

## **RE: WORK ARRANGEMENTS IN COURTS ON 3 &#8211; 14 MAY 2021**

*SC ADMINISTRATIVE CIRCULAR NO. 29-2021, April 30, 2021*

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**TO**

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ALL JUSTICES, COURT PERSONNEL OF THE FIRST AND SECOND LEVEL COURTS, AND APPELLATE COLLEGIATE COURTS, AND COURTS USERS

### **RE : WORK ARRANGEMENTS IN COURTS ON 3 - 14 MAY 2021**

Considering that the National Capital Region, the provinces of Abra, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, Quirino, and Rizal, and Santiago City, Isabela, continue to be under Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine (MECQ) until 14 May 2021, ALL first and second level courts, and appellate collegiate courts, and their judicial offices in the said areas shall continue to be physically closed until 14 May 2021.

The said courts and judicial offices in other areas under localized Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) and MECQ shall likewise be physically closed for the duration of such ECQ or MECQ.

All physically closed courts and judicial offices in areas under ECQ and MECQ may be reached through their respective hotlines and email addresses as posted in the Supreme Court website.

These courts in ECQ and MECQ areas shall continue to operate during this period through fully remote videoconferencing, which must be maximized so as not to delay the trial of cases and court processes. Judges are to conduct fully remote videoconferencing hearings on pending cases and all other matters, whether urgent or not, regardless of their physical location and without prior permission from the Office of the Court Administrator.

The time for filing and service of pleadings and motions during this period in these areas is **SUSPENDED** and shall resume after seven (7) calendar days counted from the first day of the physical reopening of the relevant court.

The essential judicial offices shall maintain the necessary skeleton staff to enable them to address all urgent matters and concerns.

The courts and judicial offices in areas under General Community Quarantine (GCQ) and Modified General Community Quarantine (MGCQ) shall be physically opened during this period with a workforce of at least twenty-five percent (25%) to be determined by the Executive Justices and Presiding Judges using their sound discretion with respect to their courts, and the Executive Justices and the Executive Judges with respect to the judicial offices. Justices and Judges may conduct videoconferencing from home, provided they will be within their respective judicial territorial region, and with notice to the Office of the Court Administrator with respect to Judges of the first and second level courts.

30 April 2021

(Sgd.) ALEXANDER G. GESMUNDO

Chief Justice

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