



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

OCA CIRCULAR NO. 160-2020

TO : ALL JUDGES AND CLERKS OF COURT OF THE SECOND LEVEL COURTS

SUBJECT : PROPOSED PROCEDURE FOR ISSUANCE OF LEVEL 1 AND 2 CERTIFICATIONS UNDER RULE 138-A PURSUANT TO EN BANC RESOLUTION DATED 25 JUNE 2019 IN A.M. NO. 19-03-24-SC (RULE 138-A [LAW STUDENT PRACTICE])

Pursuant to the recommendation of the Oversight Committee for the Implementation of the Revised Law Student Practice Rule chaired by Hon. Alexander G. Gesmundo, Associate Justice, Supreme Court, all second level courts are hereby **DIRECTED** to strictly **OBSERVE** the "Proposed Procedure for Issuance of Level 1 and 2 Certifications Under Rule 138-A," appended herein as Annexes "A" and "B," in conformity with the *En Banc* Resolution dated 25 June 2019 in **A.M. No. 19-03-24-SC** (*Rule 138-A [Law Student Practice]*).

Any prior circular from the Office of the Court Administrator on this matter which is contrary to the foregoing is hereby superseded.

24 September 2020


JOSE MIDAS P. MARQUEZ
Court Administrator

ANNEX "A"

PROPOSED PROCEDURE FOR ISSUANCE OF LEVEL 1 CERTIFICATION UNDER RULE 138-A

1. The law school, through the dean or the authorized representative, shall submit either personally, by private courier or email to the official judiciary account of the Executive Judge of the Regional Trial Court (RTC) having jurisdiction over the territory where the law school is located, the duly-accomplished application form/s of the law student applicant/s together with an endorsement under oath.
2. Applicable filing fees may be paid either thru the Office of the Clerk of Court of the Regional Trial Court concerned or thru any branch of Landbank.
3. The Executive Judge of the RTC shall evaluate and approve the application/s and shall notify the law school which indorsed the application/s by telephone or email of such approval and the schedule of oath-taking of the law student applicant/s.
4. The Executive Judge concerned shall schedule the oath-taking of the law student applicant/s via videoconference using the MS Teams account of the Executive Judge and shall record such oath-taking.
5. The Executive Judge shall issue the Level 1 Certification/s within ten (10) days from receipt of the application/s and may forward copies thereof to the law school either personally, by private courier or email using the official judiciary account of the Executive Judge. Should the Level 1 Certification/s be sent by email, copies thereof should be in uneditable portable document format (PDF) to be printed by the law school which indorsed the application/s pending receipt of the original hard copies from the Executive Judge.
6. The subject of email communications should follow this format:
 - a. For applications sent to the Executive Judge by the law school

R138-A + Law School Name Acronym + Location of School + L-1
App + Academic Year + Date of Submission (day, month, year)

*(Example: Rule 138-A UPD Quezon City L-1 App AY2020_2021 15
September 2020)*

b. For certifications sent by the Executive Judge to the law school

Rule 138-A + Law School Name Acronym + Location of School +
L-1 Cert + Academic Year + Date of Issuance (day, month, year)

*(Example: Rule 138-A + UPD Quezon City L-1 Cert AY2020_2021
15 September 2020)*

ANNEX "B"

PROPOSED PROCEDURE FOR ISSUANCE OF LEVEL 2 CERTIFICATION UNDER RULE 138-A

1. The law school, through the dean or the authorized representative, shall submit either personally, by private courier or email to the official judiciary account of the Executive Judge of the Regional Trial Court (RTC) having jurisdiction over the territory where the law school is located, the duly-accomplished application form/s of the law student applicant/s together with an endorsement under oath.
2. Applicable filing fees may be paid either thru the Office of the Clerk of Court of the RTC concerned or thru any branch of Landbank.
3. The Executive Judge of the RTC shall (a) evaluate the application/s together with the attachments, and (b) recommend to the Office of the Court Administrator (OCA), thru the concerned Deputy Court Administrators (DCAs) or Assistant Court Administrators (ACAs), the approval and issuance of the Level 2 Certification/s. The Executive Judge may send his recommendation to OCA via email. However, if the Executive Judge finds the application to be incomplete, the law school shall be notified by telephone or email and shall be required to comply with the requirements within five (5) days from receipt of notice;
4. If the concerned DCA/ACA approves the recommendation of the Executive Judge, he/she shall issue the Level 2 Certification/s within five (5) days from receipt of the recommendation. The DCA/ACA may forward copies of the Level 2 Certification/s to the Executive Judge either personally, by private courier or by email. Should the Level 1 Certification be sent by email, copies thereof should be in uneditable portable document format (PDF) which may be printed by the law school which indorsed the application/s pending receipt of the original hard copies from the DCA/ACA.

5. Upon receipt of the Level 2 Certification/s, the Executive Judge shall notify the law school which indorsed the application/s by telephone or email and the schedule of oath-taking of the law student applicant/s. The oath-taking shall be done via videoconference using the MS Teams account of the Executive Judge who shall record the proceedings.
6. The subject of email communications should follow this format:

- a. For applications sent to the Executive Judge by the law school

R138-A + Law School Name Acronym + Location of School + L-2 App + Academic Year + Date of Submission (day, month, year)

(Example: Rule 138-A UPD Quezon City L-2 App AY2020_2021 15 September 2020)

- b. For certifications sent by the DCA to the EJ, and by the EJ to the law school

Rule 138-A + Law School Name Acronym + Location of School + L-2 Cert + Academic Year + Date of Issuance (day, month, year)

(Example: Rule 138-A + UPD Quezon City L-2 Cert AY2020_2021 15 September 2020)