



Republic of the Philippines  
**Supreme Court**  
Manila

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER**  
**NO. 149-2015**

**Re: DESIGNATION OF SPECIAL COURTS TO HEAR,  
TRY AND DECIDE ELECTION CONTESTS  
INVOLVING ELECTIVE MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS**

**WHEREAS**, under Section 1, Rule 2, The 2010 Rules of Procedure for Municipal Election Contests (The 2010 Rules), Regional Trial Courts (RTCs) shall have exclusive original jurisdiction over all election contests involving elective municipal officials;

**WHEREAS**, under Section 11, Rule 2, The 2010 Rules, the Supreme Court shall designate the RTCs within a judicial region that shall take cognizance of election protests and petitions for *quo warranto*;

**WHEREAS**, under Section 13, Rule 14, The 2010 Rules, the designated election courts shall give preference to election contests over all other cases, except petitions for writs of *habeas corpus*, *amparo* and *habeas data*;

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to the pertinent provision of The 2010 Rules, Administrative Order No. 96-2013, dated 09 May 2013, designating Regional Trial Court branches as Special Courts to hear, try and decide election contests involving elective municipal officials was issued;

**WHEREAS**, Administrative Order No. 96-2013 has to be updated because a number of municipalities have been upgraded to cities, while newly-created RTCs have been organized;

**WHEREAS**, it is expected that election cases will be filed in courts in view of the forthcoming 09 May 2016 local and national elections, and the other elections thereafter;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, in the interest of a speedy and efficient administration of justice and pursuant to Section 11, Rule 2, The 2010 Rules, the following branches of the RTCs are hereby designated to exclusively and speedily hear, try and decide election protests and petitions for *quo warranto* involving elective municipal officials within their respective territorial jurisdictions during local and national elections, until otherwise revoked by the Court:

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STATION

BRANCH

NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION

PASIG CITY

Branch 262

FIRST JUDICIAL REGION

BENGUET

LA TRINIDAD

Branch 62

Branch 63

ILOCOS NORTE

LAOAG CITY

Branch 14

Branch 65

LA UNION

SAN FERNANDO CITY

Branch 27

Branch 66

PANGASINAN

LINGAYEN

Branch 38

Branch 69

DAGUPAN CITY

Branch 40

Branch 41

URDANETA CITY

Branch 46

Branch 48

SECOND JUDICIAL REGION

CAGAYAN

TUGUEGARAO CITY

Branch 3

Branch 10

APPARRI

Branch 7

ISABELA

ILAGAN CITY

Branch 18

SANTIAGO CITY Branch 36

NUEVA VIZCAYA

BAYOMBONG Branch 27

THIRD JUDICIAL REGION

BATAAN

BALANGA CITY Branch 3

BULACAN

MALOLOS CITY Branch 11  
Branch 15  
Branch 84

NUEVA ECIJA

CABANATUAN CITY Branch 25  
Branch 30

GUIMBA Branch 31

GAPAN CITY Branch 34  
Branch 35

STO. DOMINGO Branch 89

PAMPANGA

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO Branch 41  
Branch 47

GUAGUA Branch 49  
Branch 52

ANGELES CITY Branch 58  
Branch 59

TARLAC

TARLAC CITY Branch 64

ZAMBALES

IBA Branch 71



OLONGAPO CITY

Branch 74

**FOURTH JUDICIAL REGION**

**REGION 4-A**

**BATANGAS**

BATANGAS CITY

Branch 3  
Branch 8

BALAYAN

Branch 10

LIPA CITY

Branch 12

**CAVITE**

CAVITE CITY

Branch 16

IMUS CITY

Branch 22

**LAGUNA**

STA. CRUZ

Branch 91

SAN PABLO CITY

Branch 29

CALAMBA CITY

Branch 35  
Branch 92

**QUEZON**

LUCENA CITY

Branch 57  
Branch 58

**RIZAL**

ANTIPOLO CITY

Branch 97  
Branch 100

SAN MATEO

Branch 76

MORONG

Branch 80

BINANGONAN

Branch 67

REGION 4-B

PALAWAN

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY                      Branch 49  
Branch 52

FIFTH JUDICIAL REGION

ALBAY

LEGASPI CITY                                      Branch 2  
Branch 10

LIGAO CITY                                        Branch 11

TABACO CITY                                      Branch 18

CAMARINES SUR

NAGA CITY                                         Branch 19  
Branch 61  
Branch 62

LIBMANAN                                         Branch 29

PILI     Branch 31

IRIGA CITY                                         Branch 37  
Branch 60

CAMARINES NORTE

DAET    Branch 39

MASBATE

MASBATE CITY                                    Branch 45  
Branch 47

SORSOGON

SORSOGON CITY                                 Branch 53

**SIXTH JUDICIAL REGION**

**AKLAN**

**KALIBO**

Branch 5  
Branch 9

**ANTIQUE**

**SAN JOSE**

Branch 12

**CAPIZ**

**ROXAS CITY**

Branch 15  
Branch 17

**ILOILO**

**ILOILO CITY**

Branch 22  
Branch 24  
Branch 35

**NEGROS OCCIDENTAL**

**BACOLOD CITY**

Branch 42  
Branch 49  
Branch 50

**SAN CARLOS CITY**

Branch 59

**SEVENTH JUDICIAL REGION**

**BOHOL**

**TAGBILARAN CITY**

Branch 47  
Branch 49

**CEBU**

**CEBU CITY**

Branch 14  
Branch 17  
Branch 18

**MANDAUE CITY**

Branch 56

NEGROS ORIENTAL

DUMAGUETE CITY

Branch 33  
Branch 39  
Branch 42

EIGHTH JUDICIAL REGION

LEYTE

TACLOBAN CITY

Branch 6  
Branch 34

SAMAR

CATBALOGAN CITY

Branch 29

NINTH JUDICIAL REGION

ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE

DIPOLOG CITY

Branch 6  
Branch 9

ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR

PAGADIAN CITY

Branch 19  
Branch 21

TENTH JUDICIAL REGION

AGUSAN DEL NORTE

BUTUAN CITY

Branch 2  
Branch 3

BUKIDNON

MALAYBALAY CITY

Branch 8

MISAMIS OCCIDENTAL

OROQUIETA CITY

Branch 13

MISAMIS ORIENTAL

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY

Branch 17

Branch 21

Branch 41

ELEVENTH JUDICIAL REGION

DAVAO DEL NORTE

TAGUM CITY

Branch 30

DAVAO DEL SUR

DIGOS CITY

Branch 19

TWELFTH JUDICIAL REGION

LANAO DEL NORTE

ILIGAN CITY

Branch 3

Branch 6

LANAO DEL SUR

MARAWI CITY

Branch 10

For purposes of this Administrative Order, the cases referred herein shall be limited to election protests and petitions for *quo warranto* involving elective municipal officials. All other election-related cases shall be raffled among the regular courts in the station.

In stations where there is only one (1) branch designated as Special Court, the election contest shall be automatically assigned to the said branch. If there are two (2) or more branches designated as Special Courts in a station, the election contest/s shall be raffled among the designated branches. All single-sala courts are considered Special Courts for the above purpose and for this reason shall give priority to these cases in their trial calendars. In multiple-sala stations where there are no Special Courts designated for the purpose, the cases shall be raffled among the regular courts therein.

The Special Courts herein designated, all single-sala courts, and the branches where the election contests are raffled in case of multiple-sala stations where there is no designated special court, shall try and decide the election contests in accordance with The 2010 Rules.



The Special Courts herein designated shall continue to be included in the raffle of cases, criminal and civil, provided that the Executive Judges of the RTCs concerned shall exclude the designated Special Courts from such raffle whenever in their judgment the caseload of these courts will prevent them from conducting the continuous trial of the election contests.

The Branches thus designated as Special Courts shall continue to perform the functions as such within the purview of this Administrative Order even after the retirement, promotion, transfer or detail of the judges appointed/designated thereat. Election contests filed after the Special Courts became vacant due to retirement, promotion, transfer or detail of the presiding/acting judge shall still be raffled/assigned to the said Special Courts. The judge designated to preside over the vacant Special Court shall take cognizance of the cases unless the Supreme Court designates another judge.

In the event of disqualification and voluntary inhibition of the judge of the designated Special Court, the following guidelines shall be observed:

- (1) Where there is only one Special Court in the station, the pairing system for multiple-sala stations subject of Circular No. 7 dated September 23, 1974, as amended, shall apply; and
- (2) Where there are more than two Special Courts in the station, the Executive Judge shall immediately assign the case by raffle to the other or another Special Court. In case the Presiding Judge of the other special court is also disqualified or inhibits himself/herself, the case shall be forwarded to the pairing judge of the Special Court which originally handled the said case. If the pairing judge is also disqualified or inhibits himself/herself, the case shall be raffled to the other regular courts. At the next raffle, an additional case shall be assigned to the disqualified or inhibiting judge/s to replace the case so removed from his/her/their court.

If the judge in a single-branch court voluntarily inhibits himself/herself, the Order of Inhibition shall be transmitted to the pairing judge who shall then hear and decide the case in the court of origin. The determination of the pairing judge shall be in accordance with Annex "A" of A.M. No. 03-8-02-SC dated February 15, 2004 (*Guidelines on the Selection and Appointment of Executive Judges and Defining their Powers, Prerogatives and Duties*). Where the pairing judge who sits in a single-branch RTC is also disqualified or voluntarily inhibits himself/herself, the matter shall be referred by the Clerk of Court to the Executive Judge of the nearest multiple-branch RTC also in accordance with Annex "A", or in his/her absence, to the Vice Executive Judge thereof for assignment by raffle among the judges in the station. However, the case shall remain in the court of origin.

This Administrative Order supersedes Administrative Order No. 96-2013, dated 09 May 2013, and shall take effect immediately.

September 24, 2015



**MARIA LOURDES P. A. SERENO**

Chief Justice  
Chairperson, First Division



**ANTONIO T. CARPIO**  
Associate Justice  
Chairperson, Second Division



**PRESBITERO J. VELASCO, JR.**

Associate Justice  
Chairperson, Third Division

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