



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

OCA CIRCULAR NO. 10-2024

TO : ALL JUDGES AND CLERKS OF COURT OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURTS

SUBJECT: UNIFORM GUIDELINES CONCERNING CASES WHERE THE ACCUSED OR ONE OF THE ACCUSED IS A LOCAL OFFICIAL

In the 31 July 2019 Resolution in A.M. No. 19-05-131-RTC (*Re: Determination of judicial region and court to try Criminal Cases Nos. 3875-K and 3876-K, both entitled People of the Philippines v. Mayor Josh Edward S. Cobangbang, et. al., pending before Branch 24, Regional Trial Court [RTC], Cabugao, Ilocos Sur*), the Court (**Third Division**) **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT**, for uniformity, the following guidelines concerning cases where the accused or one of the accused is a local official, to wit:

- (a) within three (3) days from the filing of the case, where the accused or one of the accused is a public official, the case shall be forwarded to the nearest RTC of the nearest judicial region from the judicial region where the official holds office pursuant to Section 2 of R.A. No. 10660 (*An Act Strengthening Further the Functional and Structural Organization of the Sandiganbayan, Further amending Presidential Decree No. 1606, as amended, and Appropriating Funds Therefor*);
- (b) the determination of the nearest judicial region shall be judicial region wherein the nearest RTC is located from the RTC where the case is filed. For instance, a case filed before Branch 61, RTC, Gumaca, Quezon, may be forwarded to Branch 64, RTC, Labo, Camarines, (sic) Norte, or a case filed before Branch 31, RTC, City of San Pedro, Laguna, may be forwarded to the RTC, Muntinlupa City. The nearest RTC of the nearest judicial region shall be determined by the Presiding Judge in single-*sala* stations or the Executive Judge in multiple-*sala* stations;
- (c) where the case is filed in a multiple-*sala* court, the records of the case shall be returned to the Executive Judge, who shall forward the same to the nearest RTC of the nearest judicial region;
- (d) where the nearest RTC of the nearest judicial region is a multiple-*sala* station, within three (3) days from receipt of the case records, the case shall be raffled among the judges in the station; and

(e) the Judge of the court where the case involving a local official is raffled shall hear, try[,] and decide the case in accordance with the Rules.

Relative thereto, it is hereby clarified that the *public officials* referred to in item (a) in the decision are as follows:

"(1) Officials of the executive branch occupying the positions of regional director and higher, otherwise classified as Grade '27' and higher, of the Compensation and Position Classification Act of 1989 (Republic Act No. 6758), specifically including:

"(a) Provincial governors, vice-governors, members of the sangguniang panlalawigan, and provincial treasurers, assessors, engineers, and other provincial department heads:

"(b) City mayors, vice-mayors, members of the sangguniang panlungsod, city treasurers, assessors, engineers, and other city department heads;

"(c) Officials of the diplomatic service occupying the position of consul and higher;

"(d) Philippine army and air force colonels, naval captains, and all officers of higher rank;

"(e) Officers of the Philippine National Police while occupying the position of provincial director and those holding the rank of senior superintendent and higher;

"(f) City and provincial prosecutors and their assistants, and officials and prosecutors in the Office of the Ombudsman and special prosecutor;

"(g) Presidents, directors or trustees, or managers of government-owned or controlled corporations, state universities or educational institutions or foundations.

"(2) Members of Congress and officials thereof classified as Grade '27' and higher under the Compensation and Position Classification Act of 1989.¹

For your information, guidance, and strict compliance.

This Circular amends OCA Circular No. 211-2019 dated 11 November 2019.

12 January 2024



RAUL B. VILLANUEVA
Court Administrator

¹ Section 2 of R.A. No. 10660.