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## **Governor Signs Law to Overturn Rule Requiring Georgia Attorneys to Answer Garnishments**

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On February 8, 2012, Governor Nathan Deal signed HB 683 into law. HB 683 effectively overturns the Georgia Supreme Court's recent decision requiring employers to use a Georgia-licensed attorney to file answers to garnishments in Georgia courts of record. Under the new law, which becomes effective immediately, employers may use a Georgia-licensed attorney, their own in-house staff (including human resources, payroll, and other non-attorney staff), or other third-party vendors to handle responses to summonses of garnishment in Georgia.

In addition, HB 683 doubles the amount employers may deduct to recover their actual expenses, including attorneys' fees, incurred to prepare and file answers of garnishment.

Although the new law eliminates the mandate for employers to use Georgia-licensed legal counsel to handle Georgia garnishment answers, a Georgia-licensed attorney is still required to respond to any traverse or claim that is filed in a Georgia court of record in response to the garnishment answer.

Should you have any questions about this development or any other questions about garnishments in Georgia, please contact the Ogletree Deakins attorney with whom you normally work or the Client Services Department via email at [clientservices@ogletreedeakins.com](mailto:clientservices@ogletreedeakins.com) or at 866-287-2576.

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