given his or her consent to the board's obtaining any such records and to have waived
4007 all objections to the admissibility of such records in any hearing before the board upon
4008 the grounds that the same constitute a privileged communication; and

4009 (C) If any licensee or applicant could, in the absence of this paragraph, invoke a
4010 privilege to prevent the disclosure of the results of the examination provided for in
4011 subparagraph (A) of this paragraph or the records relating to the mental or physical
4012 condition of such licensee or applicant obtained pursuant to subparagraph (B) of this
4013 paragraph, all such information shall be received by the board in camera and shall not
4014 be disclosed to the public, nor shall any part of the record containing such information
4015 be used against any licensee or applicant in any other type of proceeding;"

SECTION 74.

4016
 4017 Said title is further amended by revising paragraph (13) of subsection (a) of Code Section
 4018 43-34-8, relating to the Georgia Composite Medical Board's authority to refuse license or
 4019 discipline physicians, as follows:

4020 "(13) Become unable to practice pursuant to this chapter with reasonable skill and safety
 4021 to patients by reason of illness or use of alcohol, drugs, narcotics, chemicals, or any other
 4022 type of material, or as a result of any mental or physical condition:

4023 (A) In enforcing this paragraph the board may, upon reasonable grounds, require a
 4024 licensee, certificate holder, permit holder, or applicant to submit to a mental or physical
 4025 examination by physicians designated by the board. The expense of this examination
 4026 shall be borne by the licensee, certificate holder, or permit holder or applicant. The
 4027 results of such examination shall be admissible in any hearing before the board,
 4028 notwithstanding any claim of privilege under a contrary rule of law or statute,
 4029 including, but not limited to, Code Section ~~24-9-21~~ 24-5-501. Every person who shall
 4030 accept the privilege of practicing a profession regulated under this chapter or who shall
 4031 file an application for a license to practice a profession regulated under this chapter in
 4032 this state shall be deemed to have given his or her consent to submit to such mental or
 4033 physical examination and to have waived all objections to the admissibility of the
 4034 results in any hearing before the board, upon the grounds that the same constitutes a
 4035 privileged communication. If a licensee, certificate holder, or permit holder or
 4036 applicant fails to submit to such an examination when properly directed to do so by the
 4037 board, unless such failure was due to circumstances beyond his or her control, the board
 4038 may enter a final order upon proper notice, hearing, and proof of such refusal. Any
 4039 licensee, certificate holder, permit holder, or applicant who is prohibited from
 4040 practicing pursuant to this chapter under this paragraph shall at reasonable intervals be
 4041 afforded an opportunity to demonstrate to the board that he or she can resume or begin
 4042 practice pursuant to this chapter with reasonable skill and safety to patients;

4043 (B) For the purposes of this paragraph, the board and any entity which has entered into
 4044 a contract with the board pursuant to Code Section 43-34-5.1, if specifically provided
 4045 for in such contract, may, upon reasonable grounds, obtain any and all records relating
 4046 to the mental or physical condition of a licensee, certificate holder, or permit holder or
 4047 applicant, including psychiatric records; and such records shall be admissible in any
 4048 hearing before the board, notwithstanding any privilege under a contrary rule of law or
 4049 statute, including, but not limited to, Code Section ~~24-9-21~~ 24-5-501. Every person
 4050 who shall accept the privilege of practicing pursuant to this chapter in this state or who
 4051 shall file an application to practice pursuant to this chapter in this state shall be deemed
 4052 to have given his or her consent to the board's obtaining any such records and to have

4053 waived all objections to the admissibility of such records in any hearing before the
 4054 board, upon the grounds that the same constitute a privileged communication; and
 4055 (C) If any licensee, certificate holder, or permit holder or applicant could, in the
 4056 absence of this paragraph, invoke a privilege to prevent the disclosure of the results of
 4057 the examination provided for in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph or the records
 4058 relating to the mental or physical condition of such licensee, certificate holder, or
 4059 permit holder or applicant obtained pursuant to subparagraph (B) of this paragraph, all
 4060 such information shall be received by the board in camera and shall not be disclosed to
 4061 the public, nor shall any part of the record containing such information be used against
 4062 any licensee, certificate holder, or permit holder or applicant in any other type of
 4063 proceeding;"

4064 **SECTION 75.**

4065 Said title is further amended by revising subsection (a) of Code Section 43-40-6, relating to
 4066 the seal and records of the Georgia Real Estate Commission, as follows:

4067 "(a) The commission shall adopt a seal, which may be either an engraved or ink stamp seal,
 4068 with the words 'State Real Estate Commission, State of Georgia,' and such other device as
 4069 the commission may desire included thereon, by which it shall authenticate the acts of the
 4070 commission. ~~Copies of all records and papers in the office of the commission, certified by~~
 4071 ~~the signature of the real estate commissioner or the commissioner's designee and the seal~~
 4072 ~~of the commission, shall be received in evidence in all cases equally and with like effect~~
 4073 ~~as the originals."~~

4074 **SECTION 76.**

4075 Title 44 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to property, is amended by
 4076 revising Code Section 44-2-5, relating to recording execution and deed after sheriff's sale and
 4077 evidence of execution where original is lost, as follows:

4078 "44-2-5.

4079 A purchaser at a sheriff's sale may have the execution under which the property was sold
 4080 recorded with his or her deed together with all the entries on the execution. ~~In the event~~
 4081 ~~of the loss or destruction of the original execution, a copy of the record shall be admitted~~
 4082 ~~in evidence."~~

4083 **SECTION 77.**

4084 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 44-2-20, relating to recorded affidavits
 4085 relating to land as notice of facts cited therein and the admissibility of such affidavits in
 4086 evidence, as follows:

4087 "44-2-20.

4088 (a) Recorded affidavits shall be notice of the facts therein recited, whether taken at the
4089 time of a conveyance of land or not, where such affidavits show:

4090 (1) The relationship of parties or other persons to conveyances of land;

4091 (2) The relationship of any parties to any conveyance with other parties whose names are
4092 shown in the chain of title to lands;

4093 (3) The age or ages of any person or persons connected with the chain of title;

4094 (4) Whether the land embraced in any conveyance or any part of such land or right
4095 therein has been in the actual possession of any party or parties connected with the chain
4096 of title;

4097 (5) The payment of debts of an unadministered estate;

4098 (6) The fact or date of death of any person connected with such title;

4099 (7) Where such affidavits relate to the identity of parties whose names may be shown
4100 differently in chains of title;

4101 (8) Where such affidavits show the ownership or adverse possession of lands or that
4102 other persons have not owned such lands nor been in possession of same; or

4103 (9) Where such affidavits state any other fact or circumstance affecting title to land or
4104 any right, title, interest in, or lien or encumbrance upon land.

4105 Any such affidavits may be made by any person, whether connected with the chain of title
4106 or not.

4107 ~~(b) In any litigation over any of the lands referred to and described in any of the affidavits~~
4108 ~~referred to in subsection (a) of this Code section in any court in this state or in any~~
4109 ~~proceedings in any such court involving the title to such lands wherein the facts recited in~~
4110 ~~such affidavits may be material, the affidavits or certified copies of the record thereof shall~~
4111 ~~be admissible in evidence and there shall be a rebuttable presumption that the statements~~
4112 ~~in said affidavits are true. The affidavits or certified copies thereof shall only be admissible~~
4113 ~~as evidence in the event the parties making the affidavits are deceased; they are~~
4114 ~~nonresidents of the state; their residences are unknown to the parties offering the affidavits;~~
4115 ~~or they are too old, infirm, or sick to attend court~~ Reserved.

4116 (c) Affidavits referred to in ~~subsections~~ subsection (a) ~~and (b)~~ of this Code section shall
4117 be filed by the clerk of the superior court of the county where the land is located and shall
4118 contain a caption referring to the current owner and to a deed or other recorded instrument
4119 in the chain of title of the affected land. The clerk of the superior court shall record such
4120 affidavits, shall enter on the deed or other recorded instrument so referred to the book and
4121 page number on which such affidavit may be recorded, and shall index same in the name
4122 of the purported owner as shown by such caption in both grantor and grantee indexes in

4123 deed records as conveyances of lands are recorded and indexed; and ~~he~~ the clerk shall
 4124 receive the same compensation therefor as for recording deeds to lands."

4125 **SECTION 78.**

4126 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 44-2-23, relating to when deed serves
 4127 as evidence, as follows:

4128 "44-2-23.

4129 ~~A recorded deed shall be admitted in evidence in any court without further proof unless the~~
 4130 ~~maker of the deed, one of his heirs, or the opposite party in the action files an affidavit that~~
 4131 ~~the deed is a forgery to the best of his knowledge and belief. Upon the filing of the~~
 4132 ~~affidavit, the genuineness of the alleged deed shall become an issue to be determined in the~~
 4133 ~~action~~ Reserved."

4134 **SECTION 79.**

4135 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 44-2-101, relating to referral of case
 4136 to examiner, as follows:

4137 "44-2-101.

4138 Upon the filing of a petition as provided in this article, the clerk shall at once notify the
 4139 judge who shall refer the action to one of the general examiners or to a special examiner.
 4140 It shall then become the duty of the examiner to make up a preliminary report containing
 4141 an abstract of the title to the land from public records and all other evidence of a
 4142 trustworthy nature that can reasonably be obtained by ~~him~~ the examiner, which abstract
 4143 shall contain:

- 4144 (1) Extracts from the records and other matters referred to therein which are complete
 4145 enough to enable the court to decide the questions involved;
- 4146 (2) A statement of the facts relating to the possession of the lands; and
- 4147 (3) The names and addresses, so far as the examiner is able to ascertain, of all persons
 4148 interested in the land as well as all adjoining owners showing their several apparent or
 4149 possible interests and indicating upon whom and in what manner process should be
 4150 served or notices given in accordance with this article.

4151 The preliminary report of the examiner shall be filed in the office of the clerk of the
 4152 superior court on or before the return day of the court as stated in the process unless the
 4153 time for filing the report is extended by the court. ~~The report shall be prima-facie evidence~~
 4154 ~~of the contents thereof."~~

4155 **SECTION 80.**

4156 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 44-4-3, relating to the duty of
4157 surveyors and processioners, as follows:

4158 "44-4-3.

4159 It shall be the duty of the county surveyor and the processioners to take all due precautions
4160 to arrive at the true lines and to trace out and plainly mark the same. The surveyor shall
4161 make out and certify a plat of the true lines and deliver a copy thereof to the applicant; and,
4162 in all future boundary disputes with any owner of adjoining lands who had due notice of
4163 the processioning, the certified plat and the lines so marked shall be prima facie correct;
4164 ~~and the certified plat shall be admissible in evidence without further proof."~~

4165 **SECTION 81.**

4166 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 44-4-6, relating to general reputation
4167 as evidence, as follows:

4168 "44-4-6.

4169 ~~General reputation in the neighborhood shall be evidence as to ancient landmarks of more~~
4170 ~~than 30 years' standing.~~ Acquiescence for seven years by acts or declarations of adjoining
4171 landowners shall establish a dividing line."

4172 **SECTION 82.**

4173 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 44-5-45, relating to when ancient deed
4174 admissible without proof of execution, as follows:

4175 "44-5-45.

4176 ~~A deed more than 30 years old which, upon inspection, has the appearance of genuineness~~
4177 ~~and which comes from the proper custody is admissible in evidence without proof of~~
4178 ~~execution if possession of the property has been consistent with such deed~~ Reserved."

4179 **SECTION 83.**

4180 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 44-13-11, relating to approval of
4181 application and transmittal of copy of exempted real property to other counties, as follows:

4182 "44-13-11.

4183 If, at the time and place appointed for passing upon the application, no objection is raised
4184 by any creditor of the applicant, the judge of the probate court shall endorse upon the
4185 schedule and upon the plat: 'Approved this the ____ day of _____, _____,' filling the
4186 blanks, and shall sign the schedule and plat officially and hand ~~them~~ such application to the
4187 clerk of the superior court of ~~his~~ the clerk's county; and, when land out of ~~his~~ the clerk's
4188 county is exempted, the judge shall transmit a certified copy of the exempted real property

4189 to the clerk of the superior court of each county in which exempted land is located. Each
 4190 clerk of the superior court of a county in which exempted land is located shall record the
 4191 exempted real property in a book to be kept for that purpose ~~in his office, which record or~~
 4192 ~~a certified transcript thereof shall be competent evidence in all the courts of this state."~~

4193 **SECTION 84.**

4194 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 44-14-38, relating to admission of
 4195 mortgages into evidence, as follows:

4196 "44-14-38.

4197 ~~When duly executed and recorded, mortgages shall be admitted into evidence under the~~
 4198 ~~same rules as recorded deeds Reserved."~~

4199 **SECTION 85.**

4200 Title 45 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to public officers and employees,
 4201 is amended by revising Code Section 45-9-1, relating to general provisions and disclosure
 4202 or insurance or indemnification in legal actions, as follows:

4203 "45-9-1.

4204 (a) In addition to any other compensation which may be paid to an officer, official, or
 4205 employee of any agency, board, bureau, commission, department, or authority of the
 4206 executive, judicial, or legislative branch of government of this state, each such agency,
 4207 board, bureau, commission, department, or authority is authorized, in its discretion, to
 4208 purchase policies of liability insurance or contracts of indemnity or to formulate sound
 4209 programs of self-insurance utilizing funds available to such agency, board, bureau,
 4210 commission, department, or authority, insuring or indemnifying such officers, officials, or
 4211 employees to the extent that they are not immune from liability against personal liability
 4212 for damages arising out of the performance of their duties or in any way connected
 4213 therewith. Such policies of liability insurance, contracts of indemnity, or programs of
 4214 self-insurance may also provide for reimbursement to an officer, official, or employee of
 4215 any agency, board, bureau, commission, department, or authority of ~~the~~ this state for
 4216 reasonable legal fees and other expenses incurred in the successful defense of any criminal
 4217 proceeding, including, but not limited to, any criminal cause of action, suit, investigation,
 4218 subpoena, warrant, request for documentation or property, or threat of such action whether
 4219 formal or informal where such action arises out of the performance of his or her official
 4220 duties. In addition, in the case of an officer, official, or employee who is required to
 4221 maintain a professional license, such reimbursement may also be provided for legal fees
 4222 and other expenses so incurred in the successful defense of a charge arising out of the
 4223 performance of his or her official duties in proceedings before a professional licensing

4224 board, disciplinary board or commission, or other similar body. Legal fees and other
4225 expenses shall be subject to adjustment by and the approval of the Attorney General.

4226 (b) Such agencies, boards, bureaus, commissions, departments, or authorities may expend
4227 federal and state or other available funds for such purposes. The amount of such insurance
4228 or indemnity shall also be in the discretion of such agency, board, bureau, commission,
4229 department, or authority.

4230 (c) For the purpose of this article, the term 'agency' shall specifically include, but shall not
4231 be limited to, public retirement systems of state-wide application established by the laws
4232 of this state, but shall not include counties or municipalities; provided, however, that the
4233 employees of community service boards, county departments of health, and county
4234 departments of family and children services as well as the members of the boards of said
4235 departments shall be considered to be state employees or officials for the purpose of this
4236 article. In order to facilitate the administration of liability coverage or other insurance
4237 coverages provided the community service boards, the Department of Behavioral Health
4238 and Developmental Disabilities shall designate a central office which shall be responsible
4239 for obtaining, submitting, and collecting all underwriting information and insurance
4240 premiums requested and assessed by the Department of Administrative Services. In order
4241 to facilitate the administration of liability coverage or other insurance coverages provided
4242 county departments of family and children services, the Department of Human Services
4243 shall designate a central office which shall be responsible for obtaining, submitting, and
4244 collecting all underwriting information and insurance premiums requested and assessed by
4245 the Department of Administrative Services. In order to facilitate the administration of
4246 liability coverage or other insurance coverages provided county departments of health, the
4247 Department of Community Health shall designate a central office which shall be
4248 responsible for obtaining, submitting, and collecting all underwriting information and
4249 insurance premiums requested and assessed by the Department of Administrative Services.
4250 ~~(d) The existence of such insurance or indemnification shall not be disclosed or suggested~~
4251 ~~in any action brought against such individual."~~

4252 **SECTION 86.**

4253 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 45-9-20, relating to authorization of
4254 purchase of insurance, as follows:

4255 "45-9-20.

4256 In addition to any other compensation which may be paid to members of the governing
4257 bodies of municipalities, counties, and other public bodies, and to supervisors,
4258 administrators, employees, or other elected or appointed public officers, each municipality,
4259 county, and other public body of this state is authorized, in its discretion, to purchase

4260 policies of liability insurance or contracts of indemnity insuring or indemnifying the
 4261 members of such governing bodies and such supervisors, administrators, employees, or
 4262 other elected or appointed officers against personal liability for damages arising out of the
 4263 performance of their duties or in any way connected therewith, whether based upon
 4264 negligence, violation of contract rights, or violation of civil, constitutional, common law,
 4265 or other statutory rights, whether state, federal, or local. Such municipalities, counties, and
 4266 other public bodies may expend state, federal, and local funds for such purposes. The
 4267 amount of such insurance or indemnity shall also be in the discretion of the governing body
 4268 of such municipality, county, or other public body. No action shall be maintained against
 4269 the person or company issuing such insurance or contracting for such indemnity until final
 4270 judgment has first been entered against the individual covered by such policy or contract;
 4271 ~~and the existence of such insurance or indemnity shall not be disclosed or suggested in any~~
 4272 ~~action brought against such individual."~~

4273 **SECTION 87.**

4274 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 45-14-5, relating to the Commissioner
 4275 of Insurance, Safety Fire Commissioner, Industrial Loan Commissioner, and the Comptroller
 4276 General's seal and sealed copies treated as originals, as follows:

4277 "45-14-5.

4278 The Commissioner of Insurance, Safety Fire Commissioner, Industrial Loan
 4279 Commissioner, and the Comptroller General shall have an official seal for each office of
 4280 such design as he or she shall select with the approval of the Governor. ~~Every certificate~~
 4281 ~~and other document or paper executed by the Commissioner of Insurance, Safety Fire~~
 4282 ~~Commissioner, Industrial Loan Commissioner, or the Comptroller General in the pursuance~~
 4283 ~~of any authority conferred upon that office by law and sealed with the seal of that office~~
 4284 ~~and all copies or photographic copies of papers certified by him and authenticated by said~~
 4285 ~~seal shall in all cases be evidence 'in equal and like manner' as the original thereof and in~~
 4286 ~~all cases be primary evidence of the contents of the original and shall be admissible in any~~
 4287 ~~court in this state."~~

4288 **SECTION 88.**

4289 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 45-16-43, relating to receipt as
 4290 evidence of records, findings, and reports of medical examiners' inquiries, as follows:

4291 "45-16-43.

4292 ~~Reports of medical examiners' inquiries performed as provided in this article and copies~~
 4293 ~~of records, photographs, laboratory findings, and reports in the office of the director of the~~
 4294 ~~division, when duly attested by said director, shall be received as evidence in any court or~~

4295 ~~other proceeding for any purpose for which the original could be received without any~~
 4296 ~~proof of the official character of the person whose name is signed thereto Reserved.~~"

4297 **SECTION 89.**

4298 Title 46 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to public utilities and public
 4299 transportation, is amended by revising Code Section 46-2-53, relating to reports, rate
 4300 schedules, orders, rules, or regulations of commission as admissible evidence in court
 4301 proceedings, as follows:

4302 "46-2-53.

4303 ~~The printed reports of the commission, published by its authority, shall be admissible as~~
 4304 ~~evidence in any court in this state without further proof. The schedules of rates made by~~
 4305 ~~the commission, and any order passed or rule or regulation prescribed by the commission,~~
 4306 ~~shall be admissible in evidence in any court in this state upon the certificate of the secretary~~
 4307 ~~of the commission Reserved.~~"

4308 **SECTION 90.**

4309 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 46-3-175, relating to receipt of
 4310 certificates and certified copies in evidence, as follows:

4311 "46-3-175.

4312 ~~(a) All certificates issued by the Secretary of State in accordance with this article and all~~
 4313 ~~copies of documents filed in his office in accordance with this article, when certified by~~
 4314 ~~him, shall be taken and received in all courts, public offices, and official bodies as~~
 4315 ~~prima-facie evidence of the facts stated therein. A certificate by the Secretary of State~~
 4316 ~~under the seal of his office as to the existence or nonexistence of facts relating to electric~~
 4317 ~~membership corporations or foreign electric cooperatives shall be taken and received in all~~
 4318 ~~courts, public offices, and official bodies as prima-facie evidence of the existence or~~
 4319 ~~nonexistence of the facts stated therein.~~

4320 ~~(b) The Secretary of State, at any time, upon the request of any person, shall make and~~
 4321 ~~certify additional copies of any document filed with his or her office and of the certificate,~~
 4322 ~~if any, issued by the Secretary of State in connection with the filing of the document, under~~
 4323 ~~this article, upon payment to him the Secretary of State of the fee provided for in Code~~
 4324 ~~Section 46-3-502."~~

4325 **SECTION 91.**

4326 Title 48 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to revenue and taxation, is
 4327 amended by revising Code Section 48-2-14, relating to the state revenue commissioner's
 4328 official seal, as follows:

4329 "48-2-14.

4330 The commissioner shall have an official seal of such device as he or she shall select,
 4331 subject to the approval of the Governor. ~~Any certificate or other legal document or paper~~
 4332 ~~executed by the commissioner in the exercise of any authority conferred upon him by law,~~
 4333 ~~which paper is sealed with the seal of his office, and all copies or photographic copies of~~
 4334 ~~papers certified by him and authenticated by the seal shall be evidence equally in all cases~~
 4335 ~~and, in like manner as the original of the document or paper, shall be primary evidence in~~
 4336 ~~all cases of the contents of the original, and shall be admissible in any court in this state."~~

4337 **SECTION 92.**

4338 Said title is further amended by revising subsection (d) of Code Section 48-5-138, relating
 4339 to the cashbook to be kept by tax collectors and tax commissioners, as follows:

4340 "(d) The tax collector or tax commissioner shall make and file an accounting as required
 4341 by Code Section 48-5-154. The record book shall be preserved by the tax collector or tax
 4342 commissioner in the tax collector's or tax commissioner's office. ~~The record book or a~~
 4343 ~~transcript of the record book, when properly authenticated, shall be admitted in evidence~~
 4344 ~~in courts of this state as evidence of the payment of taxes.~~ The commissioner shall furnish
 4345 the tax collectors and tax commissioners the book required pursuant to this Code section
 4346 at the state's expense."

4347 **SECTION 93.**

4348 Code Section 49-5-183.1 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to notice to
 4349 alleged child abuser of classification and procedure, is amended by revising subsection (i)
 4350 as follows:

4351 "(i) No child under the age of 14 shall be compelled to appear to testify at any hearing held
 4352 pursuant to this Code section. If a child under the age of 14 testifies voluntarily, such
 4353 testimony shall be given in compliance with procedures analogous to those contained in
 4354 Code Section 17-8-55. Nothing in this article shall prohibit introducing a child's statement
 4355 in a hearing held pursuant to this Code section if the statement meets the criteria of Code
 4356 Section ~~24-3-16~~ 24-8-820."

4357 **SECTION 94.**

4358 Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to state government, is amended
 4359 by revising Code Section 50-5A-4, relating to bond to be recorded and filed and certified
 4360 copy is admissible in evidence, as follows:

4361 "50-5A-4.
 4362 The bond of the state treasurer, when duly executed and approved, shall be recorded in the
 4363 Secretary of State's office and filed in the office of the Governor. ~~A copy of the bond,~~
 4364 ~~when certified by one of the Governor's secretaries under the seal of the office of the~~
 4365 ~~Governor, or a certified copy taken from the records of the Secretary of State's office shall~~
 4366 ~~be received in evidence in any court in lieu of the original."~~

4367 SECTION 95.

4368 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 50-18-96, relating to copies of records
 4369 as primary evidence, as follows:

4370 "50-18-96.

4371 ~~Photostatic copies of records produced from microfilm and print-out copies of computer~~
 4372 ~~records shall be received in any court of this state as primary evidence of the recitals~~
 4373 ~~contained therein Reserved."~~

4374 SECTION 96.

4375 Code Section 52-6-8 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to keeping of
 4376 records by the Board of Pilotage Commissioners, is amended as follows:

4377 "52-6-8.

4378 The commissioners shall preserve in a neatly bound book a record of all their acts and of
 4379 all the rules and regulations adopted by them for the direction and government of pilots.
 4380 The commissioners ~~They~~ shall designate one of their number as ~~chairman~~ chairperson and
 4381 cause a record thereof to be made. The commissioners ~~They~~ shall also preserve upon their
 4382 records a list of the names of all persons appointed pilots by them, as well as a list of the
 4383 names of those whose licenses have been suspended or revoked or who have been retired.
 4384 All persons interested shall have access to and be permitted to have ~~copies~~ duplicates of
 4385 the such records; ~~and copies thereof certified by the chairman or secretary shall be~~
 4386 ~~presumptive evidence of the facts therein stated."~~

4387 SECTION 97.

4388 Title 53 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to wills, trusts, and estates, is
 4389 amended by revising subsection (b) of Code Section 53-5-33, relating to requisites for
 4390 admission to ancillary probate, as follows:

4391 "(b) For purposes of ancillary probate of out-of-state wills, when the out-of-state will has
 4392 been admitted to probate or established in the domiciliary jurisdiction, the will may be
 4393 admitted to ancillary probate in solemn form upon production of a properly certified copy
 4394 of the will and a properly authenticated copy of the final proceedings in the jurisdiction in

4395 which the will was probated or established, certified according to Code Section ~~24-7-24~~
 4396 24-9-922, and may be attacked or resisted on the same grounds as other judicial
 4397 proceedings from a state of the United States."

4398 **SECTION 98.**

4399 Said title is further amended by revising paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of Code Section
 4400 53-5-35, relating to muniments of title to realty, as follows:

4401 "(1) Such a will is accompanied by properly authenticated copies of the record admitting
 4402 the will to probate in another state, certified according to Code Section ~~24-7-24~~ 24-9-922;
 4403 and"

4404 **SECTION 99.**

4405 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 53-5-43, relating to evidence of
 4406 authority, as follows:

4407 "53-5-43.

4408 A copy of letters, or like documentation authenticated in accordance with Code Section
 4409 ~~24-7-24~~ 24-9-922, evidencing the qualification of the personal representative of the
 4410 decedent who died domiciled outside this state, shall constitute prima-facie evidence of the
 4411 authority of the personal representative to act in this state. Whenever a personal
 4412 representative shall execute and deliver any deed of assent or conveyance with respect to
 4413 real property located within this state, the personal representative shall attach to such deed
 4414 as an exhibit the authenticated copy of the letters, and a certified copy of the will in the
 4415 case of a testate decedent. The clerks of the superior courts of this state shall not be
 4416 authorized to accept for filing and recording any deed given by such personal
 4417 representative that does not conform to the foregoing requirements. Unless a third party
 4418 has actual knowledge of the existence or pendency of ancillary probate or administration
 4419 with respect to the decedent within this state, the third party who is dealing with the
 4420 personal representative in reliance on the personal representative's letters and, in the case
 4421 of a testate decedent, the out-of-state or foreign will, shall be fully protected."

4422 **SECTION 100.**

4423 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 53-11-11, relating to authentication
 4424 or exemplification of document, as follows:

4425 "53-11-11.

4426 Whenever it is required that a document to be filed in the probate court be authenticated
 4427 or exemplified, such requirement shall be met by complying with the provisions of Code

4428 Section ~~24-7-24~~ 24-7-922 and such full faith and credit shall be given to the document as
4429 is provided in that Code section."

4430 **SECTION 101.**

4431 This Act shall become effective on January 1, 2013, and shall apply to any motion made or
4432 hearing or trial commenced on or after such date.

4433 **SECTION 102.**

4434 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.