

R.O.C.NO.1363/2020/RG/HC

MOST URGENT



NOTIFICATION

On reviewing the functioning with full strength of 33 Hon'ble Judges at Principal Seat of Madras High Court only through Video Conferencing, and that of the Hon'ble Judges at Madurai Bench, and considering the concerns expressed by some of the Hon'ble Judges, and also on assessing the present peculiar situation in Chennai, which stands reported through COVID Bulletins issued by the State Government and various other sources, including news papers reports, etc. of there being a rapid spike in the number of suspected and infected cases of COVID-19, the Hon'ble Administrative Committee of the Madras High Court has observed that the present state of affairs in Chennai and the surrounding areas as compared to the other areas in the State of Tamil Nadu is comparatively more precarious in respect of the threat perception of the spread of the Corona Virus, and that, the atmosphere therefore is not conducive enough for which a different approach has to be necessarily taken in respect of functioning of the High Court.

The Hon'ble Administrative Committee has also observed that the situation now existing has posed problems in the physical movement of the working court

staff and officers of the High Court that is likely to have an impact on the functioning of the Hon'ble Judges as well as the security personnel deputed at the High Court, and taking into account the said problems which are on the increase, it has been considered necessary to review the mode of functioning of the High Court so as to avoid any future complications.

The Committee has further observed that physical movement of case files by deploying additional staff is unavoidable with larger number of cases being listed with the full strength of Hon'ble Judges functioning from their residence that may further add to the problem. Additionally, the movement of maintenance staff of video conferencing connections and equipments as well as transportation of files can also raise the risk of a possible spread of the infection.

Though the Bar Council of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry as well as the various Bar Associations of the High Court have made requests for physical court hearings and opening of the High Court, in view of this growing situation indicating no flattening of the COVID-19 curve, the Committee felt that the functioning of the High Court should be restricted by conducting court proceedings through **video conferencing only** to the exclusion of physical court hearings at present.

The Committee also finds it necessary to cut down and reduce the number of working staff in the High Court, which would reduce the movement and travel of the High Court staff that is scattered over different parts of the City and surrounding

Districts which are prone to infection and any regular exposure is likely to affect them.

In order to prevent any untoward situation in this regard at Chennai, and to maintain uniformity at Madurai, the Committee directs that the mode of functioning of video conferencing shall be limited for urgent and emergent matters only through the functioning of **Two Division Benches and Four Single Judges at the Principal Seat at Chennai and One Division Bench and Three Single Judges at Madurai Bench.**

The Hon'ble Judges who are assigned roster shall function only from their respective residences through video conferences for the time being until any other decision is taken otherwise in this regard **till 30th of June, 2020.** The support staff for the video conferencing system and in relation thereto, will be at the barest minimum.

The working of Registry with Officers and staff at Principal Seat and at Madurai Bench will also be with barest minimum.

HIGH COURT,MADRAS
DATED: 05.06.2020.

Sd/- C.KUMARAPPAN,
REGISTRAR GENERAL

To

1. All the Hon'ble Judges (for information).
2. All the Registrars, High Court, Madras and Madurai Bench of Madras High Court, Madurai.
3. The Additional Registrar, Madurai Bench of Madras High Court, Madurai.

4. All the Officers, High Court, Madras and Madurai Bench of Madras High Court, Madurai.
5. All the Heads of Sections, High Court, Madras and Madurai Bench
6. The Secretary to His Excellency The President of India, New Delhi.
7. The Secretary General, Supreme Court of India, New Delhi.
8. The Chief Secretary to Government, Secretariat, Chennai 9.
9. The Private Secretary to His Excellency The Governor of Tamil Nadu, Raj Bhavan, Guindy, Chennai.
10. The Chief Secretary to Government of Puducherry, Puducherry.
11. The Secretary to Government, Home Department, Secretariat, Chennai-9
12. The Registrar General, High Court of Judicature @ Patna.
13. The Registrar General, High Court of Madhya Pradesh @ Jabalpur.
14. The Registrar General, High Court of Andhra Pradesh @ Amaravati.
15. The Registrar General, High Court of Telangana @ Hyderabad.
16. The Registrar General, High Court of Judicature @ Bombay.
17. The Registrar General, High Court of Punjab & Haryana @ Chandigarh.
18. The Registrar General, High Court of Judicature @ Allahabad.
19. The Registrar General, High Court of Kerala @ Ernakulam.
20. The Registrar General, High Court of Rajasthan @ Jodhpur.
21. The Registrar General, Odisha High Court @ Cuttack.
22. The Registrar General, High Court of Karnataka @ Bangalore.
23. The Registrar General, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir @ Srinagar/Jammu.
24. The Registrar General, High Court of Calcutta @ Kolkatta.
25. The Registrar General, High Court of Himachal Pradesh @ Shimla.
26. The Registrar General, The Gauhati High Court, Guwahati, Assam, (Nagaland, Mizoram & Arunachal Pradesh)
27. The Registrar General, High Court of Manipur