

# **HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA, BENGALURU**

August 28, 2021

## **THE MODIFIED STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR THE DISTRICT JUDICIARY WITH EFFECT FROM SEPTEMBER 1, 2021**

**In view of the fact that number of Covid-19 Active cases are consistently declining in Karnataka, the existing Standard Operating Procedure stands withdrawn for all the Districts with effect from 1st September, 2021, subject to the following restrictions:**

- a) At the entry points of all Court complexes, every person, including the members of the Bar, shall be subjected to thermal scanning. If at the time of scanning, it is revealed that any one has the symptoms of COVID-19, he/she shall be denied entry into the Court Complex.
- b) If possible, separate entrances be provided to all the Court Complexes, one will be for entry of Judicial Officers, Advocates and Staff Members and the other one will be for the entry of litigants, witnesses, police/ Government Officers etc. Hand sanitizers shall be provided at all entry points in the corridors.
- c) Inside the Court Complexes, all the existing rules prescribed by the Central/State Governments, such as wearing of proper face masks, maintaining physical distance and washing of hands with sanitizer/soap, shall be strictly adhered to. The members of the Bar are well advised to wear double mask all the time.

- d) The Principal District and Sessions Judge or the Senior-most Judge in the Court Complex shall have a power to remove any person/s from the Court Complex if it is found that the person/s is/are not using proper face masks and/or not adhering to physical distancing norms.
- e) Daily cause list shall be divided into two parts. One will be for morning session and the other will be for afternoon session. This will reduce the footfall of Advocates and litigants at a time in the Court Halls and Court Premises. However, all cases which are due shall be listed.
- f) Advocates, Litigants, Witnesses, Police personnel etc., shall maintain social distancing in the Court premises, Court offices, Bar Association Premises as well as in the Court rooms.
- g) It is the responsibility of the Members of the Bar to ensure that the litigants are not unnecessary called to visit the Courts/Court premises. The members of the Bar should ensure that their clients visit the Court only if their presence is absolutely mandatory. The Court officials shall have right to refuse entry to a litigant if it is found that he or she has come to visit the Court without any reason.
- h) The Bar Associations shall appeal to the litigants not to come to Court unless and until their presence is absolutely necessary.

- i) The restriction imposed on Bar Associations, Library, Canteens, Xerox Operators, Job Typists, Notaries/Oath Commissioners are completely relaxed subject to condition that the staff members of the Bar Associations, Xerox Operators, Job typists and staff members working in canteens shall be given entry in the Court Complexes only if they produce certificates showing administration of both the doses of vaccines.
  
- j) The Advocates'/Bar Associations premises within the Court complexes shall be permitted to be opened, subject to the condition that the members of the Bar shall strictly follow the rules regarding wearing of masks and maintaining physical distancing of six feet. In order to avoid congestion in the premises of the Bar Association half of the chairs in the Association premises shall be removed. If it is found that members of the Bar are not following the norms of physical distancing and wearing of masks inside the Advocate/Bar Associations, the Principal District and Sessions Judge/Principal Judge concerned will have the discretion to immediately close down the Advocates'/Bar Associations premises. If any member of the Bar who has entered the Bar Association premises is tested positive, the premises shall be kept closed for 24 hours for sanitisation. It is also responsibility of Bar Associations to report Principal District and Sessions Judge/Principal Civil Judge if any member of the Bar is tested positive immediately for further needful action.

- k) No recreation activity, playing of games, cultural activities, programs shall be allowed in the Bar Associations. Bar Association premises shall be sanitized once in a week.
- l) The suspension of itinerary Courts as per SOP dated May 21, 2021 stands revoked and all the itinerary Courts in the State, will start functioning as per earlier assignments.
- m) The decision of withdrawing the existing Standard Operating Procedure is based on the present status of the COVID-19 cases and therefore, the decision is liable to be changed in future. If any in particular Court Complex, it is found that the Advocates are not following COVID-19 norms, the Chief Justice shall have power to restrict the functioning of the Courts.

**The above modifications are only on experimental basis. If there is sudden surge of covid cases in any district, the Principal District & Sessions Judge of the said district shall immediately report to the High Court, on the basis of which this SOP can be always modified.**

**BY ORDER OF HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE**

**Sd/-  
(T.G. SHIVASHANKARE GOWDA)  
REGISTRAR GENERAL**