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JAWATANKUASA PEGUAM PULAU PINANG PENANG BAR COMMITTEE

Circular 1/21

13 Jan 2021

To Members and Pupils in Chambers of the Penang Bar,

Operations of Penang Bar Secretariat and Penang Legal Aid Centre pursuant to Movement Control Order from 13 Jan 2021 to 26 Jan 2021

Kindly be informed that the Penang Bar Secretariat and Penang Legal Aid Centre will continue to operate during the Movement Control Order (MCO) from 13 Jan 2021 to 26 Jan 2021 but with a limited workforce as the staff will take turns working at the Secretariat and from home on a rotation basis.

The applicable Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are as follows:

Penang Bar Secretariat

1. The Secretariat operating hours will be 8:30 am to 5:30 pm (Mon to Fri).
2. No visitors will be allowed into the Secretariat (including but not limited to Members of the Bar, Pupils in Chambers, despatch riders, courier service representatives, postmen, members of the public, etc).
3. Documents/correspondence/payments/packages, etc sent to the Secretariat must be placed in a box at the grill door of the staircase landing area for the PBC staff to collect without physical contact with the sender.
4. Documents/correspondence/payments/packages, etc to be collected from the Secretariat will be handed over by the PBC staff at the grill door without physical contact with the recipient.
5. The Secretariat Conference Room will not be available for Disciplinary Committee Proceedings or any meetings.

Library

1. The Penang Bar Library and Meeting Room facilities will be closed.
2. The Video Conferencing Facilities for Online Hearings will be made available upon request subject to the terms and conditions set out (see Circular 25/20 dated 19 Nov 2020 for booking and other details).

Auditorium

1. The Penang Bar Auditorium will be closed until further notice.

Legal Aid Centre

1. The Penang Legal Aid Centre operating hours will be 8:30 am to 5:30 pm (Mon to Fri).
2. The Legal Aid Centre Meeting Room will not be available for Disciplinary Committee Proceedings or any meetings.
3. Pupils in Chambers
 - a. No pupils will be rostered for duty until further notice.
 - b. All external programmes e.g. Tenaganita, Prison Visits and Legal Aid Clinics in Courts are put on hold until further notice.
4. Volunteer Lawyers
 - a. Only 2 lawyers are allowed at a time for collecting/returning assignment files or submitting YBGK claims.
 - b. Must wear face masks and undergo temperature checks. Hands must be sanitised upon entering and before interacting with the staff.
 - c. Anyone with a body temperature of 37.5°C or more and/or have respiratory symptoms e.g. cough, running nose, cold, etc will not be allowed in.
 - d. Upon entering, lawyers will be guided to the Interview Room and shall remain there. They will not be allowed access to other areas of the Centre, including the staff office area, meeting room and washrooms, etc.
 - e. The staff will acknowledge and collect the files/claims from the lawyers and the lawyers must leave the Centre immediately thereafter. If there are any discrepancies in the paperwork, the staff will contact the lawyer to collect their files/claims and they must make the relevant corrections away from the Centre and re-submit later.
 - f. Are not permitted to use the Centre to prepare YBGK claims.
 - g. Must give prior notice by phone call before visiting the Centre.

In addition to the SOPs stated above, additional measures for physical distancing, etc have also been put in place for the staff of the Secretariat and Legal Aid Centre to observe and comply with as required by the Ministry of Health, National Security Council and other relevant authorities.

We therefore request for Members' cooperation, understanding and compliance of the above at all times.

Kindly take note that the above information is subject to change or variation depending on whether any further directives or announcements are issued by the relevant authorities.

Lee Guan Tong
Chairman