



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

**OCA CIRCULAR NO. 152-2021**

**TO : ALL JUDGES AND PERSONNEL OF THE  
FIRST AND SECOND LEVEL COURTS**

**SUBJECT : INTERIM GUIDELINES ON ABSENCES OF  
JUDGES AND COURT PERSONNEL DUE  
TO COVID-19 VACCINATION AND/OR  
ADVERSE EVENTS FOLLOWING THE  
IMMUNIZATION OF COVID-19 VACCINE**

Pursuant to Civil Service Commission Memorandum Circular No. 16, s.2021 dated November 12, 2021, the following guidelines shall be observed for the treatment of absences incurred by the judges and court personnel of the first and second level courts (permanent, temporary, provisional, substitute, coterminous, casual, contractual or fixed term) during the day of the inoculation of COVID-19 vaccine and/or the required treatment/recuperation period from the Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI) of COVID-19 vaccine:

1. Absence from work during the day of inoculation of the first and second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, including future booster shots, whenever applicable, shall be considered as excuse absence and the concerned judges or court personnel will be entitled to a SPECIAL PRIVILEGE LEAVE with respect thereto as previously approved by Chief Justice Alexander G. Gesmundo.
2. Judges and personnel availing the one (1) day excused absence during the inoculation of the COVID-19 vaccine shall submit proof of vaccination schedule, e.g. vaccination card, along with the application for leave of absence, five (5) days prior to the scheduled vaccination date, if applicable.
3. Absence from work for one (1) day due to the required treatment/recuperation period from AEFI of the first and second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, including future booster shots, whenever applicable, shall be considered as excused absence. However, an application for a special privilege leave should be filed otherwise the absence will be considered as absence without official leave.

4. The following table shows the allowable period of excused absence based on the following classification of AEFI and the documentary requirements upon return to work:

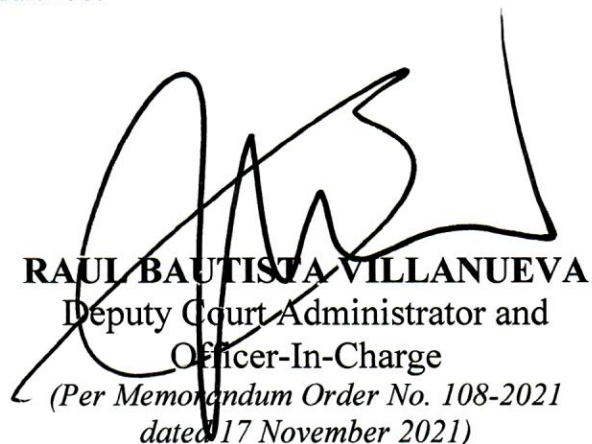
<b>Classification of AEFI</b>	<b>Allowable Period of Excused Absences</b>	<b>Required Documents Upon Return to Work</b>
<p>1. Serious AEFIs</p> <p>a. Hospitalization (Severe reaction with unusual symptoms such as, but not limited to difficulty of breathing, wheezing, swelling of the face, and tightening of the throat which requires hospitalization) or prolonging of an existing hospitalization;</p> <p>b. Persistent or significant disability or incapacity;</p> <p>c. Life-threatening; or medically important event or reaction</p>	<p>Treatment and recuperation for a maximum period of fifteen (15) calendar days.</p>	<p>Submit the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Application for Leave of Absence</li> <li>2. Copy of Immunization/ Vaccination Card, with indicated information on the local vaccination operations center or vaccination site</li> <li>3. Medical Certificate and/or clinical abstract indicating the diagnosis, management done and number of days of recuperation needed, signed by the attending physician, either in original copy or electronic copy, with indicated contact information</li> </ol>
<p>2. Non-serious or minor AEFIs such as, but not limited to:</p> <p>a. tenderness, pain, warmth, redness, itching or swelling on the arm where you got the injection</p> <p>b. generally feeling unwell</p> <p>c. feeling tired (fatigue)</p> <p>d. chills or feeling feverish</p> <p>e. headache</p> <p>f. joint pain or muscle ache</p>	<p>Treatment and recuperation for a maximum period of three (3) calendar days.</p>	<p>Submit the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Application for Leave of Absence</li> <li>2. Copy of Immunization/ Vaccination Card, with indicated information on the local vaccination operations center or vaccination site</li> <li>3. Medical Certificate signed by an attending physician at the vaccination center or medical facility where the official or employee underwent observation due to AEFI.</li> </ol>

5. In the event that the required period of treatment/recuperation exceeds the maximum period of excused absence as provided in the above table, absences incurred thereafter shall be treated as sick leave and shall be charged against their sick leave credits, if any.
6. In the event of circumstances above-mentioned wherein the employee has exhausted his/her sick leave credits, Section 56 of the Omnibus Rules on Leave shall apply allowing the use of vacation leave credits in lieu of sick leave credits. In case the vacation leave credits have been exhausted, the employee may apply for sick leave of absence without pay.
7. Judges and personnel who experienced AEFI of COVID-19 vaccine which causes permanent disability may be entitled to benefits as provided under R.A. No. 8291.
8. Judges and personnel covered by these Guidelines whose absence during the first and second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and/or the required treatment/recuperation from AEFI of the COVID-19 vaccine was deducted against their leave credits prior to the issuance of these Interim Guidelines can have the said leave credits restored.

This circular shall take effect retroactively on March 1, 2021, the official rollout of the vaccination drive in the Philippines, and shall remain in full force and effect during the period of state of calamity as declared under Proclamation No. 1218 dated September 10, 2021 issued by the President of the Philippines, or one (1) year after the government has declared the completion of the COVID-19 Vaccination Program.

For your information and guidance.

December 17, 2021.



**RAUL BAUTISTA VILLANUEVA**  
Deputy Court Administrator and  
Officer-In-Charge  
(Per Memorandum Order No. 108-2021  
dated 17 November 2021)