

HIGH COURT OF GUJARAT

CIRCULAR

Date: 05/02/2021

Resumption of Physical Functioning of Subordinate Courts of Gujarat

Considering the latest data pertaining to Corona Virus Cases in various Districts of Gujarat available on Covid Tracker website <https://gujicovid19.gujarat.gov.in/> and various representations received from Bar Associations of different Court establishments at District Headquarters of Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara and Rajkot, Honourable High Court has been pleased to issue following directions with respect to resumption of physical functioning of Subordinate Courts at the District Headquarters of Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara and Rajkot w.e.f. 01.03.2021.

1. All the Subordinate Courts (except the Courts in Micro Containment Zones, if any) at District Headquarters of Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara & Rajkot shall start functioning physically with Regular Court Working Hours of 10.45 am to 06.10 pm.
2. The Subordinate Courts in Micro Containment Zones (if any) shall continue to function as per earlier Circulars/Guidelines of the High Court of Gujarat dated 26.06.2020 for carrying out Judicial work through Video Conferencing in Courts.
3. The Subordinate Courts at District Headquarters of Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara & Rajkot shall function as per regular practice & procedure in consonance with social distancing guidelines issued by the Central/State Government and as per the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP-attached herewith) laid down by High Court of Gujarat Circular dated 04.11.2020 regarding resumption of Physical Functioning of Subordinate Courts.
4. As far as possible, the entry gates to the Court Campus or building shall be restricted to only one. The Principal Judicial Officers may have multiple entry/exit points as per the need of the Court Campus.


Registrar General
High Court of Gujarat

**Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for resumption of
Physical Functioning of Subordinate Courts of Gujarat**

Considering the present situation in State of Gujarat, the Hon'ble High Court of Gujarat is pleased to issue the following Standard Operating Procedures to be adopted for resumption of Physical Functioning of Subordinate Courts.

1. The Principal District Judge/Principal Judge should appoint a 'Covid officer' along with required dedicated staff to plan, oversee, execute and supervise all activities related to COVID in the each and every Court establishment. The Covid officer & dedicated staff constituted to assist him shall take a round of court building every day to take stock of the situation and take all necessary appropriate steps to prevent the spread of Corona virus.
2. The entry gates to the Court campus or building shall be restricted to one only, in case of multiple entry points/gates. Further, no one should be allowed to enter in the court building without wearing a mask. Wearing of masks will be compulsory for one and all in the Court premises.
3. All entrants in the court campus, including Judicial Officers, Advocates and all employees including the contractual employees shall be subjected to thermal checks on daily basis. Those found having fever/flu-like symptoms shall not be allowed to enter in the court building and be advised to take proper treatment.
4. Hand sanitizers shall be placed at the entry gates of court buildings as well as entry Gates of the Court Rooms.
5. The Principal Judicial Officer & Covid Officer in coordination with District Administration shall ensure proper cleaning and frequent sanitization of the court premises, particularly of the frequently touched surfaces like hand railings, door handles, seats, Case Filing windows, etc. Court Rooms & Building should be sanitized on daily basis post Court working hours.

6. The Principal Judicial Officer should direct the PWD/R&B Works department to install Plexiglass/Acrylic sheet between the dais of all Judicial Officers in Courts and the Sitting Space of advocates and Litigants. Similar Acrylic sheet should also be installed in Administrative Departments which have public dealings with Litigants and Advocates to ensure social distancing for one and all.
7. The Covid officer should ensure that all Courts & Administrative Offices have proper ventilation & air circulation.
8. Concerned Principal Judicial Officer/Presiding Officer should ensure that social distancing guidelines are scrupulously followed both inside and outside the Court Rooms.
9. The Court working hours should be restricted to 10:45 a.m. to 04:00 p.m.
10. The Judicial Officer should see that litigants should not attend courts unless their presence is inevitable.
11. The entry of outside vendors & casual visitors in courts premises shall be banned completely.
12. The Principal Judicial Officer should ensure sufficient quantities of mask, sanitizer, gloves, thermal scanner etc.
13. Social distancing shall be strictly maintained in the Courtrooms, Bar Rooms, Photostat Rooms etc. by rearranging the chairs and benches respectively.
14. Canteen shall serve only tea, coffee, packed food and drinking water.
15. The ATM in Court Campus, if any shall remain closed till further order.
16. The Principal Judicial Officers are directed to ensure that all the wash-rooms/toilets are maintained spick and span and to provide liquid hand wash and soaps.
17. A safe distance (minimum two meters/Six Feet) shall be maintained between all stakeholders.
18. All the Judges, advocates and Court staff may be advised to take care of their own health and look out for respiratory symptoms/fever and, if feeling unwell, should leave the workplace immediately after informing their reporting officers.

19. All Judicial Officers, Advocates and court staff members be directed to download Aarogya Setu App on their mobile phones.
20. The Ld. Advocates & Litigants should avoid crowding at any spot in court premises and leave the premises as soon as their work is completed.
21. All measures shall be taken to reduce the need for the physical presence of all stakeholders within court premises and to secure the functioning of courts in consonance with social distancing guidelines issued by the Central/State Government.

This SOP may be revised from time to time considering the situation of Covid Pandemic.

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Registrar General
High Court of Gujarat