

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: January 13, 2025

Contact: John Waelde | Chief Deputy Clerk of Court, Greenville County | 864-467-8554

### **GREENVILLE COUNTY JUSTICE SYSTEM FACES DISRUPTION DUE TO JUROR SHORTAGE**

Greenville, SC—A high-profile trial scheduled to begin today in Greenville County was postponed due to a significant shortage of jurors. Of the 161 jury summonses issued on December 5, only 59 individuals reported for jury duty, while 93 failed to appear. This critical shortage has already delayed not only the anticipated trial but also other cases on the General Sessions trial docket.

The Clerk of Court's Office emphasized the impact of the juror shortage, citing disruptions, wasted taxpayer resources, and additional strain on a judicial circuit still working to address the case backlog caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"This is a serious issue that affects everyone in our community," said Clerk of Court Jay Gresham. "When jurors fail to appear, trials are delayed, resources are squandered, and justice is put on hold. As the saying goes, 'Justice delayed is justice denied.'"

The Clerk of Court's Office stressed that the responsibility for summoning jurors is taken with the utmost seriousness. The number of jurors summoned is determined by state law and may be adjusted by court order. For this week's General Sessions trial term, the Clerk's Office fully complied with all legal requirements and did not receive a court order requesting additional summonses.

To address the current challenge, the Clerk of Court's Office has initiated immediate action, including communication with the Chief Administrative Judge for General Sessions, the Solicitor's Office, and Sheriff Hobart Lewis. Together, they are working to address the issues caused by the low juror turnout and to develop strategies for improvement moving forward.

"This situation underscores the importance of jury service as a cornerstone of our justice system," Gresham added. "Every juror plays a critical role in ensuring fair trials and upholding the principles of justice that are fundamental to our legal system. Jury service is not just a legal obligation—it is a civic duty and a right we share as Americans, one that many people around the world can only dream of."

The Clerk of Court's Office is committed to improving juror participation. Efforts include increasing public awareness about the significance of jury service, enhancing communication with prospective jurors, and exploring additional measures to encourage compliance with jury summonses. The office remains dedicated to improving processes and ensuring trials can proceed without unnecessary delays.

For more information about jury service or to address concerns about this matter, please contact the Clerk of Court's Office at [clerkofcourt@greenvillecounty.org](mailto:clerkofcourt@greenvillecounty.org).

### **About the Clerk of Court's Office:**

The Greenville County Clerk of Court's Office serves the citizens of Greenville County by supporting the judicial system through efficient case management and administration. Under new leadership, the office is committed to building public trust, addressing systemic challenges, and maintaining the integrity of the court system.

###