

**HIGH COURT OF SIKKIM**

No. 41/Confdl/HCS

Dated: 23.05.2020

**CIRCULAR**

Taking note of the current COVID-19 situation and the suggestion of the Bar Association of Sikkim that the present system of Court functioning may be continued till 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020, the High Court of Sikkim has decided to continue functioning of the High Court of Sikkim and the District Courts in the State of Sikkim in terms of Notification No. 77/HCS dated 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020, Guidelines to the District Courts bearing reference No. 78/HCS dated 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020, Circular No. 33/Confdl/HCS dated 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and Circular No. 38/Confdl/HCS dated 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2020, upto 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020.

It is also hereby notified that the High Court of Sikkim and the District Courts in the State of Sikkim will function from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020, in terms of the following instructions:

1. Limited number of cases shall be listed in the High Court before each Bench per day. In respect of all the District Courts,

the concerned Judicial Officer shall take up limited number of cases per day so as to ensure that there is no over-crowding and that social distancing can be maintained by all concerned. The jurisdictional District Judges may give guidance in this regard.

2. Hearing of matters in all the Courts will be conducted, to the extent and as far as possible, through video-conferencing.

3. Facilitation Centres for video-conferencing established in the High Court of Sikkim as well as in the District Courts Complex will be made available to such litigants who do not have means or access to video-conferencing facilities. This facility can also be utilized by the Learned Advocates, if required. Helpline number 14636 for the High Court or e-Sewa Kendra established in all the Courts may be contacted for any assistance in this regard. It will be ensured that social distancing norms shall be maintained in the Court Complexes and at the facilitation Centres.

4. In the event of a case being heard in open Court, only two Learned Advocates for each of the parties will be permitted inside the Courtroom.

5. All concerned entering the High Court premises as well as the premises of the District Courts Complexes shall wear face

masks. Entry will be denied to any person not wearing a face mask.

6. A roster duty arrangement for the Court staff will be made in the High Court by the Registrar General and in the respective District Courts by the jurisdictional District Judges to ensure that administrative works are attended to. While doing so, it will be ensured that not more than 30% of the employees should be attending the Office at a time. Guidelines issued by the Government of Sikkim vide Order No. 09/Home/2020 dated 17<sup>th</sup> May 2020 will be taken into consideration while preparing the duty roster.

7. Standard Operating Procedure published vide reference No. 137/Comp/HCS dated 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020 will continue to operate for hearing of cases through video-conferencing. In addition to Vidyo Desktop/Video Mobile application, Cisco Webex may also be used for joining the video-conference from a remote location. Within the Court Complex, Jitsi application may be used through Local Area Network for video-conferencing.

8. Notification No. 77/HCS dated 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and the Guidelines to the District Courts bearing No. 78/HCS dated 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020 shall continue to remain in operation.

This Circular shall be effective until further orders.

By Order.

**REGISTRAR GENERAL**