



FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

# **National Minimum Standards, 2025**

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**NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS, 2025**

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## Foreword

### NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS, 2025

The Administration of Criminal Justice Act (ACJA), passed in 2015, has significantly improved the criminal justice system in Nigeria. It has made the trial of high-profile corruption cases more achievable with several resulting in convictions, while others have been resolved through plea bargaining and other non-custodial methods. Similarly, there has been recorded success in stolen asset recovery and speedy delivery of justice. The enactment of the ACJA at the federal level in 2015, inspired several states to adopt similar laws. However, challenges remain, such as case delays, congested courts and overcrowded correctional centers. Many issues from the pre-2015 system persist.

In 2023, the Federal Ministry of Justice, in partnership with the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies (CSLS), Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption (RoLAC), and other relevant stakeholders, convened a National Stakeholders' Forum to review the implementation of the ACJA and Administration of Criminal Justice Laws (ACJLs) of various States. The forum led to the adoption of the National Minimum Standards (NMS) for effective implementation and it recommended forming a National Working Group (NWG) to coordinate reforms across the federal and state levels.

This document represents the outcome of collaborative efforts by the Federal Ministry of Justice through the Department of Administration of Criminal Justice and Reform (ACJ&RD), State Ministries of Justice, the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), CSLS, RoLAC/IIIDEA, and other stakeholders.

The NMS draws from the ACJA, ACJLs, and other relevant laws. It highlights the essential standards and elements of criminal justice administration, which all institutions and agencies involved in criminal justice are expected to adhere to. These standards serve as benchmarks for reviewing and evaluating justice practices by Ministries of Justice, courts, law enforcement agencies and correctional centres.

I urge all State Attorneys-General, courts and other Justice delivery Institutions to adopt these standards and align their laws and practices where needed. When consistently applied, these standards will enhance the effectiveness of the criminal justice system in addressing wrongdoing, and consequently, strengthening accountability, democracy and the rule of law.

I therefore commend these National Minimum standards to all.

LATEEF O. FAGBEMI, SAN  
*Attorney-General of the Federation  
and Minister of Justice*



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# THE NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS (NMS) ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT/ LAWS (ACJA/ACJLs)

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Administration of Criminal Justice Act (ACJA) was enacted in 2015, but challenges with its implementation persist. Similarly, each of Nigeria's 36 states has passed its own version, called the Administration of Criminal Justice Law (ACJL). However, passing the law is just the first step, proper implementation remains a significant challenge. Despite these laws being in place, the criminal justice system in Nigeria continues to struggle.

Some key challenges affecting the administration of criminal justice in Nigeria include inadequate investigations by law enforcement agencies, weak prosecution efforts, delays in case resolution, court backlogs and overcrowding in correctional facilities. While some progress has been made in prosecuting high-profile corruption cases, many correctional centers remain severely overcrowded, often with pre-trial detainees, including children. Prolonged delays in deciding cases send the wrong message to the public, suggesting that criminal behaviour may go unpunished. This lack of deterrence encourages societal ills such as corruption, terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, armed robbery, abuse of power and recidivism.

## **THE NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS PROJECT**

The National Minimum Standards Project is a collaborative initiative of the Federal Ministry of Justice, State Ministries of Justice, civil society organisations and development partners, aimed at improving the implementation of the ACJA and ACJLs at both federal and state levels.

## **BACKGROUND**

Before the ACJA was enacted, different regions of Nigeria operated under different criminal procedure frameworks. Northern States applied the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC), which governed criminal proceedings in that region, while the Southern States relied on the Criminal Procedure Act (CPA). These regional differences created inconsistencies in how crimes were prosecuted across the country, leading to gaps in effectiveness. Criminal activities often span across state borders, requiring a coordinated and consistent approach to investigation and prosecution. The ACJA reforms were introduced to harmonise criminal justice processes nationwide. However, states did not adopt identical provisions in their respective ACJLs, resulting in continued procedural variations across the country.

To ensure that Nigeria's criminal justice system becomes more efficient and accessible to all, including children, and capable of effectively combating corruption, it is essential to establish uniform standards for justice delivery across the country.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE NMS**

The objectives of the National Minimum Standards include to create a:

- (a) national framework for evaluating the implementation of the ACJA and ACJLs; and
- (b) national score-sheet to track and display the performance of each State.

## **PURPOSE OF THE NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS**

The National Minimum Standards are to:

- (a) provide a standardised evaluation framework and common benchmark for assessing the performance of criminal justice reforms and institutions across the country;
- (b) promote healthy competition among states and encourage improvements in their criminal justice systems by fostering competition based on measurable performance; and
- (c) provide a strong basis for advocacy efforts to secure added resources and investment in criminal justice administration.

## **PART 1**

### **MINIMUM STANDARDS AT THE PRE-TRIAL STAGE**

#### **CASE MANAGEMENT**

##### **1.0 Pre-trial Hearing**

1.1. Every criminal court in all jurisdictions shall conduct pre-trial case management hearing to ensure a hitch-free trial following arraignment.

1.2. Pre-trial case management includes:

- (a) early identification of the real issues in the case;
- (b) early assessment of the needs of witnesses;
- (c) achieving certainty as to what must be done, by whom and when, by the early setting of a timetable for the progress of the case;
- (d) monitoring the progress of the case and compliance with court orders and directions;
- (e) ensuring that evidence, whether disputed or not, is presented in the shortest and clearest way;
- (f) discouraging delays by addressing as many aspects of the case as possible in a single session and avoiding unnecessary proceedings;
- (g) encouraging the participants to co-operate in the progression of the case;
- (h) making effective use of technology; and
- (i) promoting diversion of cases involving children in conflict with the law and ensuring the delivery of child-friendly justice.

1.3. The court shall actively manage each case by issuing an order or directions appropriate to the needs of the case as early as possible.

1.4. Where appropriate video or audio-visual link facilities are available, the court shall use or direct the use of such facilities, whether an application for such a direction has been made or not.

1.5. The minimum standard for criminal trial after arraignment, is day-to-day until judgment. That does not necessarily mean trials on each consecutive day, but accentuates effective case management.

1.6. The case management timetable agreed by the parties at the pre-trial stage shall be in conformity with the timelines stipulated in the ACJA and ACJLs.

1.7. Following arraignment, every court shall consider the application of any appropriate restorative justice mechanism in the best interest of the state, defendant, and the victim.

## **2.0. Witness Support Unit**

2.1. Each jurisdiction shall establish a Witness Support Unit either at the office of the Chief Judge or the Ministry of Justice.

2.2. The Federal Government, Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Administration, State Governments or specialised agencies shall put in place a mechanism for paying witness expenses, either through the court, Ministry of Justice or specialised agencies, to enable witnesses attend court hearings.

2.3. The Federal Government, FCT Administration and State Governments shall make regulations to ensure the safety, support, and protection of witnesses.

## **TIMELINES**

### **3.0. Time limit for issuance of legal advice**

3.1. The Attorney-General of the Federation and the Attorneys-General of the States shall ensure that legal advice is issued within 14 days from the date a case file is received from the investigating agency.

3.2. The Attorney-General of the Federation and the Attorneys-General of the States shall ensure that the police and the court each receives a copy of the legal advice within the said 14 days.

### **4.0. Filing of criminal charge**

4.1. Each jurisdiction, federal or state, shall provide structures to facilitate efficient filling and assignment of criminal cases. This shall include the use of:

- (a) electronic filing of charges and other court processes; and
- (b) electronic assignment of criminal cases to the courts.

4.2. A charge shall be filed within seven days after vetting and approval of the charge.

4.3. A form for legal representation shall be filed and served along with the charge.

### **5.0. Assignment of charges**

5.1. A charge or information shall be assigned to a court for trial within seven working days of its filing.

5.2. The court to which the case is assigned shall within seven working days, issue a hearing notice to the parties, physically or electronically.

5.3. Where a Judge or Magistrate is elevated to a higher court, retires, or is unable to continue with the trial, the head of the court shall re-assign the case to another Judge or Magistrate within 14 days.

#### **6.0. Service of charge or information**

6.1. The Registrar of court shall ensure prompt service of the hearing notice and charge, not more than seven working days from the date of issue.

6.2. Rules of Court or Practice Direction shall provide for service of charge by post, e-mail or other electronic means possible. Service by electronic means shall be deemed to be proper service once it is sent to the electronic mail address and telephone number via SMS or WhatsApp or any other mode of electronic communication provided by the suspect.

#### **7.0. Timetable for trial**

7.1. The court and all parties shall comply with any agreed timetable for progressing the trial.

#### **8.0. Sanctions for non-compliance**

8.1. The Rules or Practice Direction shall impose a reasonable sanction, including costs where there is non-compliance with the timelines stipulated by the law.

#### **9.0. Bail**

9.1. The heads of courts exercising criminal jurisdiction shall establish Bail Information Management Systems (BIMS) that is designed to capture information such as names, biometric data and National Identification Number (NIN), and any other relevant data of suspects or defendants, and their sureties for all bails processed through the courts.

9.2. A person shall not be prevented from standing as a surety for bail because of sex or gender.

9.3. Before granting administrative bail, law enforcement agencies shall obtain and verify the names, addresses, temporary and permanent home addresses, telephone numbers, National Identification Numbers, and any other relevant data of suspects and their sureties.

9.4. A Judge or Magistrate may grant bail suo motu in appropriate circumstances.

9.5. All heads of courts shall take immediate steps to operationalise the provisions of the ACJA and ACJLs on bonds persons, as applicable to their courts and shall ensure the existence of Regulations to prevent the abuse or exploitation of suspects or defendants by licensed bondspersons.

9.6. Every investigating and prosecuting agency shall establish a bail management Unit to ensure compliance with paragraph 9.3 above.

## **10.0. Remand Protocol**

10.1. Remand proceedings protocol shall be modelled after the provisions of section 293 of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act.

10.2. Every remand order shall stipulate the duration of the order.

10.3. A child shall not be remanded in an adult remand or custodial facility.

10.4. The FCT and State Governments shall ensure the operationalisation of family courts and the application of child justice procedures in all cases involving children.

10.5. The Nigerian Correctional Service or any other detention, remand, custodial or rehabilitation centre, shall provide all necessary facilities to address the special needs of female inmates, including pregnant women, nursing mothers and children in custody, such as medical and nutritional needs.

10.6. The Nigerian Correctional Service or any other detention, remand, custodial or rehabilitation centre, shall provide all necessary facilities to address the special needs of persons with disabilities.

10.7. The interval of adjournment when Remand order is made shall not exceed 14 days.

10.8. An application for renewal of a remand order may be granted if the prosecution makes a case justifying the renewal, and shall not be granted as a matter of course.

10.9. At the expiration of the final remand order, a suspect shall be released unconditionally where a charge has not been filed against the suspect in a court of competent jurisdiction.

10.10. Applications for remand in cases involving allegations of capital offences shall be made only at the High Court.

10.11. The Registrar of the Court shall submit quarterly reports to the ACJMC secretariats or its equivalent bodies, detailing all remand applications that did not result in the filing of charges after the expiration of the remand period.

10.12. A court seized of remand proceedings shall submit quarterly returns of all remands commenced and dealt with in the court to the Chief Judge.

10.13. The Nigerian Correctional Service or any detention facility, shall forward monthly returns of all persons remanded to the ACJMC or its equivalent bodies.

10.14. The officer in charge of a correctional facility shall at the expiration of the remand period, notify the court in writing for appropriate directions.

10.15. Upon the expiration of a remand order, the court shall vacate the order immediately, or not later than 72 hours.

## **11.0. Inspection and reporting obligations of Judges and Magistrates**

11.1. The Chief Judge of the Federal High Court, FCT or State High Courts shall make adequate administrative arrangements for logistics, funding and security to enable designated magistrates to effectively discharge their obligations to visit and inspect of police stations, and for judges to visit other places of detention within their jurisdiction monthly.

11.2. Where in the course of the visit, a Judge or Magistrate discovers that a child is held in an adult correctional facility or detention centre, the Judge or Magistrate shall, in exercise of inherent powers make appropriate orders for the removal and transfer of the child; and may require the detaining authority to show cause why the child should not be released either unconditionally or on reasonable terms.

11.3. The report of the visits and inspections shall be forwarded to the appropriate authority and ACJMCs or its equivalent bodies for review, analysis and necessary remedial action. The ACJMCs or its equivalent bodies shall, within 14 days of their periodic meetings, share the report with the Attorney-General, Chief Judge and any other relevant stakeholder in the administration of criminal justice.

11.4. ACJMCs or its equivalent bodies shall develop a standard procedure to guide the visitation and inspection of police stations and other places of detention, including templates for reporting the conditions of detention and wellbeing of the detainees.

11.5. ACJMCs, its equivalent bodies or Ministry of Justice shall organise capacity building programmes for Judges, Magistrates and law enforcement agencies on the implementation of child justice procedures, including, but not limited to diversion.

11.6. Upon the receipt of the visitation reports to detention facilities, the ACJMCs or its equivalent bodies, shall review and evaluate the report, and identify actionable points for implementation.

11.7. The ACJMCs or its equivalent bodies in evaluating the visitation reports, shall identify for commendation and reward, Judges, Magistrates, heads of police stations and other places of detention with outstanding performance in the discharge of their monthly visitation obligations.

11.8. The ACJMCs or its equivalent bodies, shall identify individuals and law enforcement agencies that obstruct or refuse to cooperate with the visiting and inspecting Judges or Magistrates, and shall submit a formal report to the appropriate authorities for necessary sanctions.

## PART 2

### MINIMUM STANDARDS AT THE TRIAL STAGE

#### 1.0. Defence Disclosure Obligations

1.1. The prosecution shall frontload its evidence which shall include extra-judicial statement of the defendant(s), witness statement on oath, documents and expert opinions that the prosecution may wish to rely on during the trial.

1.2. A defendant is at liberty to frontload his defence during the pre-trial stage.

1.3. A defendant shall disclose the defence he or she intends to rely on within 14 days after the close of the prosecution's case:

(a) if the defendant intends to enter his or her defence; or

(b) after a no-case submission has been overruled by the court and the defendant is called upon to enter his or her defence, without prejudice to the right of the defendant to decide not to give evidence.

1.4. A defendant entering his or her defence shall frontload witness statements, documents and expert opinions that he or she intends to rely on during the defence.

1.5. Disclosure obligations shall apply in all courts exercising criminal jurisdiction.

1.6. A Practice Direction may provide for defence disclosure pending the amendment of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act or Administration of Criminal Justice Laws, where applicable.

1.7. Where a defendant intends to object to the admissibility of his or her confessional statement on the ground that the statement was not made voluntarily, the defendant shall, in the opening statement or not later than seven days before the commencement of trial or at such a later date as the court may permit, file a notice to that effect.

1.8. The notice shall be served on the prosecutor within seven days, failing which, the defendant shall be deemed to have waived his right to object to the admissibility of his confessional statement.

1.9. The prosecution shall as part of its case, call witnesses to adduce evidence to proving that the statement was made voluntarily.

1.10. The defendant shall as part of the defence during his or her defence, call witnesses and adduce evidence to prove that the confessional statement was not made voluntarily.

1.11. At the conclusion of the trial, the defendant and the prosecution shall, in their final addresses, present legal arguments on the admissibility or otherwise of the confessional statement.

1.12. The presiding Judge or Magistrate in delivering his final judgement, shall first rule on the objection to the admissibility or otherwise of the confessional statement.

## **2.0. Arraignment**

2.1. Where a defendant is not represented by a legal practitioner, the court shall inform him of his rights under the ACJ legislation and the Constitution before he takes his plea. Where a defendant fails to secure the services of a legal practitioner of his choice, after two adjournments not exceeding a total of 30 days, the court shall refer the matter to the Legal Aid Council of Nigeria, Office of the Public Defender, Nigerian Bar Association or other bodies or persons rendering free legal services for representation, etc.

2.2. Electronic arraignment may be conducted through video or audio-visual links.

## **3.0. Trial in absentia**

3.1. In appropriate circumstances, after arraignment, a court shall not be precluded from conducting a trial, delivering judgment and passing sentence on an absconding defendant.

## **4.0. Transfer of trial Judge or Magistrate**

4.1. Where a trial Judge or Magistrate is transferred, the trial Judge or Magistrate shall continue to hear and determine all pending criminal cases that are at an advanced stage.

4.2. A case is considered to be at an advanced stage, if the prosecution has called at least three witnesses out of the total number of witnesses listed, closed its case or the case is for defence.

## **5.0. Stay of proceedings**

5.1. Stay of trial proceedings on account of an interlocutory application or appeal is prohibited.

5.2. The ruling on any interlocutory matter shall be delivered at the time of judgment on the substantive matter.

## **6.0. Plea bargaining**

6.1. States shall have provisions on plea bargaining in their Administration of Criminal Justice Laws that protect the public interest, uphold the interest of justice and prevents abuse of legal process.

6.2. The provisions on plea bargaining in the Administration of Criminal Justice Act and Laws shall be supplemented by Plea Bargaining Guidelines that outline guiding principles and establish procedures and templates designed to promote public confidence, accountability and transparency in the plea bargaining.

6.3. Plea bargaining shall be made available for all offences, provided that due process, public interest, the interest of justice and of the rights of the victim are observed.

6.4. The heads of courts shall provide capacity-building programmes on the application of plea bargaining for Judges, Magistrates and other officers exercising criminal jurisdiction.

6.5. The Attorney-General and heads of prosecuting authorities shall provide capacity-building programmes on the application of plea bargaining for State Counsel or Prosecutors and conduct sensitisation workshops for defence counsel.

#### **7.0. Case Tracking**

7.1 The Attorney-General of the Federation and Attorneys-General of States shall each deploy case tracking systems for monitoring the progress of otherwise of their cases. This will include the assignment of cases to Counsel(s), conduct of cases in court, the progress made at each stage of the proceedings and taking of remedial action where necessary.

7.2. The Chief Judges and heads of courts shall deploy case tracking systems for monitoring the progress or otherwise of each case before their courts. This will include the assignment of cases to courts, conduct of cases and the progress of the cases and taking of remedial action where necessary.

7.3. The Attorney-General of the Federation and Attorneys-General of States and the Chief Judges and heads of courts shall explore the option of having an integrated case tracking system that enables the courts, prosecuting authorities, criminal justice agencies and defence counsel to share and access information on pending cases.

### **PART 3**

#### **MINIMUM STANDARDS AT THE POST-TRIAL STAGE**

##### **1.0. Payment of compensation**

1.1. Where a convict has served his term of imprisonment but is unable to pay the compensation imposed by the court, the Sentencing Guidelines should provide measures for these circumstances.

1.2. Where a court imposes a sentence that includes the payment of monetary compensation by a convict, the sentence should include the option of community service or such other orders as the court may deem fit to make in the circumstances.

1.3. The Federal Government, FCT and State Governments shall establish a Trust or Compensation Fund for victims of crime.

### **PART 4**

#### **CROSS-CUTTING THEMES**

##### **1.0. Early Engagement between investigators and prosecutors**

1.1. Where there is reasonable suspicion that a suspect has committed an offence punishable with death or imprisonment for a term of 14 years and above, the investigating authority shall ensure that investigation is conducted in conjunction with designated Law Officers from the Ministry of Justice or prosecutors from the relevant investigating authority.

1.2. Upon request by an investigating authority, the Attorney-General shall immediately assign a Law Officer to work with the investigator.

## **2.0. Development of Practice Directions**

2.1. The heads of courts shall develop robust Practice Directions to regulate pre-trial issues, including but not limited to:

- (a) active case management;
- (b) use of technology in trial proceedings;
- (c) plea bargaining;
- (d) disclosure obligations; and
- (e) issues relating to securing the attendance of witnesses.

## **3.0. Control of lay prosecution**

3.1. To prevent the abuse of prosecutorial powers where the ACJL of a state still permits lay prosecution, the state shall provide quality control measures to ensure quality and compliance with the standards stipulated in the ACJL. These measures include the following:

- (a) a charge to be filed by a lay prosecutor at the lower courts shall be vetted and endorsed for filing by the office of the Attorney-General or by a legal practitioner in the Legal Department of the Nigerian Police or a Legal practitioner in any other prosecutorial authority;
- (b) supervision of prosecuting personnel by the Ministry of Justice;
- (c) standard training of lay prosecutors;
- (d) standard operating procedures or guidelines to be issued by the Attorney-General; and
- (e) periodic reports to the ACJMC or its equivalent bodies by the Officer-in-charge of Legal (OC Legal) of cases prosecuted, which shall include number of cases, progress updates, outcome and any impediments encountered in the prosecution of the cases;

3.2. The ACJMC or its equivalent bodies, shall ensure that the information and data arising from the report are collated, analysed, and actionable points identified for implementation.

3.3. The Commissioner of Police shall administer appropriate sanctions where the police fail to prosecute in accordance with the standard operating procedures and guidelines.

3.4. Any member of the public aggrieved by the conduct of a Police prosecutor, may submit a written complaint to the Commissioner of Police, and forward a copy of the complaint to the ACJMC or its equivalent body for necessary remedial action.

## **4.0. Fiat**

4.1. Where a private lawyer is granted a fiat by the Attorney-General, the legal practitioner shall submit quarterly reports to the Attorney-General detailing the progress of the case.

4.2. Where the Attorney-General of the Federation has granted fiats to any State's Attorney-General, the latter shall provide quarterly reports to the Attorney-General of the Federation on the progress or otherwise of cases conducted.

#### **5.0. Adoption of Sentencing Guidelines**

5.1. Heads of courts shall adopt the Sentencing Guidelines that outline the objectives, principles and procedure of sentencing.

5.2. The heads of courts, Ministry of Justice or other relevant agencies shall provide capacity-building programmes on the application of Sentencing Guidelines for Judges, Magistrates and other officers exercising criminal jurisdiction.

5.3. The Attorneys-General shall provide capacity-building programmes on the application of the Sentencing Guidelines for State Counsel and sensitisation workshops for Defense Counsel.

5.4. Sentencing Guidelines shall include provisions requiring judicial officers to consider alternatives to custodial sentences for minor offences and for children who are in conflict with the law.

#### **6.0. Sex Offenders Electronic Register**

6.1. The Federal Government of Nigeria, States Governments and Federal Capital Territory Administration shall each establish a Sex Offender Electronic Register to record information on convicted sex offenders.

#### **7.0. Compensation**

7.1. Where a convict is unable to pay court-ordered compensation to a victim due to ascertainable financial constraints, the victim shall receive compensation from the Government Victim Compensation Trust Fund.

7.2. An individual who has completed a sentence, but is unable to pay the court-ordered compensation to the victim, shall be required to perform community service, agricultural service or other forms of services that benefit the government, a designated private entity or person.

7.3. The wages earned from such service shall be repayable to the Government Victim Compensation Trust Fund.

#### **8.0. Administration of Criminal Justice Monitoring Committees**

8.1. Every State shall establish a body to be known as Administration of Criminal Justice Monitoring Committee (ACJMC) or its equivalent Bodies.

8.2. The composition of the Body shall represent of all stakeholders of Criminal Justice Sector, the Judiciary, Ministry of Justice, Nigeria Police Force and other prosecuting agencies, the DSS, Civil Society Organisations, Legal Aid, Human Rights Commission, Nigerian Bar Association, Nigerian Correctional Services, etc.

8.3. The Federal and State Governments shall ensure that their ACJMC or its equivalent bodies are well funded and included in their annual budget.

8.4. The ACJMC or its equivalent bodies, shall have functional Secretariats, dedicated staff and sub-committees to carry out various functions. The sub-committees shall include, but not limited to:

- (a) decongestion sub-committee;
- (b) visitation sub-committee;
- (c) media and sensitisation sub-committee; and
- (d) child justice sub-committee.

8.5. The ACJMC or its equivalent bodies, shall develop standard operational templates and guidelines for all reporting obligations under the ACJA, ACJLs and these National Minimum Standards.

8.6. The ACJMC or its equivalent bodies, shall adopt specific programmes and measures aimed at ensuring harmonious working relationship among the stakeholders in the Criminal Justice Sector.

8.7. Every ACJMC or its equivalent bodies, shall carry out sensitisation activities in various courts for public complaints and suggestions.

8.8. Heads of courts and Heads of other Criminal Justice Agencies shall ensure that reports from ACJMC or its equivalent bodies, are acted upon within 30 days of receipt.

8.9. The Federal ACJMC shall operate as a coordinating body for all ACJMC or its equivalent bodies across the country, and support the development of uniform standards and templates for implementing the provisions of the ACJA and ACJLs, in order to achieve the objectives of these laws.

8.10. The Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, shall facilitate an annual review and evaluation of all ACJMCs, including the Federal ACJMC, to ensure compliance with the National Minimum Standards on the implementation of the ACJA and ACJLs across the country.

8.11. The ACJMC or its equivalent bodies, shall ensure that all Criminal Justice Reform stakeholders collect and collate relevant data, which will serve as the basis for informed decision making.

8.12. The ACJMC or its equivalent bodies, shall hold regular meetings targeted at implementing specific programmes, identifying problems and determining pathways for solving them.

8.13. The Federal and State Governments shall prioritise the establishment of Criminal Record Registries.

8.14. The ACJMC or its equivalent bodies, shall ensure that their reports contain sufficient data to demonstrate the extent of compliance with the implementation of the ACJA and ACJLs and the reports shall form the basis for advocacy.

## **9.0 Technology**

9.1. The heads of courts at all levels, shall prioritise the automation of courts by providing for E-filing of cases, E-assignment of cases, E-service of processes, case management software, virtual court proceedings, E-recording of court proceedings, audio-virtual or video link connections with custodial centres, Closed-circuit television (CCTV) and other electronic tools to facilitate the speedy conduct of proceedings, accurate record keeping, transcription and retrieval.

9.2. All Attorneys-General shall facilitate the provision of adequate budgetary allocations for the deployment of technology to support the administration of justice.

## **10.0. Duty of Compliance and Implementation**

10.1. It is the duty of all courts, authorities, agencies and persons exercising criminal justice authority in any form, at the pre-trial, trial or post-trial stage, to promote these National Minimum Standards and take concrete measures and actions to comply or ensure compliance with the Standards.

10.2. The head of each agency, institution or organisation in the public sector and civil society organisation shall actively support, promote and facilitate the implementation of the National Minimum Standards.

10.3. The Federal Ministry of Justice, in collaboration with State Ministries of Justice, criminal justice agencies, civil society organisation and development partners, shall conduct periodic peer review meetings and activities aimed at enhancing the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the National Minimum Standards for the effective enforcement of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act and Laws of the various States.

DATED this 5th day of April, 2025.

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