

**Adjustments to Arrangements about Jury Proceedings
and District Court Registry and Accounts Office from 17 August 2020**
(position as at 12 August 2020)

(I) Additional Adjustments to Arrangements

The Judiciary announced on 12 August (Wed) the following additional adjustments to the arrangements for court business from 17 August (Mon) having regard to the latest public health situation and operational experience with reduced capacity. All other arrangements as set out in the notifications for stakeholders issued on 21 and 28 July remain valid. A consolidated update of the arrangements is at Annex.

(II) Jury Proceedings and Death Inquests involving Juries

2. Jury trials and death inquests involving juries scheduled to commence between 17 August to 30 September will be adjourned, unless the parties have been notified that the case will proceed as scheduled.

(III) District Court Registry and Accounts Office

3. To compress people flow, the Judiciary has reduced staffing capacity and shortened the operating hours for registries and accounts offices. While the situation is generally manageable at most levels of court, there are long queues in the morning at the District Court for obtaining tickets for registry business. Many court users with tickets tend to come to the registry and accounts office for actual services in late afternoons, resulting in large crowds of people gathering at the registry area. This apparently goes against the social distancing objective.

4. With bunching of registry users in the late afternoon, a significant number of transactions cannot be completed before the close of the registry and accounts office at 5:00 pm. This is operationally undesirable.

5. Taking into account the above problems, the space constraints of the Wanchai Law Courts Building (“WLCB”) and the limited capacity of the District Court registry and accounts office, the Judiciary has decided to replace the existing ticketing arrangement with a new crowd management approach. Specifically, starting from 17 August :

- (a) the ticket system will be suspended. Court users will be required to go directly to the registry and accounts office on 6/F for services;
- (b) there will be crowd control at the registry and accounts office and social distancing requirements at the registry and accounts office throughout the opening hours;
- (c) a queuing arrangement at the designated area on the Ground Floor of the WLCB and/or a special lift control arrangement for accessing 6/F will be put in place where necessary; and
- (d) services will **not** be provided to court users who arrive at the registry or accounts office after **4:30 pm**.

6. **The above new crowd control arrangements require full co-operation of court users, particularly law firms. The Judiciary appeals to all court users to avoid coming to the registry and accounts office at peak hours such as late mornings and late afternoons.**

7. The Judiciary will closely monitor the situation and, if necessary, will make further refinements to the above arrangements.

**Judiciary Administration
12 August 2020**

Annex

Consolidated Update of the Detailed Arrangements for Court Business (as at 12 August 2020)

(I) Court Proceedings	Effective date
➤ Court hearings proceed as scheduled unless directed otherwise by the court. Parties will be given specific directions by the court should there be any changes.	22 July onwards
➤ For civil proceedings at the High Court, the District Court and the Family Court, presiding Judges or Judicial Officers may in suitable cases direct parties to conduct remote hearings (using video-conferencing facilities or phones) and/or dispose of the proceedings on paper. If such alternative forms are not suitable, the proceedings may have to be re-fixed to a much later date.	
➤ Subject to the court's directions, the sitting hours may be changed to 9:00am to 1:00pm in the morning and 2:30pm to 5:30pm in the afternoon.	
➤ New jury trials and death inquests involving juries scheduled to commence between 3 to 14 August are re-listed.	3 to 14 August
➤ Jury trials and death inquests involving juries scheduled to commence between 17 August to 30 September will be adjourned, unless the parties have been notified that the case will proceed as scheduled.	17 August to 30 September

(II) Registries and Accounts Offices	Effective date
➤ The capacity of the registry and accounts services at all levels of court is generally reduced. The operating hours are reduced, i.e. from 8:45am to 12:30pm and from 2:00pm to 5:00pm (Monday to Friday, except public holidays).	30 July onwards

(II) Registries and Accounts Offices	Effective date
<u>Registries and Accounts Offices in High Court, Family Court and Lands Tribunal</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The registry area of the High Court is expanded to LG4 of the High Court Building (“HCB”). A ticketing system has been adopted for court users of the High Court Registry and the Probate Registry. Court users are required to line up in different queues at designated areas on LG4/F podium of the HCB for tickets. ➤ A ticketing system has been adopted for court users of the Family Court Registry. Court users are required to line up in different queues at designated areas on G/F of the Wanchai Law Courts Building (“WLCB”) for tickets. ➤ A ticketing system has been adopted for court users of the Lands Tribunal Registry. Court users are required to line up at designated areas of the Lands Tribunal for tickets. ➤ Information on ticketing is provided at the relevant registries and building entrance(s) as well as on the Judiciary website. Only when it is their turn to be served will ticket holders be allowed entry to the relevant registries. 	22 July onwards
<u>Registry/Accounts Office in District Court</u> <p><i>From 22 July to 14 August</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A ticketing system continues to be adopted for court users of the District Court Registry. Court users are required to line up at designated areas on G/F of the WLCB for tickets. <p><i>From 17 August onwards</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The ticketing system will be suspended. Court users will be required to go directly to the registry and accounts office on 6/F of the WLCB for services. ➤ There will be crowd control at the registry and accounts office and social distancing requirements at the registry and accounts office throughout the opening hours. 	22 July to 14 August 17 August onwards

(II) Registries and Accounts Offices	Effective date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A queuing arrangement at the designated area on G/F of the WLCB and/or a special lift control arrangement for accessing 6/F will be put in place where necessary. ➤ Services will not be provided to court users who arrive at the registry or accounts office after 4:30 pm. 	17 August onwards

(III) Other Offices of the Judiciary	Effective date														
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Canteen in the HCB and the Tuck Shop in the West Kowloon Law Courts Building remain closed. 	Effective until further notice														
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Resource Centre for Unrepresented Litigants at the HCB has been relocated to LG4/F and enquiry service is suspended. 	22 July onwards														
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The other offices that provide support services to court users and the public have reduced their operating hours as set out below: 	30 July onwards														
<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="323 1174 654 1205">Offices/Public Counters</th> <th data-bbox="829 1174 1204 1205">Adjusted Operating Hours</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="208 1248 780 1311">Court Language Section's Certification Counter in WLCB</td> <td data-bbox="894 1248 1171 1311">8:45 am to 12:30 pm 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="208 1353 780 1417">Bailiff Offices' Public Counters at various court premises</td> <td data-bbox="894 1353 1171 1417">8:45 am to 12:30 pm 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="208 1459 714 1501">Integrated Mediation Office in WLCB</td> <td data-bbox="894 1459 1171 1522">9:00 am to 12:30 pm 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="208 1564 470 1607">High Court Library</td> <td data-bbox="894 1564 1171 1628">8:45 am to 12:30 pm 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="208 1670 780 1733">Resource Centre for Unrepresented Litigants at HCB</td> <td data-bbox="894 1670 1171 1733">8:45 am to 12:30 pm 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="208 1776 747 1839">Building Management Mediation Co-ordinator's Office in Lands Tribunal</td> <td data-bbox="894 1776 1171 1839">9:00 am to 12:30 pm 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Offices/Public Counters	Adjusted Operating Hours	Court Language Section's Certification Counter in WLCB	8:45 am to 12:30 pm 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm	Bailiff Offices' Public Counters at various court premises	8:45 am to 12:30 pm 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm	Integrated Mediation Office in WLCB	9:00 am to 12:30 pm 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm	High Court Library	8:45 am to 12:30 pm 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm	Resource Centre for Unrepresented Litigants at HCB	8:45 am to 12:30 pm 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm	Building Management Mediation Co-ordinator's Office in Lands Tribunal	9:00 am to 12:30 pm 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm	
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(III) Other Offices of the Judiciary	Effective date
Small Claims Tribunal Information Centre 8:45 am to 12:30 pm 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm	30 July onwards
Complaints Office at HCB 8:45 am to 12:30 pm 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm	
➤ The counter service of the Complaints Office is suspended.	