

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF JUSTICE



PRACTICE DIRECTION 9 OF 2021

COURT OPERATIONS DURING THE EXTENDED LEVEL IV COVID-19 NATIONAL LOCKDOWN PERIOD

Application

1. This Practice Direction is issued to replace operational instructions announced in Practice Directions 6 to 8 of 2021.
2. It applies to the Constitutional Court; the Supreme Court; the High Court (including the offices of the Master and the Sheriff); the Labour Court; the Administrative Court; and the Magistrates' Court (including the Messenger of Court) in Zimbabwe.

“Court Operations

3. Court operations shall proceed in the manner set out in this Practice Direction subject to the requirements of paragraphs 10, 11, 12, and 13 and in compliance with strict health protocols and regulations.
4. The filing and processing of new cases, processes, documents, pleadings, papers and court orders, including service and execution by the Sheriff and the Messenger of Court, shall be done in terms of the applicable Court Rules, legislation or court order.

5. Court sittings for Superior Courts that is the Constitutional Court, Supreme Court, High Court, Labour Court and Administrative Court shall only be limited to urgent court applications and bail hearings until the 6th of September 2021 when the third term commences.
6. Court sittings in the Magistrates' Court shall proceed in terms of the applicable court rules subject to the requirements of paragraphs 10, 11, 12 and 13 of this Practice Direction.
7. For the avoidance of doubt, accused persons remanded between 29 July 2021 and 24 August 2021, remain automatically remanded to the dates stated in Practice Direction 7 & 8 of 2021.
8. All civil cases originally postponed or set down between the 29 July 2021 and 24 August 2021, remain as such to the dates stated in Practice Direction 7 & 8 of 2021.

Court Attendance

9. Admission into court premises and offices shall be subject to paragraphs 10 - 13 below.
10. Entry into court premises/courthouses shall strictly not be permitted to members of the public who have no business at court.
11. Entry into court premises/courthouses/courtrooms shall be limited to litigants, their legal practitioners, necessary witnesses and the media, who at all times shall -
 - i. be subjected to temperature checks;
 - ii. be required to sanitise their hands at entry into court premises;
 - iii. wear face masks in the manner prescribed by law;
 - iv. maintain social distancing as prescribed by law.
12. Any person referred to in paragraph 11 who does not comply with the requirements specified therein shall not be allowed entry into court premises/courthouse/courtroom; or shall be asked to leave the court premises or courtroom or courthouse.

13. Litigants who are required to attend Court in a Province or District other than where they are normally resident shall obtain the necessary letters of clearance at the nearest police station.”

Hon. Mr Justice L. Malaba

Chief Justice of Zimbabwe

HARARE

25 August 2021