

The charter also outlines obligations expected of the Judiciary itself in delivering services to the public.

BY ANTHONY WESAKA

The Judiciary has asked litigants and other court users to dress appropriately when appearing in court, as part of new responsibilities in the Judiciary Client Charter 2024–2029 to improve discipline, efficiency, and the administration of justice.

Under the new charter, court users are prohibited from wearing outfits with offensive writings, drawings, or signs while on court premises.

“Dress decently in court and its premises and not wear outfits with offensive writings, drawings, or signs,” the charter reads in part.

Other obligations placed on litigants include refraining from idling or vending within court premises, keeping mobile phones and electronic devices switched off or on silent mode during proceedings, and avoiding eating in court unless permitted by the presiding judicial officer.

Court users are also expected to file appropriate documents, respect court judgments and orders, report on time for hearings, observe orderliness within court premises, and comply with court procedures and instructions.

Judiciary warns on offensive dressing in new court rules

The charter further requires litigants to pay prescribed court fees and keep receipts safely, provide truthful information to the court, avoid carrying deadly weapons, and respect judicial officers, court staff, and fellow court users.

The Judiciary also warned against corruption, offensive language, obscene gestures, and rowdy behaviour such as shouting, chanting, or singing within court premises.

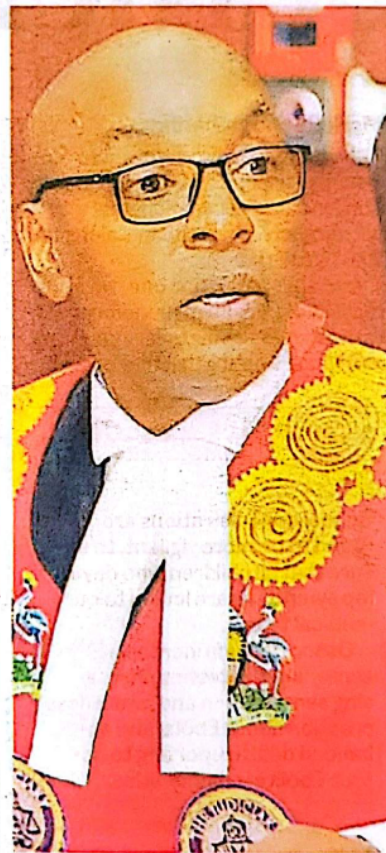
Court users have also been encouraged to report unprofessional conduct by judicial staff and to provide feedback on the services offered by the Judiciary.

At the same time, the charter spells out the rights of litigants and court users, including the right to access information upon application, a fair and speedy public hearing, certified copies of court documents at prescribed fees, and copies of judgments and rulings, including electronic copies.

Court users also have the right to lodge complaints and receive timely responses, as well as know the identity of judicial staff serving them.

The charter also outlines obligations expected of the Judiciary itself in delivering services to the public.

Among them is the commitment to observe official working hours from Monday to Friday between 8 am and



Flavian Zeija, Chief Justice. PHOTO/FILE

5 pm, with a lunch break between 12:45 pm and 2 pm, although staff may work beyond those hours where necessary.

The Judiciary also pledged to provide a safe and accessible working environment, uphold integrity, preserve court records and exhibits, and ensure courteous treatment of court users.

According to the charter, judgments should be delivered within 60 days after the close of the hearing, while the Supreme Court is expected to deliver decisions within 90 days.

The Judiciary is further committed to responding to correspondence within 14 working days and handling complaints within 14 days, or within 30 working days where investigations are required.

Bail rulings are expected within 30 days, while the refund of bail money should be processed within 21 working days after submission of all required documents.

The charter also sets timelines for administrative services, including enrollment of advocates within 14 working days after submission by the Law Council, renewal of practising licenses within seven working days, and processing of court bailiffs' licenses within the same period. The Judiciary also highlighted official

RULES AT A GLANCE

- Dress decently and avoid outfits with offensive writings, drawings.
- Switch off or keep mobile phones silent during court proceedings.
- Do not shout, chant, sing or engage in rowdy behaviour.
- Avoid vending, idling or loitering around court compounds.
- Do not eat in court unless permitted by the judicial officer.
- Report to court on time for hearings.

court vacation periods during which only criminal and urgent civil matters will be handled.

These include December 23 to January 7 for all courts, August 1 to 31 for the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal, and July 15 to August 15 for the High Court and Magistrates Courts.