

# QC JUSTICE HALL ON LOCKDOWN OVER SUSPECTED CORONAVIRUS CASE

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The Quezon City Hall of Justice was placed on indefinite lockdown beginning on Monday due to reports that an employee had died due to suspected COVID-19, or the new coronavirus disease.

Quezon City Executive Judge Cecilyn Burgos-villavert said in a statement that Supreme Court

Administrator Jose Midas Marquez had approved the lockdown to make it easier for contact tracing and disinfection procedures to be conducted should the reports be verified.

“Accordingly, entrance of any person at the Hall of Justice, Quezon City shall be disallowed during the said period,” Villavert added.

She denied, however, that the deceased worked for either the regional trial court or metropolitan trial court.

Based on reports, the employee belonged to a separate agency and had been inside the building days before dying of severe pneumonia and suspected COVID-19.

Electronic filing only

The Office of the Executive Judge also ordered all initiatory pleadings, including criminal complaints and applications for bail, to be filed electronically and received by the Office of the Clerk of Court through its official email addresses.

Pleadings related to ongoing cases could be filed directly with the branch of court where it was pending.

The Supreme Court earlier announced that courts in areas under a general community quarantine were allowed to physically reopen starting on May 18, but only with a “skeleton staff, by rotation, to be determined by the presiding judge.”

This was not applicable, however, to Quezon City, which remained under a modified enhanced community quarantine. The Hall of Justice is located just steps away from the Quezon City Hall on Elliptical Road, where various other government buildings are housed.

Two police camps in Metro Manila were recently locked down as well after several personnel tested positive for COVID-19.