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JAWATANKUASA PEGUAM PULAU PINANG PENANG BAR COMMITTEE

Court Liaison 37/20

15 Oct 2020

To Members of the Penang Bar,

Update 2: Outbreak of Covid-19 in Penang Remand Prison and Court-related Issues

Reference is made to our previous [Circular Court Liaison 35/20](#) and [Circular Court Liaison 36/20](#)

As informed in our previous Circulars, the Penang Remand Prison reported its first Covid-19 case on 5 Oct 2020 after the death of an inmate. Since then, the number of active positive cases at the Penang Remand Prison has increased to 189 as at 14 Oct 2020. We were informed that the Ministry of Health (MOH) has carried out testing all the inmates and Prison personnel, and some test results are still pending. Meanwhile, 3 new inmates at the Seberang Perai Prison (who were previously inmates of the Penang Remand Prison until recently) were confirmed positive on 13 Oct 2020. As at 14 Oct 2020, a further 6 cases were detected and the MOH is now screening all inmates of the Seberang Perai Prison.

The Penang Remand Prison and the staff living quarters have been placed under an Enhanced Movement Control Order (EMCO) for 14 days beginning midnight, 15 Oct 2020. It has also been reported in the media that visitations to all prisons nationwide are suspended until further notice effective 14 Oct 2020.

As of 14 Oct 2020, we have been informed by the Court that based on the records sent to them by the Prisons Department, some of the inmates who have been tested positive for Covid-19 were last taken to Court on 1 Oct 2020. The identification and tracking of lawyers and pupils who acted for those inmates or who were present in the relevant Court rooms on the relevant dates are carried out by the MOH with the aid of the Court, as and when new confirmed cases with recent appearances in Court are detected. Representatives from the MOH will reach out to those who, in the assessment of MOH, are required to undergo further evaluation or report for testing. Based on the feedback received, none of our Members or Court personnel have tested positive to date but some are required to observe home-quarantine for a short period of time after their tests.

In this respect, we urge the affected Members to remain calm and to comply with directions from the MOH. We also wish to remind all Members to be vigilant at all times and do our part in containing or preventing the spread of Covid-19 within our communities which may lead to the imposition of a State-wide Movement Control Order (MCO) as currently imposed in a few States.

We have also received assurance from the Court that sanitisation work is carried out at all the Courts, especially court rooms, lock-ups, lifts and other common areas, on a daily basis. The MOH has also carried out disinfection work at some of the affected Courts recently. However, we reiterate that Members who are concerned about their safety and the possible risk factors related to the ongoing situation may apply in writing to the respective Courts for adjournments of their cases.

Members who have any concerns or queries may contact the following for further details and information:

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Co-Chairpersons
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