

Chief Judge's Chambers
High Court of Justice
Ring Road
Ibadan.

28th April, 2020.

1. The Chairman,
Nigerian Bar Association,
Ibadan Branch,
Oyo State.
2. The Chairman,
Nigerian Bar Association,
Oyo Branch,
Oyo State.
3. The Chairman,
Nigerian Bar Association,
Saki Branch,
Oyo State.
4. The Chairman,
Nigerian Bar Association,
Ogbomoso Branch,
Oyo State.

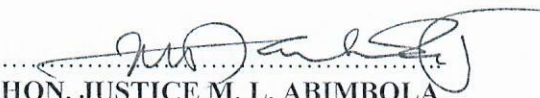
Sirs,

RE: PRACTICE DIRECTION ON COURT SITTINGS

Please refer to the attached Practice Direction on the above subject matter. The letter speaks for itself.

Please accept the assurance of my highest regards and esteem.

Yours faithfully,


.....
HON. JUSTICE M. L. ABIMBOLA
CHIEF JUDGE OF OYO STATE

Enc.

**PRACTICE DIRECTION ISSUED BY THE CHIEF JUDGE OF OYO
STATE, HONOURABLE JUSTICE MUNTA LADIPO ABIMBOLA ON
COURT SITTINGS**

In line with the Covid-19 Regulations 2020, made pursuant to the Quarantine Act Cap Q2 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004 and the Directives of His Lordship, the Honourable Chief Justice of Nigeria, Honourable Dr. Justice Ibrahim Tanko Muhammad CON by circular No NJC/CIR/HOC/11/631 on Preventive Measures on the Spread of Coronavirus (Covid – 19) and the Protection of Justices, Judges and Staff of Courts;

And in view of the directive of His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Oyo State, Governor **OLUSEYI ABIODUN MAKINDE** on resumption of Civil Servants in Oyo State;

I, Munta Ladipo Abimbola, the Honourable Chief Judge of Oyo State of Nigeria, in exercise of the powers conferred on me by section 274 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as Amended) and Section 32 of the High Court Law, Cap 35, Laws of Oyo State of Nigeria, 2000 and by virtue of all other powers enabling me in that behalf, make the following Practice Direction in respect of Filing of new cases, continuation of trials in old cases, court sittings at the High Courts and Magistrate Courts of Oyo State in all jurisdictions.

1. PURPOSE OF THE PRACTICE DIRECTION

- a. The primary purpose is not to allow a standstill situation in proceedings before the courts.
- b. It is also to safeguard the Health of Judicial Officers, Court Users and Court Personnel.
- c. To ensure timeous determination of matters pending and to avoid prolonged delay occasioned by the Covid -19 lockdown.

2. ENTRY INTO COURT PREMISES

- a) Members of the General Public will not be allowed entry into the Court Premises save Lawyers and Parties who have urgent matters/Applications for filing or pending before the Court upon service of hearing notices.

3. CASE MANAGEMENT

- a) The Court will attend only to matters that are **URGENT, ESSENTIAL** or **Time Bound** in line with the extant laws.
- b) Urgent and Exceptional matters will be taken on application of counsel.
- c) Hearing of cases and/or applications shall be scheduled by the court, limiting the number of cases on the cause list.
- d) In accordance with the Rules of Proceedings Judges may give directives regarding time of attendance of hearing of cases or applications on the cause list. Specific time of attendance will be allotted and notified to counsel and parties between the hours of 9am – 4pm to control crowded courts.
- e) In all cases only parties whose cases are to be heard; their witnesses and counsel will be allowed into the court room at any sitting or hearing time subject to a maximum of Ten (10) persons at the same time.
- f) In the court rooms, persons shall keep a distance of at least one metre to each other as recommended by the World Health Organization.
- g) The court shall through the Registry notify counsel and/or parties of the date reserved for delivery of judgments and /or Rulings.
- h) Counsel and/or parties shall be notified by text messages.
- i) In view of the decision of Correction Centres on admission of new inmates, Magistrate Courts will be sitting in accordance with this

Practice Direction on Civil Matters, and on Criminal Matters, but Custodial orders shall not be given as much as possible. If unavoidable, such persons shall be directed to be detained at the police stations having such capacity.

4. FILING OF NEW CASES /COMMISSIONING OF AFIDAVIT

- a. For the purpose of filing of processes that are timebound and commissioning of affidavits, the High Court Registry shall be opened between the hours of 9am and 1pm on Mondays till Thursdays.
- b. Phone numbers required for text messages shall be indicated on the filed processes.

5. COVID 19 COMPLIANCE

Preventive measures on the spread of Coronavirus (Covid -19) shall be strictly adhered to as follows:

- (a) Thorough washing and cleaning of hands by staff, lawyers and litigants with sanitizers or soap and water provided by the Courts.
- (b) Maintaining Social distancing of at least 1 metre (3feet) in entry and sitting in court rooms.
- (c) Usage of Nose masks/covers by all court users.

6. APPLICATION

That all Judicial Officers/Judges, Lawyers, Court Registrars and the General Public shall take notice of this Practice Direction and comply accordingly.

These Practice Direction shall take effect from 27th day of April, 2020

GIVEN UNDER my hand at the High Court of Justice, Ibadan this 28th day of April, 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Munta Ladiipo Abimbola', written in a cursive style.

HONOURABLE JUSTICE MUNTA LADIPO ABIMBOLA
CHIEF JUDGE