

ORDER

Re: Situation arising due to outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR LIMITED PHYSICAL HEARING IN HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA

Keeping in view the recommendation made by Hon'ble Special Committee, the Government Advisories, on the basis of opinion of medical and administrative experts and with a view to ensure the safety of the Hon'ble Judges, Advocates, Staff and litigants, Hon'ble the Chief Justice has been pleased to order, for the time being and subject to review as per the situation, as under:-

1. The existing system of mentioning, filing, listing of cases and hearing of cases through Video conferencing shall continue and the hearing of the cases through physical mode shall be in addition to the same.
2. 02 Hon'ble Division Benches, 04 Hon'ble Single Benches (Writ & Civil) and 06 Hon'ble Single Benches (Criminal) will be designated for hearing of cases through physical hearing w.e.f. 06.09.2021.
3. The weekly roster of the Hon'ble Benches to be nominated for physical hearing will be published separately.
4. **Entry/Exit to the High Court Building**
 - i. Entry/Exit to the Advocates/Clerk shall be permitted from Gate Nos. 1, 2 & 5 only on showing the E-pass issued by the High Court. E-Pass can be downloaded from E-Pass Portal (which is available on the Website of the Hon'ble High Court) after filling up the required particulars. It should be mandatorily filled in the E-pass Portal as to whether the applicant is vaccinated or not.
 - ii. E-pass shall be issued only to the Advocate whose name is published in the cause-list of the Benches nominated for physical hearing. Only one advocate and his Clerk shall be permitted for one party. The learned designated Senior Advocate shall be accompanied by only one Assisting Counsel.
 - iii. The President High Court Bar Association is requested to sensitize the members of the Bar to follow the Covid Protocol in letter and spirit so

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that the Standard Operating Procedure can be implemented effectively. It may also be ensured that all the Advocates and their Clerks carry their ID Cards.

- iv. No litigant, who is represented by any Advocate, would be permitted entry unless there is specific direction by the Hon'ble Court.
- v. The Advocate Generals of Punjab and Haryana are requested to issue instructions to the concerned authorities that as far as possible, instructions from Police Officials be taken in the same manner as is being done during the virtual hearing and their physical presence in the court for the said purpose be avoided.
- vi. After entering into the High Court Building, the Advocates would proceed to the designated waiting areas and wait for their turn to enter the respective Court Rooms, where physical hearing of their respective case(s) is to be taken up.
- vii. Designated waiting areas before each Court shall be defined.
- viii. The Clerk accompanied by the Advocate shall be allowed for limited purpose like delivering heavy and bulky case files upto the designated waiting area outside/nearby the respective Court Room. Such Clerks shall leave the Court Building immediately thereafter and shall enter again only to re-collect the same. The learned Advocates are advised to allow their Clerks to accompany them only in case the file/record is bulky.
- ix. Advocates will ensure that they enter the Court premises only for arguing their cases and shall leave the Court premises as soon as the hearing for the day is over. The Bar Association is expected to extend its full support and ensure that no crowding is there in the corridors, court rooms etc.
- x. There shall be no crowding/gathering in the corridors. All the Members of Bar shall co-operate by adhering to the restrictions mentioned hereinabove and will not breach the restricted area norms in any eventuality.

5. **Entry to the Court Rooms**

- i. No litigant shall be allowed to enter the Court Rooms unless specifically directed by the Court.

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- ii. Only the Advocates whose cases are listed in a particular Court shall be permitted to enter that Court room.
- iii. At any given point of time, not more than 05 Advocates should be present in the Court room.
- iv. Display boards shall be made functional for the convenience and information of the Advocates and court staff.
- v. Advocates appearing in more than one case may wait at the designated waiting area for appearing in the next case and ensure that no congregation takes place in the corridor.
- vi. The Bar Association shall sensitize learned Members of the Bar on this aspect.

6. **Arrangements in the Court Rooms**

- i. Acrylic/glass/polycarbonate partitions have been installed on the dais and on the lawyer's tables.
- ii. Arrangement of mics have been made.
- iii. Adequate arrangement of hand sanitizer shall be made for Advocates and staff.
- iv. The doors and windows shall be kept open and the proper arrangement for ventilation/exhaust fans shall be made for circulation of the air.
- v. The seating arrangements for Advocates shall be made following the social distancing norms. Excess furniture shall be removed.
- vi. Sanitization of the Court Rooms shall be as per norms. The Court shall be vacated by all after every two hours and shall reassemble after the recess of half an hour.


7. **General Preventive Measures**

- i. All officers, officials, staff members, Advocates, clerks etc. shall be allowed to enter the High Court premises only if they are using face masks which would be required to be worn at all times inside the High Court premises.
- ii. No person having any of the symptoms such as cough, sneezing or fever shall permitted entry irrespective of E-pass issued in his favour.

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- iii. Persons above 65 years of age, persons with comorbidities, pregnant women and have not been vaccinated would be advised to stay at home.
 - iv. All the entrants to the High Court premises must maintain a minimum distance of 6 feet in public places.
 - v. Frequent hand washing with soap (for at least 40-60 seconds) and use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers be done by all the officials, court staff and the learned advocates.
 - vi. Respiratory etiquettes be strictly followed. This involves strict practice of covering one's mouth and nose while coughing/sneezing with a tissue/handkerchief/flexed elbow and disposing off used tissues properly.
 - vii. Spitting shall be strictly prohibited.
 - viii. All are advised to use stairs/ramp. Number of persons in the elevators at one time shall be restricted to three only.
 - ix. Proper cleaning and frequent sanitization of all Court Rooms, chambers, offices, corridors, common places and the frequently touched surfaces must be ensured.
 - x. Every person entering the Court Complex premises shall install & use of 'AarogyaSetu App'.
 - xi. There shall be strict adherence to all the directions/guidelines/SOPs/advisories issued by the Government and health authorities time to time.
8. In case there is any inconvenience in downloading the E-pass, he may contact the following helpline numbers:
- Mobile Numbers: 7087218394
 7087218395
9. Registrar (Grouping) will be the Nodal officer for resolution of all the issues in connection with processing and issuance of E-Pass. He will also ensure compliance of the conditions enumerated in Para No.3 to 7 (supra).

BY ORDER OF HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE.


3.9.2021
(Sanjiv Berry)
Registrar General