



司法機構政務長

Judiciary Administrator

9 April 2020

Dr Hon Priscilla Leung, SBS, JP  
Chairman  
Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong

*Dear Chairman,*

**Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services  
("AJLS Panel")  
General Adjourned Period**

Further to my letter of 30 March 2020, on the instruction of the Chief Justice, I am writing to provide an update on the General Adjourned Period ("GAP") for the information of the AJLS panel.

2. The Judiciary announced on 8 April 2020 that in view of the latest public health considerations, GAP will continue from 14 April (Tuesday) to 3 May (Sunday), and be subject to review having regard to the prevailing public health situation. All court/tribunal hearings will generally be adjourned during this period unless they are urgent and essential business as directed by the presiding Judges and Judicial Officers. Registries and offices at various levels of courts and tribunals will remain closed during this period, but enhanced measures will be suitably introduced to support the revised scope of urgent and essential business. It is to be stressed again that the public's health and safety, including that of court users and Judiciary staff, remain paramount considerations in the handling of court operations by the Judiciary.

3. During GAP when physical attendance at the court premises and contacts in person should be minimized and gathering of crowds should be

avoided, the Judiciary has been exploring the greater use of information technology to support and facilitate the conduct of court business. In this regard, the Judiciary issued on 2 April 2020 a Guidance Note for Remote Hearings for Civil Business in the High Court (Phase 1: Video-Conferencing Facilities), which sets out the practice for remote hearings by video conferencing facilities (“VCF”) in civil cases in the Court of Appeal (“CA”) and the Court of First Instance (“CFI”) of the High Court during GAP. So far, two cases have been heard by way of VCF on 6 and 7 April at the CA and the CFI respectively. The proceedings for both cases were conducted smoothly and further remote hearings using VCF may be held for suitable cases in the near future. The Judiciary will continue to work closely with the legal profession and other stakeholders to further promote and explore the use of remote hearings.

4. During GAP, the Judiciary will continue to put in place appropriate preventive and crowd management measures for the health protection of all people who are required to enter and remain in the court premises for urgent and essential business.
5. The Judiciary will continue to post updated information relating to GAP on the Judiciary website ([www.judiciary.hk](http://www.judiciary.hk)).
6. Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely,



(Miss Emma Lau)  
Judiciary Administrator

c.c. Ms Teresa Cheng, GBS, SC, JP  
Secretary for Justice

Mr Philip J Dykes, SC  
Chairman, Hong Kong Bar Association

Ms Melissa K Pang  
President, The Law Society of Hong Kong