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Department:
Justice and Constitutional Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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CIRCULAR 12 OF 2025

(HEAD OFFICE FILE 12/P)

**CHIEF MASTER DIRECTIVE 2 OF 2025
TRUSTS: IMPLEMENTING QR CODE ON MASTER'S APPOINTMENT LETTERS
and ONLINE REGISTRATION OF TRUSTS**

1. Your attention is drawn to the contents of the attached Directive with regards to implementing QR codes on Master's appointment letters in trusts and the online registration of trusts in the Master's Office.
2. This Directive amends and /or repeals prior Chief Master's Directives, - Circulars or instructions regarding this subject as per the effective date indicated on the Directive.
3. Any enquiries should be addressed in writing to the Office of the Chief Master.

**Adv K Mathibe
ACTING CHIEF MASTER**

27 MARCH 2025



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Justice and Constitutional Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

CHIEF MASTER'S DIRECTIVE 2 OF 2025

TRUSTS: IMPLEMENTING QR CODE ON MASTER'S APPOINTMENT LETTERS and ONLINE REGISTRATION OF TRUSTS

1) PURPOSE OF THIS DIRECTIVE

The purpose of this Directive is to direct all Masters in the performance of their functions regarding registration of trusts and issuing of letters of authority in Trusts.

This Directive is issued in terms of:

- 1.1. Section 3 of the Judicial Matters Amendment Act, 2005 which requires the Chief Master to “exercise control, direction and supervision over all the Masters”.
- 1.2. Section 2(1) of the Administration of Estates Act 66 of 1965.

2) BACKGROUND

2.1 IMPLEMENTING QR CODE ON MASTER'S APPOINTMENT LETTERS

- a) In 2023 the Master's Branch implemented a Quick Response (QR) coded appointment letters in deceased estates with great success.
- b) These appointment letters have proved to be effective in curbing the likelihood of fraud on appointment letters and alleviating frustrations with verification and receiving of appointment letters, improving service delivery and accessibility of the Masters Office. The QR code is linked to the Master's system and when scanned can be used to verify and validate the appointment letter issued.

2.2 ONLINE REGISTRATION OF TRUSTS

- a) In 2023 the Master's Branch implemented Online Registration System for Deceased Estates with great success.

- b) This system allows users to register a deceased estate in the comfort of their own homes or offices, without the need to physically visit a Master's Office, improving service delivery and accessibility of the Masters Office.
- c) In order to provide the same function to users wanting to register a trust, the Master's Branch, together with ICT, have developed a similar system to be used for the registration of trusts.
- d) This online registration system for trusts was piloted on 18 and 19 March 2025 for the Master's Offices in Gauteng (Master Pretoria and Master Johannesburg) and has been used since only by the attendees of the mentioned pilot, in order to fully test effectiveness of the system.
- e) The system will allow for, amongst other functions, the
 - i) registration of a new trust,
 - ii) amendment of an existing trust,
 - iii) notifying the Master of the termination of a trust,
 - iv) Automatic updating of the Beneficial Owner register of the Master with the details of any newly registered trust and any amendments effected to it after registration.

3) THE FOLLOWING HAVE BEEN DECIDED:

As part of the Chief Master's statutory obligations, the following decisions have been made:

- a) to implement the QR-coded appointment letters in the trust section of all Master's Offices countrywide as from **18 March 2025** and
- b) To activate the Online Trust Registration System for all users needing to register a new trust under the Pretoria and Johannesburg Master's Office jurisdictions, as from **1 April 2025**.

3.1 QR CODE ON MASTER'S APPOINTMENT LETTERS IN TRUSTS

1. The following amendment to the format of the Letter of Authority has been made to ensure uniformity in all Master's Offices:
 - i) All letters of authority issued in trusts, will (*see attached Annexure A as example (dummy data used)*):
 - 1) Carry a system generated QR Code in the right top corner of the document and
 - 2) when scanned, the QR code will reflect the following:
 - a. The type of letter (Letter of Authority) and
 - b. Whether the QR code is valid or not and

- c. Whether the appointment letter is the latest appointment letter issued and
 - d. The details of the trust and the appointee(s) and
 - e. The date issued and by whom
 - f. If it is a valid QR code - a PDF copy of the actual letter as on the Master's system will also be available for viewing
 - 3) carry a system generated date stamp in the right bottom corner, indicating the date of approval of the appointment letter and the office where it was issued and
 - 4) Indicate the name of the Assistant Master who approved the appointment letter.
 - a. The appointment letter will not be physically signed by any Master's officials anymore.
- ii) As soon as the letter of appointment is approved by the Master, the following will be sent to the applicant:
 - 1) A text message (SMS) indicating that the appointment letter has been issued and providing a link where a copy can be viewed (where these details are available on the system); and
 - 2) An e-mail will be sent to the applicant to which the appointment letter would be attached for usage (where these details are available on the system).
 - 3) If the trust was registered making use of the Trust Online Registration System, the appointment letter will also be available under the profile of the applicant for download.
 - 4) Alternatively, the client may visit the Master's Office to obtain a printed copy of the letter of appointment:
 - a. should they not be able to download it, or
 - b. when they are a walk-in client receiving the appointment letter directly from the office, or
 - 5) When the system is unable to send the e-mail with the appointment letter, the normal process of placing the appointment letter in the MK Box, posting it or collecting it will still apply.

- iii) The QR coded appointment letters have been activated as from 18 March 2025.
 - 1) Appointment letters previously issued in the old format will remain valid unless amended or recalled after the effective date, as all system generated appointment letters will be in the above format as from the effective date.

- 6) **As from the effective dates no manual appointments may be issued by any office** – all appointments must be approved and issued on the system. Non-adherence to this directive may lead to disciplinary procedures being implemented against the violating official.

3.2 ONLINE REGISTRATION OF TRUSTS

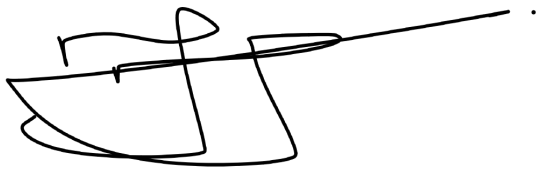
- 1. The functions mentioned in paragraphs 2.2(e)(i) and (iv) above, of the Online Trust Registration System, will be activated for all users needing to register a new trust for **Pretoria and Johannesburg Master’s Office** jurisdiction only, as from **1 April 2025**.
 - i) The functions mentioned in paragraph 2.2(e)(ii) and (iii) will remain in pilot for now and not be activated for use by all applicants at this stage.
- 2. Registration documents can be lodged in the following ways:
 - i) By making use of the Trust Online Registration System for the Pretoria and Johannesburg Master’s Offices OR
 - ii) Originally, completed documents may be posted/couriered / hand delivered to the relevant office for all other Master’s Offices, as usual.
- 3. When the applicant is making use of the Trust Online Registration System to register the trust, the Master may accept electronic copies of all documents so lodged, except for the following:
 - i) Bond of security;
 - Any document the Master, in their discretion, is of the opinion should be verified against the original thereof.
- 4. The trustee(s) is expected to keep the original documents of all such electronically lodged documents in their records, as the Master may request to view these or request certified hard copies of any such documents at any stage, should the Master deem it necessary and/or to verify against what was lodged electronically.

4 EFFECTIVE DATE

This directive repeals prior Directives, Circulars or instructions regarding this subject, with effect from the effective dates listed below.

This Directive will come into effect as follows:

- i) **QR Code on Master’s Appointment Letters in Trusts for all offices:** 18 March 2025
- ii) **Online registration of trusts:**
 - **Master Pretoria and Master Johannesburg:** 1 April 2025
 - **Rest of the country:** To be confirmed



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Adv K Mathibe
ACTING CHIEF MASTER

27 MARCH 2025
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Date



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MAGTIGINGSBRIEF LETTERS OF AUTHORITY

Ingevolge Artikel 6(1) van die Wet op Beheer oor Trustgoed, 1988 (Wet 57 van 1988)
In terms of Section 6(1) of the Trust Property Control Act, 1988 (Act 57 of 1988)

No: IT000579/2025(T)

Hiermee word gesertifiseer dat /
This is to certify that

1) THOMAS JUSTICE - 23233323 (PASSPORT)

2) TRUSTEE MADA - 34434537 (PASSPORT)

3) TESTING TRUSTEE - 3243434 (PASSPORT)

gemagtig word om op te tree as trustee(s) van die /
is/are hereby authorized to act as trustee(s) of the

trust test

GEGEE onder my hand te _____ op hede die _____ dag van _____
GIVEN under my hand at _____ PRETORIA _____ this _____ 17th day of _____ MARCH _____ year 2025

Approved by: DOJCDVTYAKUME

Signature

**ASSISTENT MEESTER
ASSISTANT MASTER**

MASTER OF THE HIGH COURT PRETORIA
PRIVATE BAG X
2025-03-17
PRETORIA 0001 (T)
MEESTER VAN DIE HOOGGEREGSHOF PRETORIA