



TO BE PUBLISHED IN THE PART-III OF THE GAZETTE OF PAKISTAN

## ISLAMABAD HIGH COURT, ISLAMABAD

F.No.183/Legis./IHC/652

Dated: 24/09/2025

### NOTIFICATION

In pursuance of decision of the National Judicial (Policy Making) Committee (NJPMC), made in the 53<sup>rd</sup> Meeting dated 11.07.2025, the Hon'ble Chief Justice of this Court has been pleased to approve following *Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)*:-

(i) **For Attendance of Under -Trial Prisoners (UTPs) through Video Link:**

- a) An 'under-trial prisoner' (UTP), for the purpose of these SOP's, is an individual who has been arrested and is awaiting trial and has not yet been convicted.
- b) Video link rooms are to be established at District Courts and respective jails, equipped with secure internet connectivity for privacy and data protection, high- definition video and microphones with clear audio, adequate lightning, sound proofing and controlled environment/ temperature.
- c) The Court may, in exceptional circumstances, for reasons to be recorded in writing, allow attendance of UTP through video link.
- d) **Caution:** The Court may examine UTP through video link, while observing all due precautions to ensure that UTP as the case may be is free of any form of coercion, threat or undue influence.
- e) Attendance of UTPs may primarily be conducted via video link for routine remand proceedings, pre- trial formalities, bail hearings, non- substantive appearances, case management and adjournment, and for any other proceedings where physical presence is not required, either legally or evidentially. However, UTPs must physically appear for framing of charge and recording of statement under section 342 of *the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898*.
- f) **Confidential consultation:** The Court shall provide adequate opportunity to UTP to consult in privacy with his or her counsel through secure digital means before, during and after the video conferencing for recording any kind of proceeding regarding trial of a UTP.
- g) Where statement of an official witness is to be recorded, and UTP does not personally appear before the Court, the Court will order a multi-point video conference between itself, official witness and UTP to facilitate the recording of the statement of the said witness.
- h) **Maintaining the record:** For the purpose of transparency and preservation of record, all proceedings, conducted through video- link, are to be recorded and be made part of the record of the court and soft copy of the same may also be saved.
- i) **Coordination with jail authorities:**
  - (i) Daily schedule for video link proceedings is to be shared in advance with jail superintendents.
  - (ii) The concerned Jail Superintendent or officer authorized by the Jail Superintendent will coordinate with Court.

(ii) **For Attendance of Official Witnesses through Video Link:**

- a) In order to save time and resources, official witnesses may be permitted to testify via video link, unless the court specifically allows otherwise.
- b) Official witnesses include Government officials, Police officers, Medical officers, and technical witnesses (such as the National Database & Registration Authority (NADRA), Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL), Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) etc.

- c) These witnesses may depose through video link from their respective offices, nearest district court or designated government facility with approved video conferencing capability.
- d) At location of appearance of an official witness, a register or a log of witnesses' appearances, must be maintained, which is to be signed digitally or physically by court staff.
- e) **Authentication of witness:** The credentials and authority of official witness must be verified in advance by the court staff. Such a witness shall, before being examined through video conferencing, must submit proof of his/ her identity. Official witness must:
  - (i) Present original CNIC and departmental card on camera;
  - (ii) Confirm identity under oath;
  - (iii) Be in uniform (if applicable) and appear from an official location.
- (f) **Examination process:**
  - (i) During examination of official witness via video link, no other person or persons will be permitted to participate, save and except with the permission of Court.
  - (ii) As per the common practice observed in Courts, decorum and formality is to be maintained during recording of statements via video link.

### MISCELLANEOUS

- a) In order to ensure security of the video- link proceedings, meeting link shall be communicated to the intended person through a secured channel like encrypted email or secured messages etc.
- b) Access to video conferencing rooms and recordings is to be restricted.
- c) Audit trails and logs of all virtual proceedings are to be implemented.
- d) Technical support and training is to be provided to the judicial officers, court staff, and official witnesses regarding adequate use of video link systems and decorum of virtual hearings.
- e) Well trained IT staff should be available at both ends (courts and jails/ witness centers) to ensure uninterrupted functioning.
- f) A monthly review mechanism is to be adopted at District level to monitor effectiveness, resolve complaints and suggest improvements regarding video conferencing under these SOPs.

(Muhammad Yar Walana)  
REGISTRAR

The Manager,  
Printing Corporation of Pakistan Press,  
University Road,  
Karachi.

Copy forwarded to:-

1. Secretary to Hon'ble Chief Justice, Islamabad High Court.
2. P.S. to Registrar, Islamabad High Court.
3. The Administrative Judge, Special Courts/Tribunals, Federal Judicial Complex, Islamabad.
4. P.A. to Member Inspection Team, Islamabad High Court.
5. The District & Sessions Judges (East & West), Islamabad.
6. The Secretary, District Bar Association, Islamabad.
- ✓ 7. The Assistant Registrar (I.T.), to upload on official website.
8. Office Record.