

**Notification for Stakeholders about
General Adjournment of Proceedings (“GAP”)
Between 7 March 2022 and 11 April 2022**

General

1. In light of the prevailing public health situation and related developments, as well as the impacts on parties, court users, stakeholders and the Judiciary, the Chief Justice has on 4 March 2022 directed that all hearings of the courts and tribunals originally listed between **7 March and 11 April 2022** be generally adjourned.
2. During this GAP period, the capacity and operations at all levels of court will be substantially reduced. Striking a balance between public health considerations and due administration of justice, the court will only carry out the business as set out in **Annexes 1 and 2** until further notice.
3. Parties, their legal representatives, court users and all stakeholders should read the Annexes carefully and to conduct their affairs with the court accordingly without seeking further directions from the court unless it is really necessary. For convenience, a brief summary is provided as follows.

Civil proceedings

4. In respect of ongoing court hearings for all civil proceedings and appeals, including remote hearings, subject to the court’s direction, they will continue.
5. In respect of all court hearings for civil proceedings and appeals originally listed in the GAP period, subject to Annex 1 and the court’s directions, they will be dealt with by paper disposal or remotely or be re-fixed. The court may give directions as appropriate.
6. The Court of Appeal will continue to deal with urgent appeals and urgent applications.

7. Urgent matters will continue to be dealt with by the Duty Judge and Duty Master.

Criminal proceedings

8. The Court of Appeal will deal with bail applications, leave applications and substantive appeals listed between 7 and 18 March 2022 in accordance with the directions already issued. From 21 March 2022 onwards, all leave applications before a single judge will be disposed of on paper and all other hearings (except bail applications) will be re-fixed, unless the circumstances are deemed by the Court of Appeal so exceptional as to warrant a hearing.
9. All jury trials in the Court of First Instance will be re-fixed, except ongoing ones which may continue pursuant to the court's direction. In respect of ongoing court hearings for other criminal proceedings, subject to the court's direction, they will continue.
10. In respect of all court hearings for criminal proceedings originally listed in the GAP period in the Court of First Instance, the District Court and the Magistracies Courts, subject to Annex 1 and the court's directions:
 - (1) insofar as they can under the law be dealt with on paper or remotely, will be so disposed of and the court will give directions as appropriate;
 - (2) in other cases, will be re-fixed.
11. The court will continue to deal with bail applications and bail reviews.
12. Urgent matters will continue to be dealt with by the Duty Judge and Duty Master.

Other proceedings

13. All death inquests in the Coroner's Court involving juries originally listed in the GAP period will be re-fixed, except ongoing ones which

- may continue pursuant to the court's direction. The Coroner's Court will continue to process and deal with matters listed in Annex 1.
14. Proceedings in the Obscene Articles Tribunal originally listed in the GAP period:
 - (1) insofar as they can under the law be dealt with on paper or remotely, will be so disposed of and the court will give directions as appropriate;
 - (2) in other cases, will be re-fixed.
 15. Urgent matters will continue to be dealt with under the existing practice.

Statutory duties

16. District Judges and Magistrates will continue to perform, as appropriate, their statutory duties relating to urgent applications for search warrants and applications under the Mental Health Ordinance (Cap 136).

Registries

17. All registries, accounts and other court offices will be closed during the GAP period, except for providing necessary support to the court's business as set out in Annex 1.
18. The registries will only conduct the business as specified in Annex 2 during the GAP period.
19. Urgent matters will continue to be dealt with by the Duty Master.

Further adjustments

20. As the public health situation may change rapidly, the Judiciary will closely monitor the situation and constantly review the impacts on the court's operations and business. In particular, as and when the compulsory universal testing is to take place, it is anticipated that the

court's operations and business will be further reduced considerably. The Judiciary may need to further adjust the scope of the court's operations and business at very short notice.

21. The Judiciary will continue to post updated information on the Judiciary website (www.judiciary.hk). Stakeholders are urged to regularly check the website for updated information as necessary.

**List of court proceedings and hearings to be continued
during General Adjournment of Proceedings (“GAP”) Period**

Court	Court proceedings and hearings
Court of Final Appeal	Proceedings as directed by the Court
Court of Appeal	Urgent civil appeals and urgent applications
	Civil appeals directed by the Court to be conducted remotely or on paper
	Applications for leave to appeal against conviction and/or sentence and substantive criminal appeals listed between 7 and 18 March 2022
	As from 21 March 2022, applications for leave to appeal against conviction and/or sentence before a single judge to be disposed of on paper; and any other matter where the circumstances are deemed by the Court so exceptional to warrant a hearing
	Bail applications
Court of First Instance	Urgent applications to Duty Judge or Duty Master
	Ongoing civil proceedings as directed by the Court
	Civil proceedings directed by the Court to be conducted remotely or disposed of on paper

	Urgent applications under section 30A of the Bankruptcy Ordinance (Cap. 6) by the trustee in bankruptcy or creditor of the bankrupt for the suspension of the bankrupt's discharge from bankruptcy
	Urgent objections to discharge applications not yet filed but with imminent dates of discharge of bankruptcy, and urgent applications for non-commencement orders under section 30AB of Cap. 6 not yet filed but with imminent deadlines for filing
	Urgent applications under section 42 of Cap. 6 by the debtors for validation orders
	Applications for bail or review of bail
	Ongoing criminal proceedings as directed by the Court
	Plea and sentencing cases as directed by the Court having regard to the circumstances of the case
	Cases with defendants remanded in custody pending reports as directed by the Court having regard to the circumstances of the case
District Court	Urgent applications to Duty Judge or Duty Master
	Ongoing civil proceedings as directed by the Court
	Civil proceedings directed by the Court to be conducted remotely or disposed of on paper
	Ongoing criminal proceedings as directed by the Court
	Criminal cases adjourned for sentence or plea and sentence with defendants remanded in custody as directed by the Court having regard to the circumstances of the case

	Criminal cases with defendants remanded in custody pending reports as directed by the Court having regard to the circumstances of the case
	Other criminal proceedings as directed by the Court having regard to the urgency and other circumstances of the case, including any application by the parties
Family Court	Urgent applications to Duty Judge
	Proceedings directed by the Court to be conducted remotely or disposed of on paper
Lands Tribunal	Proceedings directed by the Tribunal to be disposed of on paper
Magistrates' Courts	Fresh remand cases
	Cases with defendants remanded in custody who have the legal rights to appear before a Magistrate to review his/her remand situation ("eight-day cases")
	Ongoing and part-heard trials as directed by the Court
	Trials as directed by the Court having regard to the urgency and other circumstances of the case
	Cases with defendants remanded in custody pending reports as directed by the Court having regard to the circumstances of the case
	Sentencing cases with defendants remanded in custody as directed by the Court having regard to the circumstances of the case
Juvenile Court	Ongoing and part-heard trials as directed by the Court
	Cases with defendants remanded in custody pending reports as directed by the Court having regard to the circumstances of the case

	Sentencing cases with defendants remanded in custody as directed by the Court having regard to the circumstances of the case
	Urgent applications for care or protection order
Labour Tribunal	Trials and applications directed by the Tribunal to be disposed of on paper
	Ongoing and part-heard trials as directed by the Tribunal
Small Claims Tribunal	Trials and applications directed by the Tribunal to be disposed of on paper
	Ongoing and part-heard trials as directed by the Tribunal
Coroners' Court	Ongoing death inquests as directed by the Court
	Paper applications for waivers for autopsy
	Issuance of urgent certificates of order authorizing burial/cremation of body
	Urgent cases with pathologist's recommendation for autopsy
	Issuance of urgent certificate of the fact of death and documents for the removal of bodies outside jurisdiction

**List of registry business that will be conducted
during General Adjournment of Proceedings (“GAP”) Period**

Registry	Registry business
Court of Final Appeal	
Court of Final Appeal Registry	Filing of urgent applications
High Court	
High Court Registry	Filing of originating process where the limitation period for a cause of action under the Limitation Ordinance (Cap. 347) may expire during GAP period
	Filing of document(s) pursuant to an unless order imposing a time limit that may expire during GAP period
	Filing of application to apply for judicial review (including but not limited to non-refoulement claims) where the time limit for making the application provided by Order 53 rule 4(1) of the Rules of the High Court (Cap. 4A) may expire during GAP period
	Filing of urgent applications under section 30A of the Bankruptcy Ordinance (Cap. 6) by the trustee in bankruptcy or creditor of the bankrupt for the suspension of the bankrupt’s discharge from bankruptcy

	Filing of urgent objections to discharge applications not yet filed but with imminent dates of discharge of bankruptcy, and urgent applications for non-commencement orders under section 30AB of Cap. 6 not yet filed but with imminent deadlines for filing
	Filing of urgent applications under section 42 of Cap. 6 by the debtors for validation orders
	Urgent application and collection of apostilles
	Urgent registration of enduring power of attorney
Probate Registry	Urgent grant of probate
District Court	
District Court Registry	Filing of originating process where the limitation period for a cause of action under the Limitation Ordinance (Cap. 347) may expire during GAP period
	Filing of document(s) pursuant to an unless order imposing a time limit that may expire during GAP period
Family Court Registry	Filing of originating process where the limitation period for a cause of action under the Limitation Ordinance (Cap. 347) may expire during GAP period
	Filing of document(s) pursuant to an unless order imposing a time limit that may expire during GAP period