

LEGAL NOTICE SUPPLEMENT

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THE CONSTITUTION (CREATION OF THE COURT OF APPEAL CIRCUITS) (PRACTICE) DIRECTIONS, 2025

(Under Article 133(1) (b) of the Constitution)

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred upon the Chief Justice by Article 133(1)(b) of the Constitution, these Practice Directions are issued this 30th day of October, 2025.

1. Citation

These Practice Directions may be cited as the Constitution (Creation of the Court of Appeal Circuits) (Practice) Directions, 2025.

2. Application

These Practice Directions shall apply to the Circuits of the Court of Appeal.

3. Objective

The objective of these Practice Directions is to create Circuits of the Court of Appeal—

- (a) to effectively and efficiently deliver justice to the people of Uganda by bringing services closer to the people;
- (b) to manage case backlog in the Court of Appeal;

- (c) to reduce the time spent in determining appeals and constitutional petitions; and
- (d) to reduce the cost of obtaining justice in Uganda by enabling court users to seek and receive the services obtainable at the Circuit of the Court of Appeal.

4. Interpretation

In these Practice Directions, unless the context otherwise requires—

“Court” means the Court of Appeal;

“Circuit” means the Circuit of the Court of Appeal;

“Justice” means the Justice of the Court of Appeal assigned to the Circuit by the Deputy Chief Justice;

“Registrar” means a Registrar assigned to the Circuit by the Chief Registrar and shall include a Deputy Registrar and an Assistant Registrar;

“register” means the register where all pleadings and supporting documents and all orders and decisions of the Court are recorded and includes an electronic register.

5. Creation of Court of Appeal Circuits

(1) There is created circuits of the Court of Appeal sitting at the following places—

- (a) Arua;
- (b) Fort Portal;
- (c) Gulu;
- (d) Jinja;
- (e) Masaka;

- (f) Mbale;
- (g) Mbarara; and
- (h) Mubende.

(2) Appeals from the High Court Divisions and High Court Circuits specified in columns 2 and 3 of Schedule 1 to these Practice Directions shall lie to the Court of Appeal, Kampala specified in column 1 of Schedule 1 to these Practice Directions.

(3) Appeals from the High Court Circuits specified in column 3 of Schedule 2 to these Practice Directions shall lie to the respective Court of Appeal Circuits specified in column 2 of Schedule 2 to these Practice Directions.

(4) Where any written law provides that an appeal shall lie to the Court of Appeal from any other court or tribunal, the appeal shall lie to the Court of Appeal, Kampala.

6. Composition

A Circuit shall have five Justices assigned by the Deputy Chief Justice.

7. Administration

(1) The Deputy Chief Justice shall, in consultation with the Chief Justice, designate a Head and Deputy Head of a Circuit from among the Justices assigned under paragraph 6.

(2) The Heads of Circuits shall report to the Deputy Chief Justice.

(3) The Chief Registrar shall deploy Registrars to the Circuits.

(4) The Head of a Circuit shall be responsible for the administration and supervision of the Circuit assisted by the Registrar.

8. Court Users Committee

(1) There is established at every Circuit, a Court Users Committee comprising of the following—

- (a) the Head of the Circuit, who shall be the chairperson;
- (b) the Justices of the Circuit;
- (c) Registrars of the Circuit, one of whom shall be the secretary; and
- (d) key stakeholders of the Circuit.

(2) The Court Users Committee may co-opt any person to be a member.

(3) The Court Users Committee shall be an advisory body to the Circuit.

(4) The Court Users Committee shall meet at least once every quarter.

(5) The Court Users Committee shall regulate its own procedure.

9. Functions of Court Users Committee

The functions of the Court Users Committee are to —

- (a) study the challenges to effective delivery of justice and advising on appropriate strategies to address the challenges;
- (b) promote communication, cooperation and coordination among the justice service stakeholders;
- (c) initiate proposals and reforms geared towards easing access to justice through the adoption of quick, cheap and convenient processes of dispute settlement;

- (d) promote the use and implementation of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, making recommendations and proposing relevant reforms;
- (e) make recommendations to the Case Management Committee on matters requiring policy and legislative reforms relating to case management;
- (f) study concerns and issues raised by members of the bar and the bench in relation to the administration of justice and formulating best practices to address the issues; and
- (g) conduct inspection visits of the relevant justice instructions and making recommendations for the effective administration and delivery of justice.

10. Transitional provision

All appeals and constitutional petitions filed at the Court of Appeal in Kampala which lie within the jurisdiction of a Circuit created under these Practice Directions which has not been heard at the date of operationalisation of the respective Circuit, shall be transferred to the respective Circuit.

SCHE DULES

SCHE DULE 1

Paragraph 5(2)

COURT OF APPEAL, KAMPALA

Court of Appeal, Kampala	High Court Divisions	High Court Circuit
Court of Appeal, Kampala	Family Division Land Division Criminal Division International Crimes Division Civil Division Commercial Division Anti-Corruption Division	Wakiso Luwero Entebbe

SCHEDULE 2

Paragraph 5(3)

CIRCUITS OF THE COURT OF APPEAL

	Court of Appeal Circuit	High Court Circuits
1.	Arua	Arua, Moyo and Nebbi.
2.	Fort Portal	Fort Portal, Hoima, Kasese and Masindi.
3.	Gulu	Gulu, Apac, Dokolo, Kitgum, Lira and Patongo.
4.	Jinja	Jinja, Bugiri, Iganga, Lugazi and Mukono.
5.	Masaka	Masaka, Rakai and Mpigi.
6.	Mbale	Mbale, Pallisa, Tororo, Soroti, Kumi and Moroto.
7.	Mbarara	Mbarara, Bushenyi, Ibanda, Kabale, Rukungiri and Ntungamo.
8.	Mubende	Mubende and Kiboga.

ALFONSE CHIGAMOY OWINY – DOLLO,
Chief Justice.

