

**NOTICE**  
**SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE**  
**FURTHER UPDATED EMERGENCY DIRECTIONS**  
**COVID-19 PANDEMIC**  
**APRIL 23, 2020**

1. These Directions, in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, are in addition to the Supreme Court of Judicature Practice Directions COVID-19 Emergency Directions Gazetted on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2020 and updated by Notices on 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2020 and 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2020.
2. The following measures outlined herein will take immediate effect and shall last for one month (the one-month period), unless revoked or extended by notice after an assessment of the prevailing public health circumstances.

**COURT SITTINGS**

3. All 'in person' hearings shall continue to be suspended during the one-month period.
4. Sittings of the courts shall continue to be conducted remotely.
5. Court shall include any place, whether or not at a designated court house, where a Judge or Magistrate elects to sit to conduct the business of the court.
6. All time sensitive filings pursuant to Rules of Court or Orders of Court are suspended during the one-month period.
7. Affidavits in support of applications must be sworn to and subscribed as required by law. Exhibits to affidavits must be similarly marked as required.

**STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS**

8. Where a matter is due to become statute barred under the Limitation Act, Chapter 7:02 or any other legislation during the one-month period when the Emergency Directions are in force, it may be filed by electronic means notwithstanding it is not urgent. The matter must be accompanied with an affidavit explaining the circumstances.

## **COURT OF APPEAL**

9. All Chamber matters and Full Bench sittings of the Court of Appeal are further suspended for the one-month period subject to the directions of the Judge or the Court.

10. Hearing of urgent applications by the Court will be conducted remotely.

## **HIGH COURT**

### **Civil Trials**

11. Subject to the decision of the hearing Judge, all pending civil matters in the High Courts in Essequibo, Demerara and Berbice are further suspended for the one-month period.

12. Sittings will resume after the one-month period but will be subject to an assessment of the prevailing public health conditions.

### **Criminal Trials**

13. The opening of the Demerara Criminal Assizes for the April Session is further postponed for the one-month period.

14. The Berbice and Essequibo Criminal Assizes are further suspended for the one-month period.

15. After the one-month period has ended, the reopening of sessions will be reviewed on the basis of the prevailing public health guidelines.

## **SUPREME COURT REGISTRIES**

16. The Registries at the Supreme Court Registry in Georgetown, Demerara, and the Sub-registries at New Amsterdam, Berbice and Suddie, Essequibo remain in operation but the counter and 'in person' services continue to be suspended until Friday, May 22, 2020. Unless otherwise advised, these registries will reopen to the public on Monday, May 25, 2020.

17. Filing of urgent matters, or of pleadings for the Court of Appeal and High Courts as directed by the Court, until May 24, 2020, must be done by email in accordance with paragraphs 30 – 33 of the Emergency Practice Directions to the following email addresses:

- a. Judicial Registry, High Court, Georgetown, Demerara – [supremecourtguyana@gmail.com](mailto:supremecourtguyana@gmail.com)
- b. Sub-Registry, New Amsterdam, Berbice High Court - [subregistryberbice@gmail.com](mailto:subregistryberbice@gmail.com)
- c. Sub-Registry, Suddie, Essequibo High Court – [subregessequibo@gmail.com](mailto:subregessequibo@gmail.com)

- d. Family Court Registry, High Court, Georgetown – [registryfamilycourt@gmail.com](mailto:registryfamilycourt@gmail.com)
- e. Land Court, High Court, Georgetown - [landcourty@yahoo.com](mailto:landcourty@yahoo.com)
- f. Probate Registry, High Court, Georgetown – [probatereregistrygy@gmail.com](mailto:probatereregistrygy@gmail.com)

**18.** Where urgent matters are required to be filed under these Directions, litigants and/or attorneys-at-law must file an undertaking to present hard copies of their documents and pay the requisite filing fees on a date, as directed by the Registry, which shall be on or after May 25, 2020.

**19.** Registry staff are working remotely to provide services to attorneys-at-law, litigants and other court users.

**MAGISTRATES’ COURTS**

**Operation of the Magistrates’ Courts Offices during the period May 4 – May 22, 2020**

**20.** Sittings of the Magistrates Courts will continue to be by electronic means – Zoom, Skype or Whatsapp Video and teleconferencing.

**21.** Magistrates’ courts offices will be open to the public on the following days from 8.30 am to 12.30 pm.

DISTRICT	DAYS	Telephone #
Georgetown Magisterial District GMC Diamond/Golden Grove	Mondays & Thursdays Mondays & Wednesdays	225-9110 216-0483
Berbice Magisterial District New Amsterdam	Tuesdays & Thursdays	333-2834
Corentyne Magisterial District Whim	Mondays & Thursdays	337-2679 337-2648
West Berbice Magisterial District Fort Wellington	Mondays & Wednesdays	232-0600 232-0512
East Demerara Magisterial District Vigilance	Mondays & Fridays	274-0690
West Demerara Magisterial District Vreed-en-hoop	Mondays & Thursdays	264-2359
Upper Demerara River Magisterial District Linden	Mondays & Fridays	442-1402
Essequibo Magisterial District Suddie	Mondays & Fridays	774-4312 774-4373

Rupununi Magisterial District Lethem	Mondays & Thursdays	772-2334
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22. Filing of all urgent matters must be on the dates the court offices are open.
23. Where urgent matters are required to be filed on the days when the court offices are not open, contact can be made with the Clerks of Court for the relevant magisterial districts for the matters to be filed.
24. **Contact can be made to the Clerks of Court at the following addresses:**
1. **Georgetown Magisterial District**  
Georgetown Magistrates Court – [magisdistrofficegeorgetown@gmail.com](mailto:magisdistrofficegeorgetown@gmail.com)  
Diamond/Golden Grove -[magisdistrofficediamondgrove@gmail.com](mailto:magisdistrofficediamondgrove@gmail.com)
  2. **Berbice Magisterial District**  
New Amsterdam – [magisdistrofficenewamsterdam@gmail.com](mailto:magisdistrofficenewamsterdam@gmail.com)
  3. **Corentyne Magisterial District**  
Whim - [magisdistrofficewhim@gmail.com](mailto:magisdistrofficewhim@gmail.com)
  4. **West Berbice Magisterial District**  
Fort Wellington – [magisdistrofficefortwellington@gmail.com](mailto:magisdistrofficefortwellington@gmail.com)
  5. **East Demerara Magisterial District**  
Vigilance – [magisdistrofficevigilance@gmail.com](mailto:magisdistrofficevigilance@gmail.com)
  6. **West Demerara Magisterial District**  
Vreed-en-hoop – [magisdistrofficevreedenhoop@gmail.com](mailto:magisdistrofficevreedenhoop@gmail.com)
  7. **Upper Demerara River Magisterial District**  
Linden – [magisdistrofficelinden@gmail.com](mailto:magisdistrofficelinden@gmail.com)
  8. **Essequibo Magisterial District**  
Suddie – [magisdistrofficesuddie@gmail.com](mailto:magisdistrofficesuddie@gmail.com)
  9. **Rupununi Magisterial District**  
Lethem – [magisdistrofficelethem@gmail.com](mailto:magisdistrofficelethem@gmail.com)
25. Notices with contact information can also be found at each magistrates' courts' district office.

### **URGENT MATTERS AND APPLICATIONS**

26. The following matters are deemed to be urgent for purposes of applications pursuant to the Practice Direction No. 1 of 2020 – Covid 19 Emergency Directions:
- ❖ Custody Applications
  - ❖ Domestic Violence and related matters
  - ❖ Maintenance Applications

- ❖ Habeas Corpus Applications
- ❖ Public Health Ordinance, Cap. 145
- ❖ Applications for extension of time to detain persons
- ❖ Matters related to the National and Regional Elections
- ❖ Matters under the Interception of Communications Act, Cap 47:03
- ❖ Curfew and related matters

27. Notwithstanding the above list of urgent matters, all guilty pleas for traffic cases and new charges will be facilitated.

### **REVIEW AND CONTACT INFORMATION**

28. These directions may be altered, where necessary, after periodic review and assessment of the evolving COVID-19 pandemic.

29. For clarifications, queries or additional information on sittings of the courts, contact can be made by telephone to:

- a) the Registrar of the Supreme Court – 227 -1223
- b) the Clerk to the Honourable Chancellor – 225-7383
- c) the Principal Clerk of Court – 225-9127

OR by email to:

- ❖ Registrar of the Supreme Court - [regsupct@gmail.com](mailto:regsupct@gmail.com)
- ❖ Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court [deputyregsupctgy@gmail.com](mailto:deputyregsupctgy@gmail.com)
- ❖ Supreme Court COVID 19 Response Team - [teamsupremecovid19response@gmail.com](mailto:teamsupremecovid19response@gmail.com)
- ❖ Chief Justice's Chambers - [victorialawcourts@gmail.com](mailto:victorialawcourts@gmail.com)
- ❖ Court of Appeal - [courtofappealguyana@yahoo.com](mailto:courtofappealguyana@yahoo.com)
- ❖ Principal Clerk of Court - [magisdistrofficegeorgetown@gmail.com](mailto:magisdistrofficegeorgetown@gmail.com)

Sgd Yonette Cummings-Edwards, OR, CCH  
Chancellor of the Judiciary (ag)

Dated this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of April, 2020