



---

# **ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES ON COURTROOM PROCEEDINGS**

**2024**

---



COMPENDIUM OF PRACTICE DIRECTIONS &  
ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES IN GHANA  
2024

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

This Document forms part of a Compendium of Practice Directions and Administrative Guidelines in Ghana 2024 volume (1). This Compendium could not have been developed for implementation without the dedication and generosity of various individuals committed to assisting in proving systems and protocols for justice administration in Ghana.

In a special way, the Honourable Lady Chief Justice wants to extend recognition to the following individuals for their significant contributions:

### **Practice Directions on Award of Cost:**

- H/L Justice Dorothy Kingsley Nyinah
- H/H Ellen Ofei Ayeh
- Mr. Charles Idun

### **Practice Directions on Adjournments and Adoption of Proceedings in Part Heard Trials in Courts:**

- H/L Justice Richard Adjei-Frimpong (JSC)
- H/L Justice Yaw Darko Asare (JSC)
- H/L Justice Bright Mensah (JA)
- H/L Justice Dorothy Kingsley-Nyinah
- H/H Jojo Hagan
- H/H Arit Nsemoh
- H/H Afia Owusuaa Appiah

### **Practice Directions on Commercial Pre-Trial Settlement under High Court Civil Procedure Amendment Rules 2020, C. I. 133:**

- H/L Justice Angelina Mensah-Homiah (JA)
- H/L Justice Jerome Noble Nkrumah (JA)
- Mr. Alex Nartey

**Practice Directions on Court Connected ADR under High Court Civil Procedure Amendment Rules 2020, C. I. 133:**

- H/L Justice Koomson (JSC)
- H/L Justice Angelina Mensah-Homiah (JA)
- H/L Justice Jerome Noble Nkrumah (JA)
- Mr. Alex Nartey

**Practice Directions in respect of Prerogative Writs involving Chiefs/Chieftaincy Issues**

- H/L Justice Samuel Alan Brobbey (JSC) (Rtd)
- H/L Justice Philip Bright Mensah (JSC)
- H/H Angela Attachie

**Practice Directions on Plea Bargaining 2024**

- H/L Justice Afia Serwaa Asare-Botwe (JA)
- H/L Justice Marie-Louise Simmons (J)
- Ms. Evelyn Keelson

**Practice Directions for Determination of Applications for Interlocutory Injunctions to Restrain Burial of a Deceased Person**

- H/L Justice Francis Obiri (J)

**Administrative Guidelines on Procedures for Online Publication of Judgments and Rulings:**

- H/L Justice Jennifer Abena Dadzie (JA)
- H/L Justice Barbara Tetteh-Charway (J)

**Administrative Directions on Courtroom Proceedings:**

- H/L Justice Jennifer Abena Dadzie (JA)
- H/L Justice Emmanuel Lodoh (J)
- H/L Justice Tandoh Aboagye (J)
- Mrs. Patricia Naa Afarley Dadson
- Mr. Dennis Adjei Dwomoh

**Administrative Directions to aid Expeditious Disposal of Trials by Jury**

- H/L Justice Afia Serwaa Asare-Botwe (JA)
- H/L Justice Frederick Tetteh (J)
- H/L Justice Lydia Osei Marfo (J)

**Administrative Guidelines on using the Supreme Court Registry**

- H/H Ellen Ofei Ayeh

**Administrative Guidelines on the Generation of Suit Numbers:**

- Mr. John K. Bannerman
- Mr. Papa Kwasi Maisie

**Practice Administrative Directions Editorial Committee:**

- H/L Justice Dr. Ernest Owusu-Dapaa (JA)
- H/L Justice Ama Sefenya Ayittey(J)
- Mrs. Patricia Naa Afarley Dadson(ESQ)
- Mr. Dennis Adjei Dwomoh (ESQ)
- Mr. Selali Woanyo (ESQ)
- Miss Judith Lois Abena Addo

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Citation
3. Preamble
4. Application
5. Interpretation
6. General Provisions for all Courts
7. Provisions for Manual Court
8. Provisions for Computerized, Automated or Semi –Automated Courts
9. Provisions for Courts with Direct Transcription Systems
10. Provisions for Courts with Digital Transcription & E-Justice Systems
11. Commencement

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

These Administrative Guidelines are to consolidate and standardize practice and procedure in the Courts, to ensure uniformity in court experience, promote the use of technology in court proceedings for the expeditious disposal of cases and to enhance access to justice.

## **2. CITATION**

These Guidelines may be cited as **Administrative Guidelines on Courtroom Proceedings 2024**

## **3. PREAMBLE**

- Being guided by the constitutional and statutory requirement that proceedings should be conducted in a timely manner to avoid delays and to prevent unnecessary expense to parties in the proceedings,<sup>1</sup> and;
- Being guided by the requirement that the Rules of Court must be interpreted and applied to achieve speedy and effective justice, avoid delays and unnecessary expenses, and ensure that as far as possible, all matters in dispute between parties may be completely, effectively and finally determined<sup>2</sup>.

## **4. APPLICATION**

These Administrative Guidelines shall apply to all proceedings in all courts in Ghana.

## **5. INTERPRETATION**

In these Guidelines, unless the context otherwise requires:

**“Court”**: includes superior and lower courts.



**“Manual Court”:** A Court which is not equipped with computers for recording of proceedings. Hearings are recorded exclusively in long hand in the Record Books by the Presiding Judge.

**“Computerized Court”:** A Court aided by at least one computer with printing capability which allows the Court Recorder to transcribe and print proceedings recorded in the Record Book. This includes automated and semi-automated courts.

**“Direct Transcription System Court”:** A court where hearings are directly transcribed in real time and proceedings recorded within predictable and specific timelines.

**“E-justice”:** An electronic case management system for court processes.

**“Electronic devices”:** includes all forms of computers, laptops, and personal electronic devices, such as cell phones and tablets.

**“Parties”:** refers to parties, and lawyers and includes prosecutors who have a case pending before the Court.

**“Proceedings”:** include judgment, rulings, orders and hearings.

**“Judge”:** includes a Magistrate.

## 6. GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR ALL COURTS

---

1. Hearings shall be conducted in public unless the Rules of Court determine otherwise.
2. Recording of proceedings may be made manually, using legible long hand written notes, or electronically using direct transcription, audio or video recording as the case may be.
3. Where proceedings are manually recorded, every effort must be made by the Judge to capture all statements accurately.
4. Presiding Judges of all Courts are directed to facilitate the continuous typing of proceedings after every court session, and not at the conclusion of the trial, to enable parties have access to proceedings speedily.
5. Where proceedings are electronically recorded, the Court must use ONLY OFFICIALLY CERTIFIED recording equipment or devices.
6. Where proceedings are electronically recorded, all courts are to keep a backup of the files of the proceedings in accordance with the Digital Records Policy of the Judicial Service of Ghana.
7. The Court's recording, whether in writing, audio or digital form, shall constitute for all purposes the transcript of proceedings and the official record of the proceedings in question.

8. Where proceedings are recorded using the Direct Transcription System (DTS), this must be captured accurately and in real time.

9. While any party may take notes of court proceedings in writing or shorthand, no person other than the Court Recorder may make an audio recording of the proceedings, before a court using an electronic device, unless otherwise permitted or ordered by the Presiding Judge.

10. The taking of photographs or the making of digital copies or transmission by video using any electronic device of court recordings is strictly prohibited except where permission has been sought and granted by either the Presiding Judge or the Chief Justice.

11. Talking on electronic devices while Court is in session is not permitted in the courtroom.

12. Separate subject matter Record Books should be kept for proceedings where applicable.

13. All Courts should keep the following books where applicable:

- Judgment Book
- 
- Orders Book
- 
- Record Book
- 
- Rulings Book
- 
- 
- 
-

Marriage Certificate Book

Document Tracker Book- THINGS Book

Coroner's Inquest Book

Appeals against District Registration Review

Committee

And any other books as may be directed by the Chief Justice

## 7. PROVISIONS FOR MANUAL COURTS

---

For recording of proceedings in manual courts, the following must be strictly adhered to:

- i. Hearings shall be recorded in legible long hand in the Record Book.
- ii. Separate subject matter Record Books shall be kept for recording proceedings in civil or criminal matters.
- iii. Record Books shall be kept in well ventilated spaces.
- iv. Parties may request for record of proceedings and these shall be provided in hard copies.
- v. Presiding Judges are to ensure that the proceedings, judgments and rulings are regularly typed out and uploaded in accordance with the Practice Direction on same and or the Monitoring and Evaluation and Digital Records Policy.

### **Timelines to Deliver Court Proceedings**

<b>Nature of Proceedings</b>	<b>Timelines to Deliver Docket Copy after proceedings</b>
Judgment	7 Days
Full Rulings	2 Days
Bench Rulings	2 Days
Orders	2 Days
Record of Proceedings	2 Days

## **8. PROVISION FOR COMPUTERIZED, AUTOMATED OR SEMI-AUTOMATED COURTS**

---

For recording of proceedings the following must be adhered to:

- i. Hearings shall be recorded in legible long hand in the Record Book.
- ii. Separate subject matter Record Books shall be kept for recording proceedings. Proceedings captured in a Record Book shall immediately be transcribed using the computer system.
- iii. The Secretary/Recorder shall make every effort to capture the record accurately.
- iv. The Secretary/ Recorder shall create and maintain data specific file folders on the Computer system for purposes of storing data under headings such as Judgments, Orders, Rulings, Hearings, and Proceedings etc.
- v. Transcribed proceedings shall be immediately stored on the computer in a secured format in the folders.
- vi. Parties may request for proceedings and these may be provided in certified hard copies or duly certified electronic copies.
- vii. Presiding Judges are to ensure that their proceedings, judgments and rulings are typed out and uploaded in accordance with the Practice Directions on same and or the Monitoring and Evaluation and Digital Records Policy of the Judicial; Service of Ghana.

### **Timelines to Deliver Court Proceedings**

Presiding Judges of Computerized Courts shall ensure that court processes are properly stored electronically on the computer system and one copy posted in the various Court Books unless and until the court is within the E-justice system, when records may be held wholly in electronic form. The Court shall ensure that it places the underlisted proceedings on its docket in compliance with the following timelines after the date of completing same:

<b>Nature of Proceedings</b>	<b>Timelines to Deliver Docket Copy after proceedings</b>
Judgment	7 Days
Full Rulings	2 Days
Bench Rulings	2 Days
Orders	2 Days
Record of Proceedings	1 Day