



OFFICIAL MEMORANDUM

Sub: Courts – Subordinate Courts – COVID-19 – Opening up of physical hearing in the Districts of Chennai, Kancheepuram and Tiruvallur and physical functioning of Subordinate Courts in all other Districts in the State of Tamil Nadu and in the Union Territory of Puducherry from 07-09-2020 onwards – Instructions Issued – Regarding.

- Ref: 1. High Court's Notification in ROC.No.1363/2020/RG/HC, dated 1.8.2020
2. High Court's Official Memorandum in ROC.No.1363/2020/ RG/ Sub.Courts, dated 31.8.2020

The physical hearing in all subordinate Courts in 29 districts in the State of Tamil Nadu and in the subordinate Courts in the Union Territory of Puducherry has already commenced and in operation as already directed by the High Court.

The Hon'ble Administrative Committee now discussed the issues with the Principal Judge, City Civil Court and Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Chennai; Principal District Judges and Chief Judicial Magistrates of Kancheepuram and

Tiruvallur Districts with regard to physical hearing being extended in these three districts, as well as other modalities for the purpose of facilitating litigants and lawyers alike in the respective district courts.

On a detailed discussion, the Committee permits the physical filing of all nature of cases through “*Drop Boxes*”, not only in these three districts, but in all the districts throughout the State of Tamil Nadu and in the Union Territory of Puducherry. The respective District Courts at the Headquarters may, on a trial basis, proceed with the physical hearing of 3 to 5 cases a day and the nature of cases to be taken up shall be supervised by the learned Principal District Judges; The Principal Judge, City Civil Court, Chennai; The Chief Judge, Court of Small Causes, Chennai; and the Chief Judge, Puducherry.

Only those lawyers would be permitted inside the Court premises, whose cases are listed for physical hearing and the permission to litigants will be only to the extent of such witnesses, who are to depose as witnesses in a given case, if listed for physical hearing. The lawyers shall be requested to arrive in the Court only for their respective cases and leave the Court immediately after their cases are over, in order to avoid overcrowding.

In order to facilitate the official work, in modification of the earlier instructions, and keeping in view the Government Order in G.O.(Ms)No.447, Revenue and Disaster Management (D.M.IV) Department, dated 31.8.2020, all the

learned Principal District Judges; the Principal Judge, City Civil Court, Chennai and the Chief Judge, Court of Small Causes, Chennai, may accordingly take appropriate steps to deploy staff as per the requirement of the Court at appropriate places.

In the Districts of Tiruvallur and Kancheepuram, the Hon'ble Administrative Committee allows the opening of Taluk Courts for physical hearing, on the same pattern as in the other districts, subject to limitations of containment areas or subject to any reports of rise in COVID cases in the respective Taluks, which shall be at the discretion of the learned Principal District Judges.

The regulation of entry of any vehicles or the compulsory attendance of any individual, as may be required for conducting a case, shall also be at the discretion of the learned Principal District Judges; The Principal Judge, City Civil Court, Chennai; The Chief Judge, Court of Small Causes, Chennai; and the Chief Judge, Puducherry, but no person shall be allowed to enter the premises, except with his/her permission.

The above instructions shall be observed by the learned Principal District Judges; The Principal Judge, City Civil Court, Chennai; The Chief Judge, Court of Small Causes, Chennai, throughout the State, and the Chief Judge, Puducherry, and further instructions will be issued after an assessment is made in this regard upon a video-conference meeting with the above officials after two weeks.

The learned Principal District Judges; The Principal Judge, City Civil Court, Chennai; The Chief Judge, Court of Small Causes, Chennai; and the Chief Judge,

Puducherry, shall also ensure that all medical, health and hygiene facilities are made available for taking precautionary measures, looking to the existing parameters of COVID-19.

The above decision shall come into effect from 7.9.2020 and a review of the functioning will be carried out by the Hon'ble Administrative Committee in its next meeting on 22.9.2020.

All the learned Principal District Judges; The Principal Judge, City Civil Court, Chennai; The Chief Judge, Court of Small Causes, Chennai; and the Chief Judge, Puducherry shall attend the video-conference meet on 22.09.2020 with particulars indicating their experience about the functioning of the Courts through this mode, and during this period they shall also interact with the respective Bar Associations and forward their suggestions together with their comments on the same.

HIGH COURT, MADRAS
DATED: 01-09-2020.

Sd/- C.KUMARAPPAN
REGISTRAR GENERAL