



Republic of the Philippines
Supreme Court
Office of the Court Administrator
Manila

CIRCULAR NO. 63-2001

TO: ALL JUDGES AND COURT PERSONNEL OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURTS, SHARI'A DISTRICT COURTS, METROPOLITAN TRIAL COURTS, MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURTS IN CITIES, MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURTS, MUNICIPAL CIRCUIT TRIAL COURTS AND SHARI'A CIRCUIT COURTS

SUBJECT: STRICT OBSERVANCE OF PRESCRIBED WORKING HOURS AND SESSION HOURS AND RULES ON PUNCTUALITY AND ATTENDANCE

To ensure the attainment by all trial courts of their mission to provide prompt and exact judicial services, the following provisions of Administrative Circulars Nos. 1-99, 2-99 and 3-99, all dated January 15, 1999, issued by Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide, Jr. on the strict observance of working hours and session hours by the trial courts and rules on absenteeism and tardiness are reiterated:

I. Administrative Circular No. 1-99

“In inspiring public respect for the justice system, court officials and employees must xxx [s]trictly observe official time. As punctuality is a virtue, absenteeism and tardiness are impermissible.”

II. Administrative Circular 2-99

A. “[A]ll courts must observe the following office hours, without, however, prejudice to the approved flexi-time of certain personnel:

Monday to Friday
8:00 A.M. to 12:00 N
1:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M.”

B. “Absenteeism and tardiness, even if such do not qualify as ‘habitual’ or ‘frequent’ under Civil Service Commission Memorandum Circular No. 04, Series of 1991, shall be dealt with severely, and any falsification of daily time records to cover-up for such absenteeism and/or tardiness shall constitute gross dishonesty or serious misconduct.”

III. Administrative Circular No. 3-99

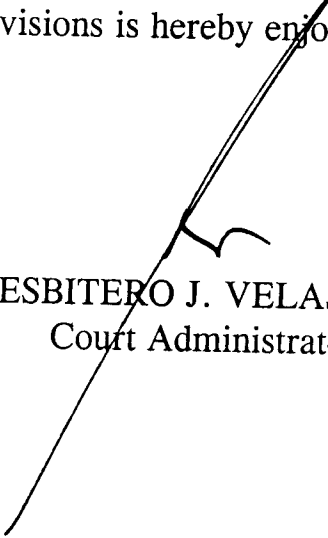
- A. "The session hours of all Regional Trial Courts, Metropolitan Trial Courts, Municipal Trial Court in Cities, Municipal Trial Courts, and Municipal Circuit Trial Courts shall be from 8:30 A.M. to noon and from 2:00 P.M. to 4:30 P.M., from Monday to Friday. The hours in the morning shall be devoted to the conduct of trial, while the hours in the afternoon shall be utilized for (1) the conduct of pre-trial conferences; (2) writing of decisions, resolutions, or orders; or (3) the continuation of trial on the merits, whenever rendered necessary, as may be required by the Rules of Court, statutes, or circulars in specified cases.

"However, in multi-sala courts in places where there are few practicing lawyers, the schedule may be modified upon request of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines such that one-half of the branches may hold their trial in the morning and the other half in the afternoon.

"Except those requiring immediate action, all motions should be scheduled for hearing on Friday afternoons, or if Friday is a non-working day, in the afternoon of the next business day. The unauthorized practice of some judges of entertaining motions or setting them for hearing on any other day or time must be immediately stopped."

Strict compliance with the foregoing provisions is hereby enjoined.

October 3, 2001.


PRESBITERO J. VELASCO, JR.
Court Administrator