

**RAILWAY CLAIMS TRIBUNAL
PRINCIPAL BENCH
13/15, Mall Road, Delhi-54**

No. RCT/DLI/Admin Policy /2019

Dated: 14.04.2020

To,

The Addl. Registrars,
Railway Claims Tribunal,
All Benches

Sub: Functioning of RCT Benches during COVID-19

The Government of India has declared the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic as a National Disaster and ordered a complete lockdown in the country for an initial period of 21 days upto 14.04.2020 to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

In view of the above, Hon'ble Chairman authorized Hon'ble Vice-Chairman of the Zones to take a decision in respect of Benches falling under their jurisdiction and Administrative Member of the Bench falling in Zones where the post of the Vice-Chairman is vacant to permit the officers and staff to work from home instead of attending office. Due to the lockdown, in all the Benches officers and staff were permitted to work from home.

However, during this period, no court proceedings could take place. All Court related work including the fresh filing of cases remained suspended. This issue was discussed by Hon'ble Chairman with Administrative Members of the Benches and it was proposed that RCT should cancel the upcoming summer vacations to make up for the loss of court working hours.

In the meantime, the issue of conducting Court proceedings by the Benches through Video Conferencing in view of guidelines issued by Hon'ble Supreme Court vide order dated 06.04.20 in Writ (Civil) 5/2020 was also examined in consultation with the Benches of RCT.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister in his address to the nation on 14.04.2020 has announced that the lockdown period has been further extended upto 03.05.2020. In view of the above, Hon'ble Chairman is pleased to pass the following orders:

- I. The Vice-Chairman of the Zones in respect of the Benches falling in their Zone and Administrative Member of other Benches i.e. Allahabad, Chandigarh, Gorakhpur, Lucknow and Amravati may again be authorized to issue instructions permitting the officers and staff to work from home instead of attending office for the further period of the lockdown upto 03.05.2020. However, the same shall be subject to the conditions that
“During the period w.e.f 15.04.2020 to 03.05.2020, all officers/officials of the Railway Claims Tribunal shall work from home and will make themselves available as and when their services are so required by their Branch Incharge. They will not leave the station and will report for duty without any lapse immediately on call.”
- II. Since the majority of the Bar Associations of the RCT Benches are not willing to function through video conferencing despite Hon'ble Supreme Court provision in this regard, the Benches are advised that if any request is made by an advocate to the Bench

for hearing his/her case through video conferencing, the request must be complied with by the Bench

- III. The summer vacation of all Benches may be treated as cancelled. The benches shall function during the vacation period to make up for the loss of court working hours. ***No earned leave will be credited in the Leave Account of the Members in lieu of cancellation/non-availing of this vacation.***
- IV. Since the filing of cases in the Registry has been disrupted during the lockdown, therefore, this period shall not be taken into consideration for calculation of period of limitation for filing of cases. If there is any delay in the filing of cases in this regard, it will be condoned.

Necessary order in this regard may be passed at your end. A copy of order may be placed on the notice board for information of all concerned and may also be uploaded on RCT website.

Sd/-
(Sarah Jayal Sawkmie)
Additional Registrar