

West's Code of Georgia Annotated  
Title 36. Local Government  
Provisions Applicable to Municipal Corporations Only  
Chapter 36. Annexation of Territory (Refs & Annos)  
Article 7. Procedure for Resolving Annexation Disputes (Refs & Annos)

Ga. Code Ann., § 36-36-114

§ 36-36-114. Arbitration panel; composition; training; oath

Effective: July 1, 2007

Currentness

(a) Not later than the fifteenth calendar day following the date the municipal corporation received the first objection provided for in Code Section 36-36-113, an arbitration panel shall be appointed as provided in this Code section.

(b) The arbitration panel shall be composed of five members to be selected as provided in this subsection. The Department of Community Affairs shall develop three pools of arbitrators, one pool which consists of persons who are currently or within the previous six years have been municipal elected officials, one pool which consists of persons who are currently or within the previous six years have been county elected officials, and one pool which consists of persons with a master's degree or higher in public administration or planning and who are currently employed by an institution of higher learning in this state, other than the Carl Vinson Institute of Government. The pool shall be sufficiently large to ensure as nearly as practicable that no person shall be required to serve on more than two panels in any one calendar year and serve on no more than one panel in any given county in any one calendar year. The department is authorized to coordinate with the Georgia Municipal Association, the Association County Commissioners of Georgia, the Council of Local Governments, and similar organizations in developing and maintaining such pools.

(c) Upon receiving notice of a disputed annexation, the department shall choose at random four names from the pool of municipal officials, four names from the pool of county officials, and three names from the pool of academics; provided, however, that none of such selections shall include a person who is a resident of the county which has interposed the objection or any municipal corporation located wholly or partially in such county. The municipal corporation shall be permitted to strike or excuse two of the names chosen from the county officials pool; the county shall be permitted to strike or excuse two of the names chosen from the municipal officials pool; and the county and municipal corporation shall each be permitted to strike or excuse one of the names chosen from the academic pool.

(d) Prior to being eligible to serve on any of the three pools, persons interested in serving on such panels shall receive joint training in alternative dispute resolution together with zoning and land use training, which may be designed and overseen by the Carl Vinson Institute of Government in conjunction with the Association County Commissioners of Georgia and the Georgia Municipal Association, provided such training is available.

(e) At the time any person is selected to serve on a panel for any particular annexation dispute, he or she shall sign the following oath: "I do solemnly swear or affirm that I will faithfully perform my duties as an arbitrator in a fair and impartial manner without favor or affection to any party, and that I have not and will not have any ex parte communication regarding the facts and circumstances of the matters to be determined, other than communications with

my fellow arbitrators, and will only consider, in making my determination, those matters which may lawfully come before me.”

**Credits**

Laws 2007, Act 205, § 2, eff. July 1, 2007.

Ga. Code Ann., § 36-36-114, GA ST § 36-36-114

The statutes and Constitution are current with legislation passed during the 2017 Session of the Georgia General Assembly. The statutes are subject to changes by the Georgia Code Commission.

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Article 7. Procedure for Resolving Annexation Disputes (Refs & Annos)

Ga. Code Ann., § 36-36-115

§ 36-36-115. Timing of arbitration; evidence; findings;  
dissolution of panel; compensation; consolidation of disputes

Effective: July 1, 2007

Currentness

(a)(1) The arbitration panel appointed pursuant to Code Section 36-36-114 shall meet as soon after appointment as practicable and shall receive evidence and argument from the municipal corporation, the county, and the applicant or property owner and shall by majority vote render a decision which shall be binding on all parties to the dispute as provided for in this article not later than the sixtieth day following such appointment. The meetings of the panel in which evidence is submitted or arguments of the parties are made shall be open to the public pursuant to Chapter 14 of Title 50. The panel shall first determine the validity of the grounds for objection as specified in the objection. If an objection involves the financial impact on the county as a result of a change in zoning or land use or the provision of maintenance of infrastructure, the panel shall quantify such impact in terms of cost. As to any objection which the panel has determined to be valid, the panel, in its findings, may establish reasonable zoning, land use, or density conditions applicable to the annexation and propose any reasonable mitigating measures as to an objection pertaining to infrastructure demands.

(2) In arriving at its determination, the panel shall consider:

(A) The existing comprehensive land use plans of both the county and city;

(B) The existing land use patterns in the area of the subject property;

(C) The existing zoning patterns in the area of the subject property;

(D) Each jurisdiction's provision of infrastructure to the area of the subject property;

(E) Whether the county has approved similar changes in intensity or allowable uses on similar developments in other unincorporated areas of the county;

(F) Whether the county has approved similar developments in other unincorporated areas of the county which have a similar impact on infrastructure as complained of by the county in its objection; and

(G) Whether the infrastructure or capital outlay project which is claimed adversely impacted by the county in its objection was funded by a county-wide tax.

(3) The county shall provide supporting evidence that its objection is consistent with its land use plan and the pattern of existing land uses and zonings in the area of the subject property.

(4) The county shall bear at least 75 percent of the cost of the arbitration. The panel shall apportion the remaining 25 percent of the cost of the arbitration equitably between the city and the county as the facts of the appeal warrant; provided, however, that if the panel determines that any party has advanced a position that is substantially frivolous, the costs shall be borne by the party that has advanced such position.

(5) The reasonable costs of participation in the arbitration process of the property owner or owners whose property is at issue shall be borne by the county and the city in the same proportion as costs are apportioned under paragraph (4) of this subsection.

(6) The panel shall deliver its findings and recommendations to the parties by certified mail or statutory overnight delivery.

(b) If the decision of the panel contains zoning, land use, or density conditions, the findings and recommendations of the panel shall be recorded in the deed records of the county with a caption describing the name of the current owner of the property, recording reference of the current owner's acquisition deed and a general description of the property, and plainly showing the expiration date of any restrictions or conditions.

(c) The arbitration panel shall be dissolved on the tenth day after it renders its findings and recommendations but may be reconvened as provided in Code Section 36-36-116.

(d) The members of the arbitration panel shall receive the same per diem, expenses, and allowances for their service on the committee as is authorized by law for members of interim legislative study committees.

(e) If the panel so agrees, any one or more additional annexation disputes which may arise between the parties prior to the panel's initial meeting may be consolidated for the purpose of judicial economy if there are similar issues of location or similar objections raised to such other annexations or the property to be annexed in such other annexations is within 2,500 feet of the subject property.

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