

**STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS SUPPLEMENT**

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**S T A T U T O R Y I N S T R U M E N T S**

**2026 No. 14**

**THE JUDICATURE (COURT ANNEXED MEDIATION)  
RULES, 2026**

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# STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2026 No. 14

## THE JUDICATURE (COURT ANNEXED MEDIATION) RULES, 2026

*(Made under section 45 of the Judicature Act, Cap.16)*

**IN EXERCISE** of the powers conferred on the Rules Committee by section 45 of the Judicature Act, these Rules are made this 16th day of March, 2026.

### PART I – PRELIMINARY

#### **1. Citation**

These Rules may be cited as the Judicature (Court Annexed Mediation) Rules, 2026.

#### **2. Objectives of Rules**

The objectives of these Rules are—

- (a) to provide a definition and scope of court annexed mediation;
- (b) to provide for accreditation and registration of court annexed mediators;
- (c) to provide for the effective oversight and administration of court annexed mediation;
- (d) to provide for the role of a mediator, parties and advocates during court annexed mediation; and
- (e) to provide for remuneration of mediators participating in court annexed mediation.

### **3. Application of Rules**

These Rules apply to all civil matters arising from a lawsuit or appeal where parties consent to have their matter referred for mediation.

### **4. Interpretation**

In these Rules, unless the context otherwise requires –

“alternative dispute resolution (ADR)” includes any process or procedure of initiating alternative methods and procedures of resolution of issues in controversy without resorting to litigation through processes such as negotiation, mediation, conciliation and arbitration;

“appellate court” means all courts that hear appeals, including, chief magistrates court, high court, court of appeal and supreme court;

“appellate mediation” means a non-adversarial process in which a mediator encourages and facilitates the resolution of a dispute between parties at appeal stage;

“consent decree or order” means a decree or order entered by court based on a settlement agreement between the parties to a lawsuit;

“court” includes a justice, judge, registrar and magistrate;

“court accredited mediator” means a mediator accredited as a mediator by the Chief Justice and registered by the Chief Registrar in accordance with these Rules;

“court-annexed mediation” means a mediation process conducted under the auspices of any court of judicature;

“committee” means the case management committee established under rule 4 (e) of the Administration of the Judiciary (Establishment of Committees) Regulations, 2023;

“mediation” means the non-adversarial process in which a mediator encourages and facilitates the resolution of a dispute between parties;

“mediation settlement agreement” means a written and signed agreement arising out of a mediation process;

“mediator” means an independent and neutral third party who has the expertise to assist disputing parties to reach a settlement;

“parties” means persons who are directly involved in a civil matters arising from a lawsuit or an appeal;

“statement of understanding” means a written and signed document confirming that the parties understand and agree to mediation.

## PART II – ADMINISTRATION OF COURT ANNEXED MEDIATION

### **5. Functions of case management committee**

The case management committee established under rule 4 (e) of the Administration of the Judiciary (Establishment of Committees) Regulations, 2023 shall perform the following functions –

- (a) formulate policies, standards, guidelines and manuals for the proper management of court annexed mediation in Uganda;
- (b) monitor the quality, evaluate and assess the effectiveness of mediation as a form of alternative dispute resolution;
- (c) review and advise on any proposed amendments to the mediation rules, policies, standards, guidelines and manuals;

- (d) recommend persons to the Chief Justice for accreditation and registration as court annexed mediators;
- (e) promote the use of mediation at all levels of dispute resolution in the judicial system; and
- (f) develop a mentorship program for mediators.

**6. Responsibilities of registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation**

Every court shall designate a registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation, whose role shall include –

- (a) overseeing the operations of the court annexed mediation registry;
- (b) ensuring adherence to the mediation processes, procedures and prescribed timelines;
- (c) referring files to the trial court where mediation has failed;
- (d) providing overall guidance for the entire mediation process;
- (e) maintaining a record of accredited mediators assigned to the Court;
- (f) allocating matters to mediators;
- (g) taking all necessary steps to ensure that matters referred to mediation are processed under these Rules;
- (h) substituting a mediator upon request by parties or the mediator, where necessary;
- (i) considering and resolving complaints relating to misconduct of mediators ;

- (j) issuing notices as envisaged under these Rules;
- (k) processing claims for payment of mediators;
- (l) ensuring that consents endorsed by the court are duly registered and enforced; and
- (m) providing regular reports and statistics to the Chief Registrar on the performance and management of court annexed mediation.

### PART III – ACCREDITATION AND REGISTRATION OF MEDIATORS

#### **7. Application for accreditation and registration of court accredited mediator**

(1) A person who intends to practice as a court accredited mediator shall apply to the Chief Justice through the Chief Registrar for registration and accreditation using Form 1 set out in Schedule 1 to these Rules.

(2) The Chief Registrar shall forward the application made under subrule (1) to the committee for consideration and recommendation for accreditation to the Chief Justice.

(3) A person shall not be considered and recommended for accreditation unless the person is of high moral character and proven integrity.

(4) The Committee shall consider the application for accreditation and make a recommendation to the Chief Justice.

(5) The Chief Justice shall upon receipt of the application and recommendation of the committee –

- (a) accredit the applicant as an accredited mediator and cause the Chief Registrar to register the applicant as an accredited

mediator, where the applicant meets the requirements of subrule (3); or

- (b) reject the application and inform the applicant of the reason for rejection, where the applicant does not meet the requirements of subrule (3).

(6) The Chief Justice shall issue an accreditation certificate to a person who has met the requirements of accreditation under subrule (3).

(7) The Chief Registrar shall keep an up to date register of all court accredited mediators and shall upload the register on the official Judiciary website and any platforms approved by the Chief Justice.

(8) An application under this rule shall be processed within thirty days from the date of receipt of a complete application.

## **8. Suspension or revocation of accreditation**

The Chief Justice may suspend or revoke the accreditation of a mediator at any time.

## **9. Code of conduct for mediators**

A mediator participating in a court annexed mediator shall comply with the code of conduct for mediators set out in Schedule 2 to these Rules.

## **10. Complaints against mediators**

(1) A person aggrieved by the conduct of a mediator may complain to the registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation.

(2) The registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation shall consider and resolve the complaint within seven days from the date of receipt of the complaint.

## **11. Performance report**

(1) A registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation shall prepare and submit to the Chief Registrar a monthly report on the performance of each mediator assigned to that court for purposes of performance management.

(2) The Chief Registrar shall submit quarterly mediation reports to the committee.

### **PART IV – COURT ANNEXED MEDIATION, ROLES OF MEDIATOR, PARTIES AND ADVOCATES**

## **12. Court annexed mediation**

(1) The parties to any civil matter arising from a lawsuit or proceedings in any court may voluntarily and by mutual consent, refer the dispute between or amongst them for mediation at any stage before the final determination of the suit or proceedings.

(2) Where the parties agree to have their dispute referred for mediation, the parties shall choose a mediator of their choice either from the list of court accredited mediators or any other person of their choice.

(3) Where the parties fail to choose a mediator under subrule (2), the registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation shall appoint a court accredited mediator to facilitate the mediation.

(4) Court-annexed mediation shall be commenced by referring the dispute to a mediator and notifying the mediator and the parties of the referral.

(5) A judicial officer may, with the consent of the parties, serve as a mediator in a case pending before court.

(6) Where a judicial officer acts as a mediator under subrule (5) and the mediation is unsuccessful, the judicial officer shall immediately cease to take part in any further proceedings relating to that suit or proceeding.

### **13. Role of court**

The court shall –

- (a) explain to the parties –
  - (i) the option and benefits of mediation; and
  - (ii) the option of choosing a mediator of their choice whether or not the mediator is on the list of court accredited mediators;
- (b) avail the list of court accredited mediators to the parties;
- (c) refer matters for mediation, with the consent of the parties; and
- (d) conduct periodic mention of matters referred to mediation.

### **14. Responsibilities of mediator**

(1) A mediator shall facilitate and control the process of mediation while encouraging and assisting the parties.

- (2) The mediator shall –
  - (a) obtain the consent of the parties to conduct mediation and have the parties sign a confidentiality and inadmissibility agreement;
  - (b) identify the issues in dispute and assist the parties in reaching a mutually acceptable resolution of all or part of the issues in dispute;
  - (c) appreciate the mediation process and conduct the mediation in good faith and in an expeditious and cost effective manner;
  - (d) meet and communicate with the parties jointly or separately in person, by writing or by any other appropriate means;

- (e) identify the information and documents necessary to resolve the dispute;
- (f) caucus with each party separately, where necessary;
- (g) fill out an attendance sheet after every mediation session and file the mediator's progress report and the attendance sheet to the registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation upon conclusion of mediation;
- (h) act with utmost integrity and uphold the code of conduct of mediators at all times; and
- (i) prepare or assist in the preparation of a settlement agreement, where the parties have settled the dispute or file a mediation report, where the parties have not reached a settlement.

(3) The mediator shall neither determine the disputes between the parties nor impose terms of settlement on the parties.

(4) A mediator shall disclose to the parties to the mediation any matter which may be regarded as a conflict of interest.

(5) A mediator shall not act or continue to act in mediation where he or she has a conflict of interest unless all the parties specifically acknowledge the disclosure and agree in writing to the mediator acting or continuing to act as mediator.

(6) A mediator shall not serve as a witness in a dispute in regard to information received by him or her or action taken by him or her in respect of the mediation proceedings.

## **15. Responsibilities of parties in court annexed mediation process**

- (1) The parties to a court-annexed mediation shall –

- (a) file a mediation summary using Form 2 set out in Schedule 1 to these Rules, if required by the mediator;
- (b) furnish the registry, at filing stage, with their contact information, including telephone numbers and email addresses;
- (c) attend mediation sessions in person or through an agent expressly authorised to bind the principal;
- (d) act in good faith and cooperate with the mediator;
- (e) treat as confidential any information obtained orally or in writing in the course of mediation;
- (f) commit to observe the rules of engagement and sign a statement of understanding; and
- (g) sign a settlement agreement in the event that there is consensus on some or all of the issues in dispute.

(2) By agreeing to the mediation, the parties and the mediator acknowledge that they will not use any written or spoken remarks made by them or their representatives during the mediation proceedings to support or pursue defamation, libel, slander or related action.

## **16. Role of advocate in court annexed mediation**

An advocate participating in court annexed mediation shall –

- (a) adopt an advisory role while the party takes the lead role in mediation sessions;
- (b) ensure that the party he or she is representing respects the notices issued by the mediator and court;
- (c) ensure the appearance of the party at each mediation session;

- (d) explore with the party the available options so as to ensure a speedy conclusion of the mediation; and
- (e) co-operate and encourage the party to cooperate with the mediator and the other party during mediation sessions to ensure a speedy resolution of the dispute.

## PART V – APPELLATE MEDIATION

### **17. Appellate mediation**

(1) The parties to any civil appeal or application in any appellate court may voluntarily submit the dispute between or amongst them for mediation before the hearing of the matter or at any stage before delivery of judgement or ruling.

(2) Where a dispute is referred to mediation, the parties shall select for that purpose their choice of mediator, either from the listed of court accredited mediators or any other person of their choice.

(3) Where the parties fail to select a mediator, the registrar shall, in consultation with the parties, appoint a court accredited mediator.

(4) The mediator shall conduct mediation sessions in accordance with these Rules.

(5) Where the parties reach a settlement, the mediator shall prepare a mediation settlement agreement and have the parties sign the agreement.

(6) The mediation settlement agreement signed by the parties under subrule (5) shall be recorded in writing and filed with the court before being adopted as an order of the court.

(7) The court shall, before adopting a mediation agreement under subrule (6), review and confirm that the mediation agreement is lawful.

**18. Allocation of files for court annexed mediation**

(1) The registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation shall allocate files for mediation to a mediator appointed under rule 12.

(2) The registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation allocating a file under subrule (1) shall immediately notify the mediator and the parties about the allocation of the file for mediation.

(3) Where during the mediation process, a mediator withdraws from handling the mediation, the mediator shall notify the registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation and the parties.

(4) Where the mediator withdraws under subrule (3), a new mediator shall be appointed in accordance with rule 12.

**19. Notification of allocation of file**

(1) The registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation shall refer the matter to mediation by issuance of a notice of appointment of a mediator to the parties and the mediator.

(2) The notice referred to in subrule (1) shall be in Form 3 set out in Schedule 1 to these Rules.

**20. Commencement of mediation**

(1) Mediation proceedings shall be commenced as follows –

(a) a mediator to whom the file is referred for court annexed mediation under rule 19 shall issue a mediation notice to the parties or their advocates stating the date, time and venue of the mediation in Form 4 set out in Schedule 1 to these Rules; or

(b) the parties to whom a notice of allocation is issued under rule 19 shall contact the mediator within five days of receipt of the notice to commence mediation.

(2) The mediator shall, upon obtaining the consent of the parties to mediate, require them to sign a confidentiality and inadmissibility agreement in Form 5 set out in Schedule 1 to these Rules.

(3) The mediator shall commence the mediation and shall permit parties and their advocates, where a party is represented, to attend subsequent mediation sessions, either physically or virtually.

## **21. Participation in mediation sessions**

(1) A party to a mediation shall participate in mediation sessions personally or through an agent who is knowledgeable on the subject matter.

(2) Where a party appoints an agent under subrule (1), the party shall issue a letter of authorisation giving the agent authority to settle the matter.

(3) The format of the letter of authorisation referred to in subrule (2) shall be –

(a) in Form 6 set out in Schedule 1 to these Rules, in the case of a natural person; or

(b) in Form 7 set out in Schedule 1 to these Rules, in the case of a corporate entity, Ministry, department or agency of Government or partnership.

(4) A party may be represented or assisted during a court annexed mediation by an advocate or person of choice.

(5) The registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation shall communicate the name, address and function of an advocate or an agent to all parties and the mediator in advance.

(6) An advocate or another person accompanying a party to a court annexed mediation shall –

- (a) treat as confidential any information obtained orally or in writing in the course of mediation;
- (b) not use any electronic device to record the mediation sessions;
- (c) commit to observe the rules of engagement and statement of understanding; and
- (d) comply with the directions issued by the mediator.

(7) The parties shall be required to conduct themselves with utmost good faith during the court annexed mediation.

## **22. Service of process**

(1) The registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation shall serve mediation notices and other process upon a party or authorised representative through the address provided to the court at the time of filing of the case.

(2) The registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation shall effect service physically or electronically and file proof of service.

## **23. Mediation period**

The court annexed mediation process shall be concluded within sixty days from the date of referral of a matter to mediation upon consent of the parties.

## **24. Language**

In the absence of an agreement by the parties to the contrary, the language to be used in mediation shall be English.

**25. Responsible officer to bind Ministry, department, agency of Government or local government**

(1) The Attorney General or his or her representative shall support a Ministry, department or agency of Government or local government in mediation.

(2) Notwithstanding subrule (1), the responsible officer of a Ministry, department or agency of Government or local government may participate in mediation without the Attorney General however, any mediation settlement agreement to be entered into by the responsible officer must be approved by the Attorney General prior to signature.

(3) The responsible officer of a Ministry, department or agency of Government or local government shall, with the approval of the Attorney General, have the authority to bind the Ministry, department or agency of Government or local government in mediation.

**26. Representative of corporation, partnership, Ministry, department, agency of Government or local government**

(1) Where one of the parties is a corporation, partnership, Ministry, department or agency of Government or local government, an officer duly authorised to represent and bind that party shall attend each mediation session and, at the first mediation session, present the mediator with a written authorisation indicating that the officer has been authorised to enter into a binding settlement agreement on behalf of the corporation, partnership, Ministry, department or agency of Government or local government.

(2) The written authorisation referred to under subrule (1) shall be in Form 7 set out in Schedule 1 to these Rules.

**27. Adjournments**

(1) The mediator may adjourn a mediation session to another date for further mediation or for the performance of such other act as the mediator may direct.

(2) The mediator may adjourn a matter where a party fails to attend a mediation session.

(3) Where a mediation session has been adjourned under subrule (1) or (2), the mediator may issue a notice to the parties indicating the new date, time and venue for the mediation session and file a copy of this notice with the court.

## **28. Venue and time of conducting mediation**

(1) Mediation proceedings under these Rules shall be conducted in person at the court premises or virtually, or at such other place as the mediator shall, with the approval of the parties, determine.

(2) Where the venue of the mediation is at court the premises, the registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation shall allocate or arrange for a venue for the mediation session and communicate to the mediator.

(3) Where a mediation session is conducted at any other place outside the court premises, the mediator shall not charge any fees to the parties or the court.

(4) Where a physical mediation session is conducted outside the court premises under subrule (3), the mediator shall ensure its, convenience to the parties in terms of distance and expenses, neutrality and security.

## **29. Virtual proceedings**

(1) The mediator and the parties may agree to conduct the mediation virtually, and shall agree on the platform to be used.

(2) Mediation proceedings through virtual platforms shall be undertaken in accordance with these Rules and any other court Rules and Practice Directions for the time being governing the conduct of virtual court proceedings, insofar as the same are applicable and practicable.

(3) A mediation settlement agreement resulting from mediation proceedings where one or both parties are outside the country undertaken through a virtual platform shall be valid and capable of enforcement in the same manner as mediation settlement agreements resulting from mediation proceedings conducted in person or where the parties are in Uganda.

### **30. Confidentiality and inadmissibility**

(1) A person taking part in a mediation process under these Rules shall be required by the mediator to execute a confidentiality and inadmissibility agreement in Form 5 set out in Schedule 1 to these Rules and shall be bound by the terms of the agreement.

(2) In the absence of any agreement of the parties to the contrary and subject to any written law –

- (a) the proceedings, but not the fact that they are taking place, have taken place or will take place, are private and confidential;
- (b) any consent or mediation settlement agreement between the parties shall be kept confidential, except that a party shall have the right to disclose it to the extent that such disclosure is required by law or necessary for purposes of its implementation or enforcement;
- (c) a party shall not in any manner produce as evidence in any judicial, arbitral or similar proceedings information obtained during mediation;
- (d) any documents, statements or communications that are submitted by another party or by the mediator in or for the proceedings shall be confidential, unless they can be obtained independently by the party seeking to produce them in the judicial, arbitral or similar proceedings;

- (e) any views expressed or suggestions made by any party within the proceedings with regard to the dispute or the possible settlement of the dispute shall be confidential;
- (f) any admissions made by another party within the proceedings are confidential;
- (g) any views or proposals put forward by the mediator within the proceedings are confidential; and
- (h) the fact that any party indicated within the proceedings that it was ready to accept a proposal for a settlement is confidential.

(3) Any communication and information considered confidential under this rule, including the mediator's notes, shall be privileged and confidential and shall not be admissible in evidence in any ongoing or subsequent legal proceedings.

(4) Any person taking part in a mediation process shall maintain the confidentiality of any information obtained during the mediation and shall not disclose that information unless—

- (a) that person is required by law to disclose the information;  
or
- (b) the information relates to child abuse, child neglect, defilement, domestic violence, a sexual offence or any related criminal or illegal purpose.

(5) The court shall establish measures to guide the procedure for making and processing disclosures under subrule (4).

(6) Subject to subrule (4), the mediator or any person present or appearing at a mediation session may not be summoned, compelled or otherwise required to testify or to produce records or notes relating to the mediation in any proceedings before any court of law.

(7) A person who presents or appears at a mediation session, whether in person or through a virtual platform, shall not use any electronic device to record the mediation session unless the parties have agreed to the recording.

(8) A person shall only attend a mediation session with the consent of the parties and shall be bound by the rules of confidentiality set out in this rule, and shall sign the confidentiality and inadmissibility agreement at his or her first appearance.

(9) This rule shall not apply to any settlement agreement, decree or order arising from the mediation.

PART VII – CONCLUSION OF MEDIATION AND  
SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS

**31. Mediation settlement**

(1) Where the parties resolve some or all of the issues in a dispute, the mediator shall prepare a mediation settlement agreement.

(2) The mediation settlement agreement referred to in subrule (1) shall, with the necessary modifications, be made in Form 8 set out in Schedule 1 to these Rules, and shall be duly signed in triplicate by the parties, advocates of the parties or agent expressly authorised by the parties to bind the principal and the mediator.

(3) The mediator shall personally verify the consent of the parties to the terms of the mediation settlement agreement.

(4) The mediator shall file the mediation settlement agreement in court within seven days after the conclusion of the mediation and provide each party or advocate of the party or agent expressly authorised to bind the parties with a copy of the agreement.

(5) The mediation settlement agreement shall indicate pending issues, if any, which shall be forwarded to the court for hearing and

determination.

### **32. Adoption of mediation settlement agreement**

Upon receipt of the mediation settlement agreement signed by the parties and the mediator, the judicial officer shall, where he or she has reviewed and confirmed that the mediation agreement is lawful, adopt the mediation settlement agreement, by affixing his or her signature and the seal of the court.

### **33. Partial settlement of disputes in mediation**

(1) Where the parties reach a settlement on some of the issues to the dispute, the mediator shall prepare and file a partial mediation settlement agreement.

(2) A partial mediation settlement agreement shall, with necessary modifications, be in Form 9 set out in Schedule 1 to these Rules and concisely state the issues that the parties were able to agree upon and the issues that remain unresolved.

(3) A partial mediation settlement agreement shall, where the parties so request, indicate any specific directions or assistance that the parties would like the court to grant for the expeditious resolution of the remaining issues.

### **34. Report of mediator**

(1) The mediator shall submit to the registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation a duly signed and dated report within seven days of the conclusion of the mediation.

(2) The report referred to in subrule (1) shall be made in Form 10 set out in Schedule 1 to these Rules and shall indicate the outcome of the mediation.

### **35. Termination of mediation proceedings**

(1) A mediation proceeding shall terminate –

(a) upon the expiry of the period referred to in rule 23;

- (b) the filing of the mediator's report under rule 34; or
- (c) the notification in writing made to the mediator by a party indicating that he or she is no longer interested in pursuing mediation.

(2) The judicial officer shall, upon termination of mediation under subrule (1), refer any unresolved issue to court for determination.

### **36. Further mediation**

Upon conclusion of the mediation, the parties may, where a matter is referred to court under rule 35 (2) for determination, voluntarily and by mutual consent and with good reasons, where necessary, request court to refer the dispute for further mediation.

## PART VIII – RECOGNITION AND ENFORCEMENT

### **37. Enforcement of mediation settlement agreements**

(1) The mediation settlement agreement signed by the parties under these Rules shall be recorded in writing and filed with the court before being adopted as an order of the court.

(2) Upon the adoption of a mediation settlement agreement under these Rules, the court shall issue an order or decree stating the terms of the order or decree in accordance with the applicable court Rules.

(3) A decree and an order arising from the adoption of a mediation settlement agreement shall have the same force of law as any other order or decree of the court and shall be enforceable in accordance with the applicable court Rules on execution of court orders and decrees.

(4) A party who is aggrieved by the failure to implement an order or decree arising out of a settlement agreement may move the court for its execution as provided for under the relevant applicable law or apply for further orders or directions by the court.

**38. Setting aside an order or decree arising out of mediation settlement agreement**

(1) A party dissatisfied with an order or decree arising out of a mediation settlement agreement may apply to court that issued the order or decree to set aside an order or decree arising from a mediation settlement agreement.

(2) An application for setting aside an order or decree arising out of a mediation settlement agreement under subrule (1) shall be by notice of motion supported by an affidavit.

(3) An order or decree arising out of a mediation settlement agreement may be set aside on the following grounds –

- (a) fraud;
- (b) fundamental mistake;
- (c) misrepresentation;
- (d) collusion between the parties or between one party and the mediator;
- (e) illegality; or
- (f) misapprehension of a material fact by the mediator.

PART IX – MISCELLANEOUS

**39. Remuneration of mediators**

(1) A mediator shall be paid by court for each concluded case in accordance with guidelines issued by the Chief Justice.

(2) For the avoidance of doubt, the parties to a court annexed mediation shall not pay fees to a mediator for conducting mediation.

#### **40. Costs**

Each party to the court annexed mediation shall bear its own costs of participation in the mediation under these Rules, unless the parties agree otherwise.

#### **41. Revocation of S.I No.10 of 2013 and savings**

- (1) The Judicature (Mediation) Rules, 2013 are revoked.
- (2) Notwithstanding the revocation referred to in subrule (1) –
  - (a) a person who was accredited by the Chief Justice as mediator under the Rules revoked under subrule (1) and whose accreditation is still valid shall, subject to these Rules, continue as an a court accredited mediator as if accredited under these Rules.
  - (b) any mediation settlement agreement concluded by the parties in accordance with the Rules revoked under subrule (1) shall remain valid on the commencement of these Rules as if they were concluded under these Rules; and
  - (c) any mediation proceedings commenced before the commencement of these Rules and in accordance with the Rules revoked under subrule (1), shall continue as if commenced under these Rules.

**SCHEDULES**

**SCHEDULE 1**

**FORMS**

**FORM 1**

**APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION AND ACCREDITATION**

*Rule 7(1)*

To the Chief Justice,  
Through the Chief Registrar

I.....of .....apply for registration and accreditation as a court accredited mediator. I attached a copy of my Curriculum Vitae, academic and professional certificates.

Dated at ..... this ..... day of ..... 20.....

Signed .....  
Applicant

## FORM 2

### CONTENT OF MEDIATION SUMMARY

*Rule 15(1) (a)*

The mediation summary shall include the following –

- (a) the names of the parties;
- (b) the address of the parties including postal, telephone and email addresses;
- (c) the facts giving rise to the civil action and the defence to the facts;
- (d) the name and address of the advocate of the parties, if any;
- (e) the names of representatives of the parties, if any
- (f) the person with full authority to sign a settlement agreement;
- (g) the name of the person who will be the lead negotiator for each party;
- (h) the name of the proposed mediator, if any;
- (i) the documents that the parties intend to rely on at the mediation; and
- (j) any other useful information.

FORM 3

**NOTIFICATION OF REFERRAL OF FILE TO MEDIATION**

*Rule 19(2)*

**Plaintiff/Applicant/Petitioner**

**Versus**

**Defendant/Respondent**

To: Parties to case  
Address

Take notice that the above case has been referred for mediation before.....[*insert name of mediator and address*].

You are advised to contact the mediator and agree on a date to commence mediation.

Dated at .....this.....day of....., 20.....

Signed .....  
Registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation

Copy to:           The Parties' Advocates, if represented  
                          The Mediator

FORM 4

**NOTICE OF COMMENCEMENT OF MEDIATION**

*Rule 20(1) (a)*

**Plaintiff/Applicant/Petitioner**

**Versus**

**Defendant/Respondent**

To: Parties  
Advocates/Representatives/Agent

Following my appointment as a Mediator, I hereby issue this notice to commence the mediation.

The mediation session shall take place on the .....day of .....,  
20..... from..... in the forenoon/afternoon at .....(venue)

You must bring with you any documents that you consider important in the action. You shall be required to be present throughout the period during which the mediation session shall be conducted.

Where it is necessary to obtain someone else's permission or authorisation before entering into a settlement agreement, you shall be required to make arrangements in this regard before the mediation session to ensure that you have ready access to that person throughout the mediation session and outside regular business hours.

Please note that attendance at the mediation session is mandatory.

Dated this.....day of.....20.....

Signed .....

(Name, address, telephone number and email address of the mediator)

Copied to the registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation.

FORM 5

**CONFIDENTIALITY AND INADMISSIBILITY  
AGREEMENT Rule 20 (2) & 30 (1)**

**Plaintiff/Applicant/Petitioner**

**Versus**

**Defendant/Respondent**

I.....have been appointed to mediate your case. I shall serve as a neutral party to help you resolve your dispute. I shall not act as an advocate for any party. Each party agrees not to request that I the Mediator, testify against the other party, nor ask me nor any party to testify regarding the statements of the mediation. Each party taking part in this mediation agrees to have this matter mediated by me.

Each person taking part in this mediation process shall treat all information obtained orally or in written form by and about the parties in the mediation as confidential and shall not disclose that information unless the party is required by law to do so.

All information obtained during the mediation process shall be governed by this Confidentiality and Inadmissibility Agreement and shall not be admissible in court as evidence. No party shall be bound by anything said or done during this mediation unless a settlement is reached.

Please sign below to acknowledge that you agree to be bound by this Confidentiality and Inadmissibility Agreement. By signing below, you also agree to have your matter mediated by me and confirm that you have read and understood this statement and the mediation rules.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Plaintiff

\_\_\_\_\_  
Defendant

---

Plaintiff's advocate

---

Defendant's advocate

---

*Any other person*

*(Please indicate the capacity under which you are attending)*

---

*Mediator*

FORM 6

**LETTER OF AUTHORISATION BY NATURAL PERSON**

*Rule 21 (3) (a)*

To:  
The Mediator

**LETTER OF AUTHORISATION**  
(By natural person)

I.....of NIN No.....  
do hereby authorise.....of NIN No.....  
to act on my behalf in this mediation case and confer on him/her to  
execute a binding settlement agreement on my behalf.

Any and all acts carried out by..... on my behalf, within the  
scope of the power granted herein, shall have the same effect as acts  
of my own.

Dated this.....day of.....20.....

Signature.....  
(Authorising party)

Copy to: The registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed  
mediation

FORM 7

**LETTER OF AUTHORISATION BY COMPANY,  
PARTNERSHIP, GOVERNMENT, MINISTRY, DEPARTMENT,  
AGENCY OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

*Rules 21(3) (b) and 26(2)*

To:  
The Mediator

**LETTER OF AUTHORISATION  
(By Company/ Partnership /Ministry /Department/Agency of  
Government/Local Government)**

I.....do hereby authorise.....(authorised officer) to act on behalf of.....(Company/Partnership /Ministry /Department/Agency of Government/Local Government) in all issues in relation to this mediation matter, including executing a binding settlement agreement.

If you have any questions regarding the authorisation, please contact the undersigned.

Dated at.....this.....day of.....20.....

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
(Authorising officer)

Copy to: The Registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation.

**FORM 8**

**SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT**

*Rule 31(2)*

**Plaintiff/ Applicant /Petitioner**

**Versus**

**Defendant/ Respondent**

We, the undersigned parties in this matter, have agreed to settle our dispute/differences as follows:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Dated and signed this.....day.....20....

.....  
Plaintiff/Applicant/Petitioner

.....  
Plaintiff's/Applicant's/Petitioner's  
advocate

.....  
Defendant/Respondent

.....  
Defendant's/Respondent's advocate

.....  
Mediator



FORM 10

**REPORT OF MEDIATOR**

*Rule 34(2)*

**Plaintiff/Applicant/Petitioner**

**Versus**

**Defendant/Respondent**

The Judicial Officer

I ....., having been appointed as the Mediator in this matter, and having conducted the mediation between the parties, do hereby report that the parties have reached a full settlement/reached a partial settlement/not reached a settlement (*delete as appropriate*).

Dated at.....this.....day of.....20.....

.....

Mediator

## SCHEDULE 2

# CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEDIATORS PARTICIPATING IN COURT ANNEXED MEDIATION

*Rule 9*

### TABLE OF CONTENT

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10. Enforcement of Code of Conduct
11. Disciplinary procedure

### **1. Objectives of Code of Conduct**

- (1) The objectives of this Code are –
  - (a) to guide mediators in ensuring that they uphold the highest professional and ethical conduct of mediation at all times;
  - (b) to support the expeditious and effective resolution of disputes through mediation;
  - (c) to serve as a guide for mediators as they engage with parties, their advocates and the courts in order to ensure that mediation is carried out in a fair, courteous and transparent manner;

- (d) to provide guiding principles for the conduct of mediators;
- (e) to provide protection for members of the public and promote public trust and confidence in mediation as a form of alternative dispute resolution mechanism;
- (f) to ensure consistency, efficiency and quality delivery in mediation processes; and
- (g) to set out appropriate disciplinary and sanction criteria for inappropriate conduct of mediator.

(2) This Code of Conduct establishes the minimum ethical standards for conduct of mediators applicable across all practice styles and contexts, whether conducted in person or online.

(3) All mediators participating in court annexed mediation shall adhere to this Code of Conduct in a way that upholds the principles of natural justice, equity and respect for human rights.

## **2. Interpretation**

In this Code of Conduct, unless the context otherwise requires –

“Code of Conduct” means the Code of Conduct for Mediators;

“impartiality” means freedom from manifestations of favoritism or bias toward one party over another in word, action or omission; and the appearance of favoritism in the eyes of a reasonable person;

“online mediation” means a mediation conducted by a mediator virtually with use of information technology, including video conferencing.

## **3. Application**

This Code of Conduct shall apply to all mediators participating in court annexed mediation.

#### **4. Guiding principles**

##### **(1) *Self-determination***

- (a) A mediator shall conduct the mediation process in accordance with the principle of party self-determination, ensuring that all participating parties possess the legal capacity to engage, make informed decisions and act voluntarily, free from any form of coercion or undue influence.
- (b) Self-determination is the right of the parties in mediation to make their own voluntary, non-coerced decision regarding the possible resolution of any issue in dispute which decision is made without any improper influence. In online mediation, it also includes the ability to use the relevant communication technology.
- (c) A mediator shall not undermine any party's self-determination for reasons such as higher or lower settlement rates. Mediators shall provide information about their role in mediation before commencing mediation; including the fact that the authority for decision making rests with the parties and not with the mediator.
- (d) A mediator shall not provide legal or technical advice to the parties.
- (e) A mediator shall have the responsibility to advise unrepresented parties to obtain independent legal advice, where appropriate. Mediators shall also advise the parties of the need to consult other professionals to help them make informed decisions.

##### **(2) *Impartiality***

- (a) A mediator shall not accept an appointment without first disclosing anything within his or her knowledge that may,

or may be seen to, materially affect his or her independence, neutrality or impartiality. This duty to disclose is a continuing obligation throughout the mediation process.

- (b) A mediator shall serve in matters where he or she can remain impartial throughout the process.
- (c) The existence of circumstances potentially affecting, or appearing to affect, a mediator's independence, neutrality or impartiality will not automatically imply unfitness to act as a mediator, provided that these circumstances have been fully disclosed and addressed to the satisfaction of the parties and the mediator.
- (d) Where a mediator becomes aware of his or her lack of impartiality, he or she shall immediately disclose to the parties that he or she can no longer remain impartial and shall withdraw from the mediation.
- (e) A mediator shall not act with partiality or prejudice based on any participant's status, profession, personal characteristics, background, values and beliefs or performance at a mediation or any other reason.
- (f) A mediator shall neither give nor accept a gift, favor, loan or other item of value that raises a question as to his or her actual or perceived impartiality.

### ***(3) Conflict of interest***

- (a) A mediator shall not mediate cases where he or she has personal, professional or financial interest in the outcome of the dispute.
- (b) A mediator shall make a reasonable inquiry to determine whether there exist any facts that a reasonable person would consider likely to create a potential or actual conflict of interest for a mediator.

- (c) A mediator shall disclose, as soon as practicable, all actual and potential conflict of interest that are reasonably known to him or her and which could reasonably be seen as raising a question about his or her impartiality.
- (d) Following any such disclosures, a mediator shall decline to participate as a mediator in a particular case, if any of the parties raises an objection, unless the mediator considers the objection to be baseless.
- (e) After appropriate disclosure, the mediator may mediate the matter if all parties agree. However, if the conflict of interest clearly impairs his or her impartiality, the mediator shall withdraw regardless of the express agreement of the parties.
- (f) A mediator shall not create a conflict of interest during the mediation. During mediation, a mediator shall not provide any services that are not directly related to the mediation process. Information that the mediator shall disclose includes –
  - (i) having acted in any capacity for any of the parties before;
  - (ii) the mediator’s firm, if applicable, having acted in any capacity for any of the parties;
  - (iii) having any financial or other interest, whether direct or indirect, in any of the parties or in the subject matter or outcome of the mediation; or
  - (iv) having any confidential information about any of the parties or in the subject matter of the mediation.

**(4) Professional relationship**

A mediator shall not establish a professional relationship with any of the parties in the matter related to the mediation which could give rise to a conflict of interest.

**(5) Commitment**

- (a) A mediator's commitment is to the parties and the process and he or she shall not allow to be influenced by any third party to compromise his or her independence.
- (b) The mediator shall remind the parties before commencement of the mediation that his or her fees shall be paid by the Judiciary and not by the parties.

**(6) Nondisclosure and confidentiality**

- (a) Mediation being confidential in nature, a mediator shall at all times, treat all information regarding mediation as confidential and shall not disclose any matter which a party requires to be kept confidential, except in the following circumstances –
  - (i) when the mediating parties consent;
  - (ii) where ordered to do so by court or required to do so by law;
  - (iii) in circumstances as envisaged under the Judicature (Court Annexed Mediation) Rules, 2026;
  - (iv) where the information or documentation discloses an actual or potential threat, danger to human life or safety of either party or any person, if the information in question is not disclosed;
  - (v) where the information or documentation is necessary to defend the mediator from any proceedings or charges for which he or she risks incurring liability;

- (vi) for the purposes of preparing any report or summary that is required to be prepared by the mediator under the Judicature (Court Annexed Mediation) Rules, 2026; or
  - (vii) when the information comes into public domain otherwise than as a result of a disclosure by the mediator.
- (b) A mediator shall inform the parties of the confidential nature of the mediation process.
  - (c) A mediator shall not communicate to any non-participant information about how the parties acted in the mediation. A mediator shall report whether the parties appeared at a scheduled mediation and whether or not the parties reached a resolution.
  - (d) In an online mediation, a mediator shall discuss with the parties the risks to privacy and confidentiality in using online communication, establish who is allowed to be present in the room and confirm that no one is recording the mediation proceedings.
- (7) *Public standing of the profession and process***
- (a) A mediator shall exercise his or her roles in a manner that maintains the standing of and public trust in the profession and process. Maintaining the standing of the profession and process involves refraining from conduct that might devalue the public's perception of mediation and the profession, or diminish the willingness of the public to use mediation.
  - (b) A mediator shall exercise the mediator's role and discharge the mediator's duties in a manner worthy of the public's trust in the mediation process and profession.

**(8) *Fairness***

- (a) A mediator shall perform his or her role impartially and uphold a fair process throughout mediation.
- (b) In this Code of Conduct, fairness means adhering to the standards and interpreting them in line with their intended spirit and purpose. This approach emphasises a practical, substantive and contextual understanding of the standards and their impact on the parties, rather than a strictly formal or literal interpretation.

**(9) *Information to parties***

Before mediation commences, a mediator shall inform the parties –

- (a) about his or her relevant background and experience;
- (b) about the Code of Conduct the mediator will observe;
- (c) about the process that will apply in the unlikely event of a party believing the mediator has not met the standards of the Code of Conduct; and
- (d) that at the end of the process, they will be invited to offer written feedback on the process and on the mediator's role.

**(10) *Availability***

- (a) Before accepting an appointment to mediate in respect of a specific matter that has been referred to a mediator, the mediator must be satisfied that he or she has time and attention essential to ensure that the mediation can proceed in an expeditious manner.
- (b) A mediator must notify the registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation of his or her absence in case he or she will or is likely to be away for an extended period of time that warrants non-allocation of court cases.

***(11) Quality of process***

- (a) A mediator shall conduct mediation in accordance with this Code of Conduct and in a manner that promotes diligence, timeliness, and safety, presence of the appropriate participants, party participation, procedural fairness, party competency and mutual respect among all participants.
- (b) A mediator shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that the parties understand the mediation process before mediation commences.
- (c) A mediator shall ensure that he or she conducts a process which provides the parties with the opportunity to participate in the mediation and which encourages respect among the parties.
- (d) A mediator shall inform the parties to a dispute that mediation is only effective when the parties with full authority to settle are in attendance and when they are willing to consider options for their settlement.
- (e) A mediator shall acquire and maintain professional skills and abilities required to uphold the quality of the mediation process.
- (f) A mediator shall promote honesty and openness between and among all participants and shall not intentionally or knowingly misrepresent any material fact or circumstance in the course of conducting mediation.
- (g) If for any reason a party exercises self-determination, a mediator shall cancel or postpone the mediation.
- (h) A mediator shall neither give nor accept a gift or favor, loan or other item of value in any mediation process. During the mediation process, a mediator shall not solicit or otherwise

attempt to procure future professional services or accept any offers made for such services.

- (i) A mediator shall be patient, dignified and courteous during the mediation process.
- (j) A mediator shall not accept any engagement, provide any service or perform any act that would compromise his or her integrity or impartiality.
- (k) A mediator shall not conduct a dispute resolution procedure which is not mediation, but knowingly label it as a mediation process in an effort to mislead and gain the protection of rules, statutes or other governing authorities pertaining to court annexed mediation.
- (l) If mediation is being used to further criminal conduct, a mediator shall take appropriate steps including, filing a report seeking further directions from the court.

**(12) Advertising**

- (a) A mediator shall refrain from guaranteeing settlement or promising specific results.
- (b) A mediator shall provide accurate information about his or her educational background, mediation training and experience, and other alternative dispute resolution skills to the court and the parties if requested or required to do so.
- (c) A mediator shall not engage in misleading or deceptive publicity or advertising.
- (d) A mediator shall not make any false or misleading statement including statements or claims as to the mediation process, its costs and benefits or the mediator's role, skills, or competence.

- (e) A mediator shall not solicit in a manner that gives an appearance of partiality for or against a party or otherwise undermines the integrity of the process.
- (f) A mediator shall not communicate to others, in promotional materials or through other forms of communication, the names of persons served without their permission.
- (g) A mediator shall not knowingly put up misleading advertisements concerning the nature of his work, qualifications or his or her ability and skills to perform a particular task.

**(13) *Agreement to mediate***

- (a) A mediator shall ensure that before the mediation commences, the parties understand the terms of mediation, whether or not they are contained in a court order, written agreement or contract to mediate, which terms shall include –
  - (i) confidentiality of communications and documents;
  - (ii) the right of the mediator and parties to terminate or suspend mediation; and
  - (iii) the fact that the mediator shall not be compellable as a witness in court or other proceedings by any parties to the mediation.
- (b) The mediator shall act in accordance with the court order, direction or agreement, whether written or oral, made between the parties in relation to the mediation.

**5. Termination or suspension of mediation**

(1) The mediator shall withdraw from the mediation if he or she is in breach of this Code of Conduct or is required by the parties to do something which would constitute a material breach of this Code of Conduct.

(2) A mediator may suspend or terminate the mediation if the mediator considers that –

- (a) the process is likely to prejudice one or more of the parties;
- (b) one or more of the parties is using the process inappropriately;
- (c) one or more of the parties is delaying the process to the detriment of another party or parties;
- (d) the mediation process is detrimental to one or more of the parties or the mediator;
- (e) it appears that a party is not acting in good faith; or
- (f) there are other reasons that are or appear to be counterproductive to the process.

(3) A mediator shall communicate to the parties requiring them to remedy the issue in question under paragraph (2) (c) and resume the mediation once the issue is resolved and the suspension is no longer necessary.

(4) The mediator shall seek directions from the registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation where the issue is unresolved before withdrawing from the mediation.

(5) A mediator may, in accordance with the Judicature (Court Annexed Mediation) Rules, 2026, withdraw from the mediation where –

- (a) any of the parties is acting in breach of a court order, direction or the agreement to mediate;
- (b) in the mediator’s opinion, any of the parties is acting in an unconscionable or criminal manner;

- (c) the mediator decides that continuing the mediation is unlikely to result in a settlement; or
- (d) any of the parties alleges that the mediator is in material breach of this Code of Conduct.

## **6. Mediator competence**

(1) A mediator shall mediate only where he or she has the necessary competence to satisfy the reasonable expectations of the parties.

(2) The basic competency required of a mediator includes, familiarity with the mediation process, knowledge and skills, based on the training and experience necessary for effectively assisting parties to communicate, negotiate and make voluntary decisions.

(3) A mediator shall decline an appointment, withdraw or request appropriate assistance where the facts and circumstances of the case are beyond his or her skill or experience.

(4) If a mediator during the course of a mediation determines that he or she cannot conduct the mediation competently, he or she shall discuss that determination with the parties as soon as is practicable and take appropriate steps to address the situation, including, withdrawing or requesting for appropriate assistance.

(5) If a mediator's ability to conduct a mediation is impaired by substance abuse, drugs, alcohol, medication or otherwise, the mediator shall not conduct the mediation.

## **7. Application of other ethical standards**

Nothing in this Code of Conduct replaces, alienates or absolves the mediator from complying with any ethical standards and codes which may be imposed upon such mediator by virtue of his or her professional membership or calling.

## **8. Availability and dedication**

On accepting an appointment, a mediator shall –

- (a) ensure his or her availability for hearings and deliberations;
- (b) not allow any other engagement to affect his or her participation in the case; and
- (c) consult with the parties in advance, where his or her absence is required under exceptional circumstances.

## **9. Observing timelines**

(1) The mediator shall ensure that the mediation process is conducted and concluded within the timelines specified in the Judicature (Court Annexed Mediation) Rules, 2026.

(2) The mediator shall inform the registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation of any adjournment and shall not fix a date for mediation or further mediation without prior consultation with the court.

## **10. Enforcement of Code of Conduct**

(1) This Code of Conduct shall be enforced by the Chief Justice.

(2) A mediator shall avoid breach of this Code of Conduct and shall take all necessary endeavors to support those who seek to uphold the Code of Conduct and report immediately any unethical decisions or practices by a mediator.

(3) A mediator who breaches this Code of Conduct shall be deemed to have committed a professional misconduct and shall be dealt with in the manner provided under this Code of Conduct.

(4) When a mediator knows of an ethical violation by another mediator and it seems appropriate, he or she shall informally attempt

to resolve the issue by bringing such behavior to the attention of that mediator. If the conduct is of a minor nature or one borne out of sheer lack of knowledge or experience, such an informal resolution shall be deemed appropriate. If the violation does not seem amenable to an informal resolution and is of a more serious nature, the mediator shall bring the violation to the attention of the registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation for resolution.

(5) A complaint against a mediator may relate to the conduct of that mediator before, during or after a mediation, a violation of this Code Conduct, the set standards or Rules applicable to the mediator or any other relevant matter. The complaint may originate from a member of the public, a party to a mediation, a fellow mediator or any other interested party.

## **11. Disciplinary procedure**

(1) Subject to paragraph 11, the procedure to be followed in addressing a specific complaint shall entirely be within the discretion of the Chief Justice.

(2) The Chief Justice shall be assisted by the Chief Registrar to initiate and deal with such disciplinary process including removal, suspension or any other disciplinary measure acceptable in mediation practice and shall provide access to such disciplinary process through correspondence, exchange of documents or personal attendance. The decision will be made in a procedurally fair manner.

(3) A complaint shall be reported to the registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation as soon as possible and shall be in written or recorded format either via letter, memo, email, text message, telegraphy, photograph, video recording or voice recording.

(4) Where a complaint is made orally or via phone call, the complainant shall be required to soon thereafter reduce his or her complaint into written or recorded format.

(5) A complaint may be reported anonymously. Where an anonymous complaint is reported, the registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation shall decide the weight to be placed on such complaint, the mode of processing the complaint and the nature of sanctions, if any, that may be imposed out should that complaint be found merited.

(6) Every complaint shall be accompanied by all supporting documents or evidence, if any. Where the complaint is not accompanied by supporting documents or evidence, the complainant shall be required to submit such documents or evidence as may be required by the registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation within three days of the request.

(7) The registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation shall open a general file for purposes of serialising and recording every complaint received.

(8) Upon receipt of a complaint, the registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation shall acknowledge receipt and shall conduct a preliminary review for purposes of ascertaining its viability. Upon such preliminary review, the registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation shall either admit or summarily reject the complaint on account that it lacks merit, or that there is a pending court case on the subject matter or for any other reason as he or she may determine.

(9) Where a complaint is summarily rejected, the registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation shall communicate the outcome to the complainant and close the entry of the complaint in the general file.

(10) Where a complaint is admitted, by the registrar or magistrate in charge of court annexed mediation shall consider and resolve the complaint within seven days from the date of admission.

## **Cross Reference**

Judiciary (Establishment of Committees) Regulations, 2023

**FLAVIAN ZEIJA (PhD),**  
*Chairperson Rules Committee.*

