JOHANNESBURG ATTORNEYS' ASSOCIATION

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Johannesburg Attorneys' Association (JAA)
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Room 028, High Court Building
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4 August 2026

Dear Members,

Following the previous liaison meeting held at the Randburg Magistrate's Court on 29 July 2026, we are pleased to report the following: -

1. **Default Judgments and Missing Court files**

   a. The court acknowledges that there is a problem with court files taking an unreasonable amount of time to become available after default judgment is granted.

   b. The 14-day turnaround period applies only to the period within which Magistrates are expected to deal with default judgment files. It does not relate to the subsequent availability of court files in the filing room.

   c. It is the responsibility of the court staff to return court files to the appropriate filing boxes once received from the respective Magistrates. Delays frequently arise at this stage due to filing errors and delays in returning the files to the filing room.

   d. Any court files that cannot be located should be reported to Ms. Mazibuko.

   e. An arch-lever file is maintained in the filing room recording when default judgment files are allocated to Magistrates and when they are returned. Practitioners are encouraged to consult this register when following up on default judgment files.

   f. The issue of piecemeal default judgment queries was again raised and remains under discussion with the Magistrates. Where a response to an existing query gives rise to a further issue, additional queries may nevertheless be raised.

2. **Duplicate court files**

   a. Duplicate court files must be initialed on the cover by the office manager.

   b. If the original court file is located, the two files must be consolidated.

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

   a. Maintenance

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The current estimated turnaround time for maintenance investigations is approximately 60 days.

An additional maintenance investigator, Rosemary Skosana, has been appointed.

b. Children's Court

Alleged non-compliance with Children's Court orders is currently being referred to the Criminal Courts for enforcement where appropriate.

c. Domestic Violence & Harassment

Partitioning is being provided to assist pro-bono attorneys with confidentiality during consultations with members of the public.

4. Court staff

Practitioners who encounter suspected bribery or other misconduct by court staff are encouraged, where it is lawful and appropriate to do so, to retain as much information as possible, including the name of the staff member concerned and any supporting evidence. This information greatly assists court management in investigating complaints.

If you experience poor service or are not assisted by a member of court staff, please record the staff member's name and provide the details to a member of the JAA EXCO. Anonymous reports are welcome. Detailed information greatly assists us in raising concerns with court management.

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