



Chambers of the Chief Justice

SUPREME COURT OF UGANDA

Plot 2, The Square High Court Building
P. O. Box 7085, Kampala Uganda

IN ANY CORRESPONDENCE ON
THIS SUBJECT PLEASE QUOTE NO.

CJ/C.7

21st July 2020

C I R C U L A R

The Hon. Deputy Chief Justice
The Hon. The Principal Judge
The Hon. Justices of Supreme Court
The Hon. Justices of Court of Appeal/Constitutional Court
The Hon Judges of High Court
The Permanent Secretary/Secretary to the Judiciary
The Ag. Chief Registrar
All Registrars, Deputy Registrars and Assistant Registrars
All Magistrates
All Judiciary Staff

GUIDELINES ON CONDUCTING CRIMINAL SESSIONS IN COURTS OF JUDICATURE DURING THE EXISTENCE OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Reference is made to the earlier guidelines issued on 19th, 26th March, 29th April 5th May 27th May, and 29th June 2020 regulating the conduct of court business during COVID-19.

By the powers conferred upon the Chief Justice under Article 133 of The Constitution of Uganda;

"Justice for All"

I do hereby issue the following additional Guidelines for the conduct of all criminal sessions in Uganda.

1. All courts may now resume the conduct of criminal sessions while observing The Presidential Directives and Ministry of Health Guidelines and Standard Operations Procedures (SOPs).
2. All participating courts shall conduct pre-session meetings with stakeholders like ODPP, Police, Prisons, Advocates and Probation Officers to agree on the modus operandi of the session.
3. In compliance with Ministry of Health Standard Operations Procedures (SOPs) on COVID-19, plea taking and fixing of trial dates shall be done at the prison facilities. For the courts with Audio-visual facilities, they may conduct the pre-trial activities through the said facility.
4. Pre-trial cases conferencing shall be held for all cases to determine among others matters relating to witnesses, evidence and trial period.
5. Cases shall be cause-listed in accordance with the earlier guidelines issued.
6. The sessions shall be closed off to the public with the exception of witnesses, complainants and the relevant actors.
7. The Minors taking part in the sessions may be accompanied by one parent/guardian or a Probation officer.
8. Accused persons shall not mix with the members of the public while at court premises with the exception of the defense counsel/Advocates who shall do so with the help of prison authorities while observing the SOPs issued by the Ministry of Health.

9. Advocates will be given sufficient time to meet their clients with the guidance of prisons authorities while observing the SOPs issued by the Ministry of Health.

10. These guidelines may be amended from time to time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alfonse C. Owiny-Dollo', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Alfonse C. Owiny-Dollo
AG. CHIEF JUSTICE