

RE : Supreme Court (“SC”) *Administrative Circular No. 37-2020*  
*Pilot testing of hearings through video conferencing for persons deprived of liberty in criminal cases*

DATE ISSUED : 27 April 2020

-----



#### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN ?

- This means that hearings on **URGENT MATTERS** in criminal cases involving Persons Deprived of their Liberty (“PDL”) may be conducted via video conferencing on **IDENTIFIED COURTS** throughout the country. All court stations in the National Capital Region are **included** in the list of **IDENTIFIED COURTS** for pilot testing.
- Criminal hearings via video conferencing shall cover only **PDLs** and may apply to all stages of trial in **newly-filed** and **pending** criminal cases, including but not limited to, arraignment, pre-trial, bail, hearings, trial proper and promulgation of judgement.
- It is worth mentioning that the video conference hearings in criminal cases are only for **PILOT TESTING** and **SHALL APPLY ONLY DURING THIS PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PERIOD.**




#### HERE'S AN EXAMPLE :



- If Juan dela Cruz is detained in a Quezon City jail because of a crime he allegedly committed (ie: theft) on 2 May 2020, his arraignment may be done via video conferencing during this public health emergency period.

*Paul V. Mercado is a lawyer at M & Associates, a full-service firm located at Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City.*

*This article is for general information purposes only and should not be used as a substitute for specific advice.*

 +63 (02) 8863-0601

 [inquiry@m-associates.com](mailto:inquiry@m-associates.com)

 <https://m-associates.com>