

Home department issues SOPs for registration of documents

The Sindh Home Department, in pursuance of the instructions given by the provincial government, has issued standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the registration of documents.

The notification issued with the subject 'Standard operating procedures for the registration of documents' reads: "Whereas, owing to the apprehensions of the spread of COVID-19, the offices of sub-registrars were closed vide the circular dated March 22, 2020, the said order having been extended on March 31, 2020, April 5 and April 17, 2020.

"And whereas, with the prolongation of the lockdown, the workload of the registration of documents is piling up; and whereas, the construction sector has been declared as an 'industry' by the Government of Pakistan with accompanying incentive package, resulting in further escalation of the demand for registration of documents.

"There is a realisation that the offices of sub-registrars are public dealing offices, and that with the piling up of pending work, there ought to be an initial rush of aspirants for registration, needless to mention that even in the ordinary course of life, overcrowding in these offices is a commonly observed phenomenon; and whereas, the Government of Sindh is contemplating to permit functioning of certain essential services under a set of 'standard operating procedures'.

"Now, therefore, the Board of Revenue Sindh is pleased to allow functioning/opening of the offices of sub-registrars in Karachi Division with effect from May 4, 2020 with the condition of strict observance of the following SOPs."

The SOPs

The notification states the following SOPs to be observed: "The offices of sub-registrars will start functioning from 10am daily on all working days and close at 4pm during Ramazan-ul-Mubarak and on the notified office timings of the Government of Sindh in the subsequent months.

"Each aspirant for registration of document will contact the sub-registrar concerned through one of the messaging services (SMS/WhatsApp) to get an appointment of a fixed time reserved for the execution of his or her document.

"Each party will get a fixed time of 20 minutes, and the party concerned will be obligated to reach within the office premises at least five minutes earlier, and get their presence acknowledged by the official concerned.

“No person will be allowed to enter the office without demonstrable message of appointment. Only actual executants and identifiers will be permitted to enter the office, all of whom will make sure that they present themselves in the office at the fixed time. If any one of the mandatory signatories is missing, the document will not be received, and a new time will be given.

“The executants will bring along their hand sanitisers; sanitise their hands before and after the execution and registration of the document; wear a recommended face mask; maintain social distancing among themselves and with the staff.

“No executant and identifier will be allowed entry in the office premises unless he or she has adopted the above protective measures. The executants and identifiers will stand in a queue at their designated spot marked by the sub-registrars at three feet distance for each person.

“The entire job will be completed within 20 minutes, after which the parties will leave the office, and the next party will be called in. For the party in waiting, there will as well be markings at three feet distance for each individual in the corridor or other appropriate place to be identified by the sub-registrar concerned. Such notices will be displayed at conspicuous places for public information.

“No handshakes or other means of body touching will be permissible; it will be lawful for the sub-registrars to defer registration by putting a specific note about violation of these SOPs and/or other relevant SOPs notified by the home department, Government of Sindh, by anyone or more persons from among the executing parties.

“Minimum nuclear staff will be called for duty; the sub-registrars will be duty-bound to follow and implement the SOPs; the sub-registrars will keep their offices, records, etc. disinfected continually; the entire staff will put on face masks and hand gloves of appropriate specifications.

“The district registrar will constitute monitoring teams, and will himself carry out surprise visits to the offices of sub-registrars to check if the SOPs are being followed in letter and spirit.

“A daily log of inspections along with a brief account of the observations will be submitted to the inspector general of registration and member of Registration, Stamps & Evacuee Property, Board of Revenue.”