JOHANNESBURG ATTORNEYS' ASSOCIATION

www.jaa.org.za
@jaa.org.za
Johannesburg Attorneys' Association (JAA)
@Johannesburg Attorneys Association

Room 028, High Court Building
Corner Prichard/Von Brandis Streets
Johannesburg

Tel: 010 449 3023
Email: info@jaa.org.za

7 October 2025

Dear Members,

Following the previous liaison meetings held at the Randburg Magistrate's Court, we are pleased to report as follows: -

CIVIL SECTION

1. Family Courts (Domestic Violence, Harassment, Maintenance and Children's Court)

a. A directive has been issued to Magistrates regarding part-heard or postponed matters. Magistrates must ensure their availability on **return dates** to prevent repeated postponements before presiding officers who are unfamiliar with the court file or facts of the matter.

b. The court has received a significant number of requests for proceedings in these courts to be held **virtually**. As far as reasonably practicable, court staff will render assistance in this regard. However, a formal **application** must first be made in court (in person) at the first appearance by the party seeking such an order.

c. It has further been noted that certain practitioners continue to arrive late for court and then seek **preferential accommodation**. This practice will no longer be permitted. In the Maintenance Court, postponements and settlements are attended to first; if practitioners are late for roll call, they will be attended to in due course. In the Children's Court, priority will be afforded to matters where children are present, or where social workers are in attendance. Practitioners are required to be **punctual** and to conduct themselves with courtesy at all times.

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2. Civil Courts

a. Court rolls are made available on Friday afternoons. Practitioners whose matters are not reflected on the roll are requested to attend court **early** on Monday mornings to assist court staff in locating the relevant files.

b. **Certifications** for trial are currently being enrolled for February 2026. In order to shorten the waiting period, the number of matters enrolled per day will be increased to 25. Certifications will no longer take place on Fridays. Matters already placed on the roll will not be impacted by this change.

Backlogs are frequently created owing to the unavailability of courts, malfunctioning electronic equipment, or the absence of Magistrates. Members are reminded that certifications may, where appropriate, take place in **chambers** if a courtroom is unavailable. Practitioners are encouraged to utilise this opportunity to avoid unnecessary postponements and delays.

c. The **pigeonhole** system has been reinstated and can be found outside Court 18 on the 1st Floor. Pigeonholes are being allocated to attorneys' firms within the jurisdiction of the court. Requests for allocation must be made to Mr. Ally on your firm's letterhead, by email to **Yally@justice.gov.za.**

3. Missing Court Files

Although the issue of limited storage space remains a challenge, new court files and boxes are being created on a daily basis to minimise the risk of files going missing.

The court staff, in collaboration with members of the JAA, will be conducting a file **audit**. Members will be requested to **volunteer** a few hours on a Saturday to assist the court staff in sorting and collating files.

This process will be undertaken in small groups and supervised by the Court Manager and Senior Magistrates. Dates will be confirmed once feedback has been received from the court.

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CRIMINAL SECTION

4. **Short Remands in Bail Matters (Investigations, Address Verification, etc.)**

   It currently takes approximately 2 (two) days for dockets to reach the detectives. This does not afford detectives sufficient time to carry out the necessary investigations and verifications. Practitioners are requested to remain mindful of this and, where possible, adhere to the **7 (seven) day** remand period to allow adequate time for investigations. Failure to do so may result in repeated postponements, with the consequence that clients remain in custody.

5. **Verification of Address in Bail Applications**

   SAPS has indicated that the verification of addresses presents a safety risk to detectives. Accordingly, they will no longer undertake repeated address verifications. Only **two attempts** will be made. Thereafter, the bail application will proceed without further verification.

6. **Audio Visual Remands (AVR)**

   AVRs are conducted as **early** as possible on AVR days to accommodate the multiple courts

   Practitioners are strongly urged to arrive no later than **08h00,** as proceedings cannot be delayed to await the arrival of attorneys, including Legal Aid representatives.

7. **Departure of Vans to Sun City (Johannesburg Correctional Services)**

   Due to admission policies at Sun City, vans must depart no later than **15h30**. Practitioners are requested to bear this in mind when dealing with matters involving accused persons in custody.

   The Randburg truck is consistently delayed due to accused being released late. Consequently, matters involving accused persons in **custody** will be **prioritised** should time constraints arise.

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8. Witnesses from outside Gauteng

All stakeholders are strongly encouraged to ensure that they are ready to proceed when **witnesses** from outside Gauteng are in attendance. Their evidence must be dispensed with on the days they are present, as any postponement results in unnecessary costs to the administration.

Stakeholders are requested to avoid unnecessary delays and postponements in these cases.

We encourage members to continue engaging with the Association by reporting challenges and raising issues that require attention. Constructive collaboration among all stakeholders remains essential to improving the efficiency of our court system.

Regards,
JOHANNESBURG ATTORNEYS' ASSOCIATION