



OFFICIAL MEMORANDUM

Sub: Courts – Subordinate Courts – COVID-19 pandemic – Functioning of Subordinate Courts in full capacity in the State of Tamil Nadu and Union Territory of Puducherry - Instructions Issued – Regarding.

Ref: High Court's Official Memorandum in ROC.No.1363/2020/ RG/ Sub.Courts, dated 1.9.2020 & 24.9.2020

In furtherance to the High Court's Official Memorandum in the reference cited, the Hon'ble Administrative Committee of the High Court, on assessing the prevailing situation of COVID-19 Pandemic in the State of Tamil Nadu and Union Territory of Puducherry, and the present functioning of Subordinate Courts in the State of Tamil Nadu and Union Territory of Puducherry, directs that no limitations or restrictions are centrally imposed for functioning of the Subordinate Courts in full capacity (pre-COVID pandemic stage) **w.e.f. 08.02.2021**. It is open to the Principal District Judges to decide on the mode and manner of functioning, depending on the situation prevailing in their respective District, or even in a particular Taluk.

The Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to be followed by the Subordinate

Courts in the State of Tamil Nadu and in the Union Territory of Puducherry are annexed herewith.

All the Principal District Judges/District Judges in the State of Tamil Nadu and the Chief Judge, Puducherry shall ensure better functioning of Subordinate Courts, without compromising on the COVID protocol.

With regard to opening of Bar Associations' rooms, Chambers and Canteens inside the premises of the Subordinate Courts, the same will be considered by the High Court after three weeks from the Courts commence physical hearing in full capacity.

HIGH COURT, MADRAS
DATED: 01-02-2021.

SD./-C.KUMARAPPAN
REGISTRAR GENERAL

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP) TO BE FOLLOWED BY
SUBORDINATE COURTS IN THE STATE OF TAMIL NADU AND
UNION TERRITORY OF PUDUCHERRY**

Before resuming physical functioning of Courts in full capacity (pre-COVID stage), entire Court halls, Chambers of Hon'ble Presiding Officers, entire Office space, Corridors, Advocates Chambers are to be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized by taking all requisite measures.

The Local Administration is to be requested to depute sufficient number of Paramedical staff for doing Thermal Screening of all Judicial Officers, Staff, Advocates and litigants, entering into the Court campus.

Sanitization of corridors, office space, rest rooms, etc., has to be done at least twice a day, for which necessary arrangements have to be made.

- There shall be one or two entry for the Officers, staff and litigants, depending upon the local requirement.
- Everyone, who enters the Court campus must strictly follow the advisories and directives of the Central and State Governments as to maintaining hygiene, social-distancing and avoid over crowding in the campus.
- Entry into the Court campus shall be permitted only after hand wash with liquid soap at the entry points, screening by thermal scanners and wearing of masks.
- Persons with symptoms of COVID-19 during thermal scanning shall be denied entry.
- Persons without mask shall be denied entry into the court campus.
- The Advocates, Litigants, Advocate Clerks shall be permitted entry to the Court campus/Court Halls only in the following manner:
 - a) Only the Advocates whose names are found in the cause list and at the best one client per case,

- b) Parties who are summoned by the court / required to be present to adduce evidence / witness in a case,
 - c) Registered Advocate Clerks are permitted for carrying heavy case files of the Advocates to whom they are attached.
- Over crowding of Advocates or parties in court halls, sections, corridors and in any common place is strictly prohibited.
 - Principal District Judges and Chief Judicial Magistrates shall take necessary steps for smooth functioning of Courts through Physical hearing with an option of Video Conference by following SOP/guidelines issued by the Government of India and State Government.

The above SOP is only indicative in nature.

The Principal District Judges may modify or relax any condition/impose any restriction depending upon the local requirements subject to guidelines issued for prevention of COVID-19 by State and Central Governments.