



CASE MANAGEMENT IN MAGISTRATE'S COURTS.

Induction of New Judicial Officers

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About this Presentation

1. Management
2. Case Management?
3. Case Flow Management?
4. File Management?
5. Court Management?

What is Management?

1. “Art of knowing what you want to do and then seeing that it is done in the best and cheapest way” – *F.W. Taylor*
2. “To manage is to forecast, to plan, to organize, to command and to coordinate, and to control.” – *Henry Fayol*
3. “Management is the art of getting things done through and with people.” – *Peter F. Draker*

What is Case Management ?

1. Case management = a comprehensive system of management of time and events in a lawsuit/case as it proceeds through the justice systems from institution to resolution
2. Effective case management falls on the shoulders of both Judicial Officers and practitioners.

Best Practices for Case management

1. **Case Docketing/ case tracking:** When a case is filed, it is assigned a docket number for identification and tracking purposes. This number is used throughout the case's lifecycle. Use of CCAS, Registers and their updates.
2. **Case Scheduling:** set dates for various stages of the case, hearings and other proceedings. This helps in managing the court calendar and ensures timely resolution.

Best Practices for Case Handling

3. Preliminary Hearings: Magistrates Courts often hold preliminary hearings to determine the merits of the case, facilitate settlements, or identify issues that can be resolved without a full trial.

Mind the multiplicity of applications.

Best Practices cont'd

4. **Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR):**

Help parties find amicable solutions

...encourage or mandate ADR methods, such as mediation or conciliation, to resolve disputes more quickly and cost-effectively.

Best Practices cont'd

5. Document Management:

Notices, Summons, Pleadings, Submissions and PWs. Paperwork associated with each case, including pleadings, motions, and evidence.

Helps to maintain an organized record. Court issues notices and summons to inform parties about upcoming hearings, trial dates, etc. Witness statements and their usage.

Best Practices cont'd

6. Dismissal for lack of progress:

Circumstances for which a suit may be dismissed. Loss of interest, want of prosecution., no step taken for 2 yea

7. Adjournments:

Reasons for the same. Case law defines what sufficient cause.

8. Civil Contempt of Court

Best Practices cont'd

9. Causelisting and calendaring:

Efficient disposal / slow entire process. Avoid calendar clashes.

10. Conferencing:

The magistrate may hold conferences with the parties involved to discuss the case's progress, address any issues, and ensure that all necessary steps are taken for a fair and timely resolution.

Best Practices cont'd

11. Record Keeping and archiving:

Accurate and comprehensive records of each case are maintained, documenting all actions taken, decisions made and communications with parties.

12. Adjudication – expeditious hearing and disposal; locus visits, small claims, Plea Bargain in criminal cases, use of ADR (promotion of reconciliation as per Art. 126 (2)(d) and S. 160 MCA

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Case-Flow Management?

“A process through which a case passes, from filing to completion.”

i) **Timeliness** => Justice must be delivered speedily, expeditiously and cost-effectively... (Article 28 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995)

ii) **Timely delivery of judgments/rulings** (disposal of cases, 60 days rule);

iii) **Produce court records** => appeals/ executions;

iv) **Timely reporting** to the CR through RMA

File Management

For ALL documents filed on the file....

- ✓ Recorded on the left of the folder, chronologically according to the date of filing. Record all documents brought on the file.
- ✓ If a document is tendered ... it is labeled accordingly. Eg. Annexure 1 – Land Title. That makes it easy to retrieve.

What is File Management

- ✓ Exhibits are tied on the right; written with the exhibit name; and align the title of the exhibit.
- ✓ Any other submission to the court – clerk inserts the record after the proceedings; make a label on the left-hand side
- ✓ All documents are punched and tied on file.

Court Management?

Court management = the administration of the courts. This includes all administrative activities “that create, maintain and utilise all resources required for arriving at court judgment and ruling”

KEY COMPONENTS:

- Planning.
- Organizing.
- Coordinating.
- Controlling processes.
- Directing/commanding.

Court Management?

- ✓ Manage Funds – OP, Locus, etc.;
- ✓ Repair and maintenance of court property;
- ✓ Display of court fee structures on notice boards;
- ✓ Hold regular meetings – Staff, finance, DCC, etc.;
- ✓ Manage inventory of Judiciary assets;
- ✓ Prepare management reports to CR;
- ✓ Prepare and submit monthly case returns.
- ✓ Etc.

Other Roles of Court Management?

- ✓ Create awareness of the court business. (Bail processes and refund, sessions, absence notices etc.)
- ✓ Establish an open-door policy;
- ✓ Predictable methods of complaint handling.
- ✓ Involve stakeholders in administration of justice;
- ✓ Prioritizing cases of the most vulnerable.
- ✓ Organizing and participating in court open days.
- ✓ Etc.

END

Thank You for Listening!!