



CARIBBEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

134 HENRY STREET
PORT OF SPAIN

REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

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Practice Direction 1 of 2020

PRACTICE DIRECTION COVID-19 Emergency Directions

1.0 AUTHORITY

This Practice Direction is issued by the President pursuant to Part 17.1(1) of the Caribbean Court of Justice (Appellate Jurisdiction) Rules 2019, as amended (“Appellate Jurisdiction Rules”) and Part 6.1(1) of the Caribbean Court of Justice (Original Jurisdiction) Rules 2019, as amended (“Original Jurisdiction Rules”).

2.0 COMMENCEMENT

This Practice Direction shall come into force, on the 6th day of April, 2020.

3.0 INTRODUCTION

In response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the emergency situation in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the Seat of the Court, and in the other jurisdictions of CARICOM, this Practice Direction is issued to protect the health and safety of court staff and the public.

4.0 DIRECTIONS

WHEREAS Part 6 of the Appellate Jurisdiction Rules and Part 9 of the Original Jurisdiction Rules provide for the filing and service of documents and Part 6.1 of the Appellate Jurisdiction Rules and Part 9.2 of the Original Jurisdiction Rules, provide for the submission of documents for filing;

AND WHEREAS the Caribbean Court of Justice (Court) is committed to doing everything necessary to ensure continued access to justice and functioning of the Court while protecting court staff and users;

AND WHEREAS the Court is committed to –

- a. Facilitating access to justice;
- b. Reducing the number of persons attending physically at the Court; and
- c. Contributing to the health and safety of staff members of courts in the jurisdictions of the Caribbean that provide support to the CCJ’s operations for the hearing of matters.

The following measures shall operate until further notice -

a. HEARINGS OF APPEALS AND ORIGINAL JURISDICTION CASES

The Court shall, after consultations with the parties, hear only matters that are urgent or otherwise fit for adjudication.

b. TIME AND FORM

All directions previously given or applied or provided for by the Rules for the filing of submissions or other documents may be varied by the Court on application made by letter or other form of written communication to the Court and copied to the other parties. The Court may grant or refuse such application by letter or other form of written communication.

5.0 PROTOCOL FOR VIRTUAL HEARINGS

Attorneys are expected to dress as they would for Chamber Court in their respective home state or at a Case Management Conference.

Every effort must be made to eliminate background noises. Cell phones and/or smart phones, ipods or MP3 players must be switched off during hearings.

In all other respects, the Court's Protocols for virtual hearings shall be observed.

6.0 RESERVED JUDGMENTS

The Court shall deliver its reserved judgments as and when the same are ready for delivery. Parties and their Counsel shall be advised in the usual way of the date and time of delivery.

Dated this 6th day of April, 2020

/s/ Adrian Saunders
President, Caribbean Court of Justice