

## **Resumption of Court Proceedings at District Court**

Details of the resumption of court proceedings at District Court (“DC”) starting from 4 May 2020 are set out below.

2. In line with usual practice, parties will be separately notified of any change in the date and other arrangement of the hearing of their cases, regardless of whether the hearing has been affected by the General Adjourned Period (“GAP”).

### **3. Civil proceedings in the District Court (“DC”)**

#### **(a) Proceedings listed for hearing in the DC in the weeks of 4 May, 11 May and 18 May 2020**

- (i) Unless otherwise directed by the presiding judge/master (“JJO”), the court will give 7-day lead time to hearings involve interlocutory and substantive applications (not involving oral evidence) and 14-day lead time to trials listed in the above periods;
- (ii) The above lead time policy does not apply to cases that are ready to proceed and the presiding JJO has given direction for the hearing to proceed as scheduled;
- (iii) If, notwithstanding the above lead time policy, a party is not ready to proceed with the hearing of the case, he/she should apply as soon as practicable to the presiding JJO for an adjournment. Unless otherwise directed, the application will be processed on the papers; and

- (iv) Notwithstanding the gradual re-opening of the court registries starting from 6 May 2020, JJOs may continue to give special directions on the filing and lodging of documents for cases listed to be heard in this period.

(b) For proceedings, including trials, listed for hearing in the DC in the period from 25 May to 30 June 2020

- (i) They will proceed as scheduled unless directed otherwise; and
- (ii) Any party who is not ready to proceed with the hearing of the case shall apply as soon as practicable to the presiding JJO for an adjournment. Unless otherwise directed, the application will be processed on the papers.

(c) Alternative modes of hearing

In view of the need to reduce oral hearings in court buildings due to public health considerations, in appropriate cases, JJOs may give directions for the case to be determined on the papers, or heard by the use of VCF or, for hearings before masters, by telephone. Directions for alternative mode of hearing will be communicated to the parties in good time. In the absence of such directions, oral hearings will take place with the parties or their legal representatives present in court.

(d) Lodging of documents through dedicated email accounts and e-Lodgement Platform

- (i) Parties or legal representatives may submit documents to the Duty Judge through the following dedicated one-way “no-reply” email account at

[dc dutyjudge@judiciary.hk](mailto:dc dutyjudge@judiciary.hk) which will be open until further notice.

- (ii) Parties and legal representatives are reminded to :
  - (1) contact the Duty Judge concerned by telephone before sending their documents to the court electronically; and
  - (2) refrain from telephoning the Duty Judge after office hours (i.e. from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. from Mondays to Fridays), unless it is really necessary;
- (iii) Parties and legal representatives may lodge written submissions, authorities, hearing bundles and other documents as directed by JJOs to the DC through the e-Lodgement Platform;
- (iv) Documents relating to hearings on Summons Day in the DC on Fridays may be submitted through the e-Lodgement Platform; and
- (v) Documents relating to hearings of Employees' Compensation cases in the DC may be sent to the dedicated one-way "no-reply" email account, which will be open until further notice : [dc rec@judiciary.hk](mailto:dc rec@judiciary.hk).

#### 4. **Criminal proceedings in the DC**

##### (a) Plea Day

- (i) Having regard to the need to maintain social distancing, Plea Day will be held on every Monday,

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday in May and June; and

- (ii) Documents relating to the hearings on Plea Day may be sent to the dedicated one-way “no-reply” email account, which will be open until further notice : dcrplea@judiciary.hk.

(b) *Trials and other hearings*

- (i) Generally, all hearings, including trials, will proceed as scheduled subject to measures to facilitate social distancing. Parties will be notified of any change in the date and other arrangement of their hearing; and
- (ii) Parties or legal representatives directed by the court to lodge documents or written submissions may do so through the dedicated one-way “no-reply” email account, which will be open until further notice : dcr@judiciary.hk, or the e-Lodgement Platform.

5. The court will continue to hand down decisions and judgments in both civil and criminal cases that are ready. As usual, the court will give sufficient notice to the relevant parties of the cases. The judgments will be uploaded onto the Judiciary’s website immediately after handing down. Parties need not come to the court to collect the judgments. If a party does not come to the court to collect the judgment, a hard copy will be sent to him/her.

**Judiciary Administration**  
**29 April 2020**