

Court business to resume normal

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

The Judiciary today (September 15) announced that with the recent stabilisation of the public health situation, court business will be fully resumed in an incremental and orderly manner starting from September 15 as far as possible. Appropriate social distancing and crowd management measures will be maintained to ensure that the courts can continue to carry on business as safely as circumstances permit.

Court proceedings will fully resume as far as possible as from September 15, while proceedings involving a large number of court users will continue to be fixed to be heard at appropriate times and intervals for social distancing and crowd management purposes.

New jury proceedings and death inquests involving juries will gradually resume normal as from late September.

To enable an orderly and gradual resumption of registries and accounts offices at various levels of court, the Judiciary will resume the normal number of counters from September 15, and resume normal operating hours of the registries and accounts offices, i.e. from 8.45am to 1pm and from 2pm to 5.30pm (Monday to Friday, except public holidays) from September 28. The expanded area of some of the registries may be maintained on a need basis to help ensure social distancing.

With the normalisation of registry services from September 28, all ticketing arrangements will cease. Court users should go directly to the relevant registries and accounts offices for services before 4.45pm. There will also be crowd control and social distancing requirements at the registries and accounts offices throughout the opening hours.

Operating hours of other offices that provide support services to court users and the public will resume normal by stages as shown below:

Offices/Public counters	Normal opening hours (Monday to Friday, except public holidays)
From September 15, 2020	
• Court Language Section's Certification Counter in Wanchai Law Courts Building (WLCB)	8.45am to 1pm 2pm to 5.30pm
• Bailiff Offices' Public Counters at various court premises	8.45am to 1pm 2pm to 5.30pm
• Integrated Mediation Office in WLCB	9am to 1pm 2pm to 6pm

• High Court Library	8.45am to 6pm
• Building Management Mediation Co-ordinator's Office in Lands Tribunal	9am to 1pm 2pm to 5pm
• Complaints Office at High Court Building (HCB)	8.45am to 1pm 2pm to 6pm
From September 28, 2020	
• Resource Centre for Unrepresented Litigants at HCB	8.45am to 1pm 2pm to 6pm
• Small Claims Tribunal Information Centre	8.45am to 1pm 2pm to 5.30pm

The Canteen in the High Court Building will be re-opened on September 23 with suitable adjustments to the number and spacing of tables. The Tuck Shop in the West Kowloon Law Courts Building will be re-opened on September 28.

The Judiciary will maintain appropriate preventive and crowd management measures, including enhanced cleansing and disinfection of public and staff areas, mandatory body temperature checks upon entry into Judiciary premises, mandatory wearing of surgical masks at all times unless otherwise directed by Judges or Judicial Officers, providing hand sanitisers at different locations, and installing protective shields and partitions in courtrooms as appropriate.

Any court users including parties and legal representatives who have a fever or a high body temperature, and/or are subject to any quarantine requirement or medical surveillance are not allowed to enter Judiciary premises. They should apply to the court as soon as practicable for permission of absence or inform the court with reasons for absence as appropriate.

Chessboard seating arrangements will continue to be applied in the public gallery of courtrooms and court lobbies, with seating capacity reduced to half. Broadcasting of proceedings will be arranged where necessary and practicable. Capacity limits and admission control will remain in force in areas such as court lobbies, registries and accounts offices. Where appropriate, queuing or other crowd management arrangements will be put in place. Court users should follow the instructions of the Judiciary staff and security personnel.

For enquiries regarding the above arrangements, court users may call the following hotlines which operate from 8.45am to 1pm and from 2pm to 5.30pm (Monday to Friday, except public holidays).

- General Information : 2869 0869
- Court of Final Appeal: 2123 0123
- High Court: 2523 2212
- Probate: 2840 1683

- Competition Tribunal: 2825 0426
- District Court: 2845 5696
- Family Court: 2840 1218
- Lands Tribunal: 2771 3034
- Labour Tribunal: 2625 0020
- Small Claims Tribunal: 2877 4068
- Magistrates' Courts: 2677 8373
- Coroner's Court: 3916 6204
- Bailiff Section: 2802 7510
- Court Language Section: 2388 1364

The Judiciary will continue to post updated information, including Daily Cause Lists, all arrangements in relation to Judiciary business and advice to court users, on the Judiciary website (www.judiciary.hk). Court users are strongly advised to check the website for updated information.