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Part III—Section 2

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Heads of Departments.

NOTIFICATIONS BY HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS, ETC.

JUDICIAL NOTIFICATION

RULES FOR DESIGNATION OF SENIOR ADVOCATES BY THE HIGH COURT OF
MADRAS, 2026

(R.O.C.No.53960-A/2022/SSA)

No. SRO C-21(a)/2026.

In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 34 (1) read with Section 16 (2) of the Advocates Act, 1961, the High Court of Judicature at Madras, hereby makes the following Rules:

RULES FOR DESIGNATION OF SENIOR ADVOCATES BY THE HIGH COURT AT MADRAS, 2026

In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 34(1) read with Section 16(2) of the Advocates Act, 1961, the High Court of Judicature at Madras, hereby makes the following Rules:-

PART 1 | GENERAL

1. **Preamble and Commencement:** These Rules shall be called "Rules for Designation of Senior Advocates by the High Court of Madras, 2026". The Rules shall apply on and from the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.

2. **Definitions:**

The following terms shall, wherever used in the capitalized form in these rules, have the meanings ascribed to them hereinbelow, with such grammatical extrapolations as the context may require.

- “Full Court” means the full court of the Madras High Court, acting on its administrative side.
- “Other Stakeholders” means either an actively practising advocate, or the Bar Council, and any relevant bar association of a court, and in cases covered by Rule 10(ii), the entities mentioned in Note 2 thereto.
- “Permanent Committee” means the committee established under Rule 4 herein
- “Permanent Secretariat” or “Secretariat” means the secretariat established under Rule 6 herein.

3. **General:** All matters relating to the designation of Senior Advocates in the High Court shall be dealt with by a Permanent Committee to be known as “Permanent Committee for Designation of Senior Advocates”.
4. **Constitution of the Permanent Committee:** The Permanent Committee for Designation of Senior Advocates shall consist of:

(a)	The Chief Justice	Chairperson
(b)	Two senior-most Judges of the High Court	Members

5. The Committee shall meet whenever exigencies require.
6. **Establishment of the Secretariat:** The Permanent Committee shall have a Permanent Secretariat. The composition of the Secretariat will be decided by the Chief Justice in consultation with the members of the Committee.
7. The Secretariat of the Permanent Committee shall initiate the process for designation of Senior Advocate at least once every year by inviting applications from Advocates for designation as Senior Advocates.

PART 2 | APPLICATION PROCESS

8. The Notice inviting applications from Advocates shall be published on the official website of the High Court.
9. At least twenty-one days’ time shall be given to applicants to submit their applications online (as per Annexure-‘A’) or in the manner as directed by the Permanent Committee at the relevant time.
10. The conditions on which Advocates shall be eligible for designation as Senior Advocates are:

- (i) At least
- (a) Ten years’ standing as an Advocate; or
- (b) ten years’ combined standing as an Advocate and as a District and Sessions Judge or as a Judicial Member of any Tribunal in India, whose qualification for eligibility for such appointment is not less than that prescribed for appointment as a District Judge.

- (ii) Practise mainly in the High Court, or in a District Court.

Note 1: Applicant-advocates having domain expertise of practicing before specialized Tribunals may be given concession with regard to the extent of appearances in the High Court.

Note 2: Where advocates practising before the District Courts apply for designation, the Permanent Committee may instruct the Permanent Secretariat to solicit the views of the concerned District Judge, and the concerned bar association of that district court, as to their views on the said application.

- (iii) Attainment of the age of 45 years, unless the age limit is relaxed by the Full Court.

- (iv) The application of the applicant-Advocate to designate him/her as a Senior Advocate has not been rejected by the Madras High Court, the Supreme Court of India or any other High Court, within a period of two years, or the said application has not been deferred by any Court within a period of one year, immediately preceding the date of notice inviting applications from the Advocates.
11. On receipt of applications from Advocates, the Secretariat will compile relevant data and information with regard to the reputation, conduct and integrity of the advocate(s) concerned including the information/data furnished by concerned Advocate(s) in the prescribed format. Information may also be collected by the Secretariat from such source(s), as may be decided by the Permanent Committee.
12. The Secretariat will publish the proposals received for designation on the official website of the High Court and invite suggestions/ views of Other Stakeholders on the proposals for designation.
13. Subject to Note 2 to Rule 10(ii), at least fifteen days' time shall be given to Other Stakeholders to give their suggestions/views on the proposed designation.
14. Once compilation of the database and such additional information as is collected pursuant to the directions of the Permanent Committee is complete, the Permanent Secretariat shall place the entire dossier before the Permanent Committee. Upon the Permanent Committee being satisfied that the dossier is complete, the Permanent Secretariat shall put up the proposals with the entire set of materials in the dossier, before the Full Court.

PART 3 | CONSIDERATION BY THE FULL COURT

15. The Full Court will examine each application in the light of the data provided by the Secretariat and make its overall assessment on the basis of ability, standing at the Bar or special knowledge or experience in law of the candidates, considering the following:

Ability: It will include very sound knowledge of law and especially the branches of law in which the Advocate is practising. The ability will also include, apart from sound knowledge of law, skills of advocacy, which are required to effectively conduct a case. Writing articles and commentaries on law will be part of ability. Capacity to rationally critique judicial decisions will be a facet of ability.

Standing at the Bar: Some of the qualities which give an advocate a standing at the Bar are as follows:

- (a) He / She is always fair while conducting cases before the Courts.
- (b) His / Her behaviour with the Judges and other members of the Bar is respectful.
- (c) He / She maintains decorum while conducting cases before the Court.
- (d) He / She always acts first as an officer of the Court and, thereafter, a mouthpiece of his/her client.
- (e) He / She follows the highest standards of professional etiquette and ethics.
- (f) He / She acts as a mentor to the junior advocates.
- (g) He / She does pro bono work.
- (h) He / She carries respect in the legal fraternity.
- (i) He / She does possess honesty and integrity.

The above list is only illustrative in nature, and not exhaustive.

Special Knowledge of Law: An Advocate may be said to be having special knowledge or experience in law if in a particular branch of law, he has acquired expertise; for example, Civil or Criminal Trial work, Arbitration, Insolvency and Bankruptcy, Company Law, Intellectual Property Law, Tax Laws etc.

No criminal antecedents: An Advocate has not been convicted by a competent court of law and should not have been punished for an offence involving moral turpitude or contempt of court or should not have been punished by any State Bar Council / Bar Council of India for any act of misconduct.

16. The applications of all candidates found to be eligible by the Permanent Secretariat along with relevant documents submitted by them shall be placed before the Full Court.
17. Even if an Advocate deserving of a designation does not apply for designation, on the basis of the discussion, the Full Court may recommend his / her designation de hors an application in a deserving case, subject to his / her consent.
18. The decision-making on designation of Advocates will be by consensus. However, if that is not possible, the decision will be made on the basis of majority view.
19. Voting may be either by show of hands or by secret ballot. The Full Court will record the reasons for resorting to the chosen manner of voting.
20. All cases which are not favourably considered by the Full Court may be reviewed / reconsidered after the expiry of two years from the date of the decision of the Full Court by following the procedure applicable at that time.
21. All cases deferred by the Full Court for being designated as Senior Advocate shall not be considered until the expiry of one year from the date of the decision of the Full Court.
22. The final decision of the Full Court will be communicated individually to all the applicants.

PART 4 | POST DECISION PROCESS

23. After designation as a Senior Advocate, the person concerned is expected to adhere to the provisions of the Advocates Act in all regards, scrupulously, and must not breach the same, directly or indirectly.
24. The Full Court may review its decision to designate a person as a Senior Advocate and recall the conferment of designation if the Advocate is found guilty of conduct which according to the Full Court disentitles him to designation. The Full Court would give an opportunity of a hearing before any such action is taken.

PART 5 | RESIDUARY

25. **Removal of Difficulties:** All questions relating to interpretation and / or application of these Rules shall be referred to the Permanent Committee whose decision shall be final. The Permanent Committee may issue directions for the removal of difficulties either in general terms or in a particular instance as the exigencies may require.
26. **Repeals and Savings:** The existing norms of the Madras High Court for designating an Advocate as a Senior Advocate, including the 2020 Rules, are hereby repealed. However, this repeal shall not invalidate the previous actions taken under the same. All pending applications, proposals or recommendations for designation shall be returned to the Advocate concerned for applying afresh in accordance with these Rules.

Annexure-'A'

**APPLICATION-CUM-CONSENT
LETTER FOR DESIGNATION OF SENIOR ADVOCATE
[FOR ADVOCATES]**

Recent Passport Size Colour Photograph:		The upload photo size must be 20 to 200 KB in jpg/jpeg.
1.	Name of the Applicant-Advocate: (Dr./Mr./Ms./Mrs.)	
2.	Date of Birth:	
3.	Age(as on 01.01.2026):	Years: Months:
4.	Address in Full:	(i) Office: (ii) Residence:
5.	Contact Details:	(i) Landline: (ii) Mobile: (iii) Email:
6.	Educational / Professional Qualifications:	
7.	(i) Date, Month and Year of Enrolment as an Advocate:	
	(ii) Enrolment Number:	
	(iii) Bar Council, where registered (Copy of Enrolment Certificate to be attached):	(The upload file size must be less than 5MB in PDF)
	(iv) Number of years of practice from the date of enrolment:	Years: Months:
	(v) Net Professional Income per annum (in Lakhs of Rs): [Only earnings through practice as Advocate]	
8.	Whether the applicant is a member of any bar association attached to a specific court (eg. Madras High Court Advocates Association, Madurai High Court Advocates Association, or any district bar association)	☐ Yes ☐ No

9.	Number of Reported Judgments (excluding orders that do not lay down any principle of law): Format L-1	No. of Reported Judgments that the Advocate actually argued: Upload Format L-1 (The upload file size must be less than 5 MB in PDF)	Supreme Court High Court District Court/ Labour Court and Tribunals		
10.	Number of Unreported Judgments (excluding orders that do not lay down any principle of law): Format L-2	No. of Unreported Judgments that the Advocate actually argued: Upload Format L-2 (The upload file size must be less than 5 MB in PDF)	Supreme Court High Court District Court/ Labour Court and Tribunals		
11.	Pro Bono /Amicus Curiae work: Format L-3(i) FormatL-3(ii)	Total Pro Bono cases: Upload Format L-3(i) (The upload file size must be less than 5 MB in PDF)	Total Amicus Curiae cases: Upload Format L-3(ii) (The upload file size must be less than 5 MB in PDF)		
12.	Whether the applicant is a first-generation lawyer:	☐ Yes ☐ No			
13.	Academic Articles/Books published, experience of Teaching Assignments in the field of law, Guest Lectures delivered in law schools or professional institutions connected with law: Format L-4	No. of Academic Articles: No. of Teaching Assignments: Upload Format L-4 (The upload file size must be less than 5 MB in PDF)	No. of Academic Books:____ No. of Guest Lectures:____		
14.	Courts, where the applicant is practicing/has practiced: (Court-wise period may be indicated)	Court	From	To	
		Supreme Court of India			
		High Court(s)/District/Trial Court(s)			
15.	Tribunals, where the applicant has specialized practice: (Applicable to those practising before Tribunals)	Tribunal(s)	From	To	
16.	Nature of practice– (e.g. Civil, Criminal, Constitutional, Taxation, Labour, Company, Service, etc.):				
17.	Field of Law – domain expertise (such as, Constitutional law, Inter-State Water Disputes, Criminal law, Arbitration law, Corporate law, Family law, Human Rights, Public Interest Litigation, International law, law relating to women) in which the applicant has specialization / expertise:				

18.	Whether the applicant has applied earlier to the Madras High Court for designation; if so, date of the application & current status thereof:	☐ Yes ☐ No
19.	Whether the applicant has applied earlier to the Supreme Court, or any other High Court; if so, date of the application and details thereof:	☐ Yes ☐ No
20.	Whether any FIR has ever been lodged against the applicant; if so, details thereof:	☐ Yes ☐ No
21.	Whether the applicant is a party to any criminal case; if so, details thereof:	☐ Yes ☐ No
22.	Whether any proceedings were initiated or are pending against the applicant before Bar Council of India or State Bar Council; if so, details thereof:	☐ Yes ☐ No
23.	General State of Health:	
24.	Any other relevant information:	
<u>DECLARATION</u> I _____ hereby give consent for being designated as Senior Advocate. I hereby declare that the information furnished above is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. No material information is concealed or suppressed there from. I understand that furnishing of false information or suppression of any factual information would render me unfit from being designated as Senior Advocate. I undertake that if my application is accepted, I will strictly adhere to the code of conduct applicable under the Advocates Act and Bar Council Act, as well as these Rules, and shall not do any act which directly or indirectly violates any of the above, either in letter or in spirit. Date:- Signature of the Applicant-Advocate (The uploaded signature size must be 10 to 20 KB in jpg/jpeg.)		

PRESCRIBED FORMATS

Format L-1
(See Sl.No.9 of the Application)

AS ARGUING COUNSEL**LIST OF REPORTED JUDGMENTS (EXCLUDING ORDERS NOT LAYING DOWN ANY PRINCIPLE OF LAW)**

In matters before Madras High Court

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Citation / Case Number</i>	<i>Cause Title and Subject Matter</i>	<i>Decided on</i>	<i>Legal formulation advanced by the applicant.</i>

In matters before Supreme Court and other High Courts

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Court(s)</i>	<i>Citation / Case Number</i>	<i>Cause Title and Subject Matter</i>	<i>Decided on</i>	<i>Legal formulation advanced by the applicant.</i>

In matters before District Courts / Labour Courts or Tribunals

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Court / Tribunal(s)</i>	<i>Citation / Case Number</i>	<i>Cause Title and Subject Matter</i>	<i>Decided on</i>	<i>Legal formulation advanced by the applicant.</i>

Format L-2
(See Sl. No.10 of the Application)

AS ARGUING COUNSEL**LIST OF UNREPORTED JUDGMENTS (EXCLUDING ORDERS NOT LAYING DOWN ANY PRINCIPLE OF LAW)**

In matters before Madras High Court

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Citation / Case Number</i>	<i>Cause Title and Subject Matter</i>	<i>Decided on</i>	<i>Legal formulation advanced by the applicant.</i>

In matters before Supreme Court and other High Courts

S.No.	Court(s)	Citation / Case Number	Cause Title and Subject Matter	Decided on	Legal formulation advanced by the applicant.

In matters before District Courts / Labour Courts and Tribunals

S.No.	Court / Tribunal(s)	Citation / Case Number	Cause Title and Subject Matter	Decided on	Legal formulation advanced by the applicant.

Format L-3(i)
(See Sl.No.11 of the Application)

List of matters in which appeared as Pro-Bono

S.No.	Court(s) / Tribunal(s)	Citation / Case Number	Cause Title	Decided on	Describe manner in which society was sought to be benefited by the litigation

Format L-3(ii)
(See Sl.No.11 of the Application)

List of matters in which appeared as Amicus Curiae

S.No.	Court(s)/ Tribunal(s)	Citation/ case Number	Cause Title	Decided on	Reportable / Unreportable

Format L-4

(See Sl.No.13 of the Application)

Details of academic articles/books published, experience of teaching assignments in the field of law, guest lectures delivered in law schools or professional institutions connected with law.

S.No.	Topic of published academic		Experience details in law schools or professional institutions (with names) connected with law		Any other relevant details
	Articles	Books	Teaching Assignment(s)	Guest Lectures	

INSTRUCTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE ADVOCATES WHILE APPLYING FOR
DESIGNATION OF SENIOR ADVOCATE

1.	Advocates are requested to scrupulously follow these instructions while submitting the Application and the prescribed Formats (L-1 to L-4).
2.	At the time of submission of the Application online, the following should be kept ready: (i) Data/ Information that is to be furnished in formats L-1 to L-4; (ii) Scanned signature of the applicant; (iii) Recent scanned passport size colour photograph; and (iv) Scanned Enrolment Certificate.
3.	In addition to the Application submitted online, the following should be submitted in the Permanent Secretariat: (i) One print-out of the Application along with its attachments in the shape of a Paper Book, duly tagged & indexed. (ii) One recent passport size colour photograph(name of the applicant should be written on its backside).
4.	Data/Information relating to reported and unreported judgments in matters argued as lead arguing/assisting counsel, pro bono /amicus curiae, publication work (articles/ books/teaching assignments/guest lectures) should be provided in the prescribed formats L-1 to L-4 which form part of Application.
5.	List of citations of reported and unreported judgments in matters argued as lead counsel should be furnished in chronological order. The citations should be of judgments made reportable by the Supreme Court/High Courts/ Tribunals and are available in their official reports.
6.	Name of the applicant should tally with his/her name as mentioned in his/her enrolment certificate. Abbreviated name shall NOT be accepted.
7.	Request to accept application beyond the last date indicated in the notice, shall NOT be entertained in any case.

☐

Yes, I have read the instructions carefully and understand that an error in this application cannot be subsequently rectified and may result in rejection of my application.

High Court, Madras,
22nd July, 2026.

DEEPTHI ARIVUNITHI,
Registrar General.