



THE HIGH COURT OF KERALA

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HCKL/2367/2025-REC4- HC KERALA

Dated : 16/04/2025

NOTIFICATION

KERALA STATE HIGHER JUDICIAL SERVICE EXAMINATION – 2025

Online applications are invited from qualified candidates for appointment as District and Sessions Judge (Pay :144840-194660) in the Kerala State Higher Judicial Service by direct recruitment from the Bar against the below notified vacancies. Candidates can submit applications only after completing One Time Registration in the Recruitment Portal of the High Court (<https://hckrecruitment.keralacourts.in>). Online applications can be submitted from 21/04/2025 onwards. No other means/modes of application will be accepted.

[Those who apply for Special Recruitment and NCA vacancies can apply for Regular vacancies also]

SPECIAL RECRUITMENT

2. Recruitment Number : 9/2025

(Special Recruitment for filling up backlog vacancies of differently abled candidates for the period from 1996 - 2023)

Number of vacancies : Visually Impaired and Low Vision - 1

Deaf and Hard of Hearing - 1

(Candidates belonging to the categories of Visually Impaired/Low Vision/ Deaf /Hard of Hearing alone are eligible to apply.)

NCA VACANCY

3. Recruitment Number : 10/2025

(1st Re-notification relating to the select list prepared pursuant to Notification No. **HCKL/2658/2023-REC4** dated 13.04.2023)

Number of vacancies : Muslims - 1

(Candidates belonging to the Non - Creamy layer of the Muslims community in the State of Kerala alone are eligible to apply.)

REGULAR VACANCIES

4. **Recruitment Number** : 11/ 2025

Number of vacancies : 3

5. **Qualifications** : A candidate for appointment as District and Sessions Judge from the Bar shall satisfy the following general conditions:

- a. shall be a citizen of Indian Union.
- b. shall have attained 35 years of age and shall not have completed 45 years of age on the first day of January, 2025.
- c. shall be of good character.
- d. shall be of sound health and active habits and free from any bodily defect or infirmity which renders him unfit for such appointment.
- e. shall not have more than one spouse living unless exempted by the Government on special grounds.
- f. **shall be a practising Advocate** having a standing of not less than seven years of practice, as on the first day of January, 2025.
- g. shall be an Advocate continuing in practice at the time of appointment (*As per Judgement of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dated 19.02.2020 in Dheeraj Mor v. High Court of Delhi*).
- h. shall not be a person already in the service of the Union or of any State in India.

Note: For relaxation of age limit, provisions in sub rule (c) of Rule 10 of Part II of the Kerala State and Subordinate Services Rules, 1958 raising the upper age limit in the case of candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes, adult members of Scheduled Castes and their children when such adult members are converted to other religions, Scheduled Tribes and Other backward Classes shall be applicable. 5 years' age relaxation over and above the existing upper age limit will be granted to Persons with Benchmark Disabilities who come within the definition of section 2 (r) of the Right of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (Central Act 49 of 2016). Provision in sub-rule (e) of Rule 10 of Part – II, KS & SSR, 1958 for raising the upper age limit in the case of Ex-service men shall be applicable to such candidates. **However, the maximum age limit in any case shall not exceed 50 years.**

6. **Mode of Selection:** The selection shall be after holding competitive examinations at two successive stages. The first stage is the Kerala State Higher Judicial Service (Preliminary) Examination. The second stage is the Kerala State Higher Judicial Service (Main) Examination, consisting of a written examination and a viva-voce. The preliminary examination will consist of one paper of objective type screening test containing 75 multiple choice questions (30 from civil laws, 30 from criminal laws and 15 from the Constitution of India, English language, General knowledge and Legal aptitude). These shall also include questions having multiple correct answers and in such questions all the correct answers are to be

marked/indicated. If the candidate darkens any of the wrong answer options or darkens only a part of the correct answer options, it will be treated as incorrect answer. Two marks will be awarded for correct answers and one mark will be deducted for incorrect answers. Duration of the examination shall be Two hours. Marks obtained in the preliminary examination will not be counted for determining the final order of merit. The syllabus of the preliminary examination shall not be confined to that of the main examination. Questions from other statutes/topics which have application to the proceedings before the District & Sessions Courts, the Constitution of India, English language, General knowledge and legal aptitude will also be included. The ratio of notified vacancies to the number of successful candidates in the preliminary examination shall be 1:10. If more than one candidate obtains the same mark as that of the last candidate in the descending order of merit, all such candidates securing identical mark shall be treated as qualified for the main (written) examination. **The date of Preliminary examination will be announced later.**

The total marks for the Main (Written) examination is 300 and it shall consist of two papers each carrying a maximum of 150 marks based on the syllabus given below. The duration of each paper shall be three hours. The number of candidates for the viva voce shall not ordinarily exceed three times the number of notified vacancies. If more than one candidate obtains the same mark as that of the last candidate in the descending order of marks, all such candidates securing identical mark shall be treated as qualified for the viva voce. Maximum marks for viva voce shall be 50. The general and OBC candidates should secure a minimum of 40% marks and SC/ST and 'Persons with Benchmark disabilities' candidates should secure a minimum of 35% marks for passing the viva voce. The merit list of successful candidates will be prepared on the basis of the aggregate marks secured in the main (written) examination and viva voce. While preparing the merit list if there are more than one candidate securing identical marks, the candidate who is older in age shall be preferred. If the age of the candidates is also identical, the one with longer period of practice shall be preferred. If the length of practice is also identical, the Committee shall decide who among the candidates, who have secured equal number of marks, should be ranked higher taking into consideration all relevant factors.

The preliminary as well as the main examination will be common for the candidates who apply in response to Recruitment Nos.9/2025 for Special Recruitment, 10/2025 for NCA vacancy and Recruitment No. 11/2025 for Regular vacancies.

7. Syllabus for the Main (Written) Examination:

PAPER - I	Limitation Act, Specific Relief Act, Transfer of Property Act, Indian Easements Act, Family Courts Act, Motor Vehicles Act (Chapters X, XI and XII), Laws relating to Intellectual Property Rights, Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, Indian Contract Act, Arbitration and
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	Conciliation Act, Indian Succession Act (Probate, Letters of Administration, Wills, etc.), Personal Laws - Hindu, Muslim & Christian, Guardian and Wards Act, Code of Civil Procedure, Civil Rules of Practice, Kerala Court Fees and Suit Valuation Act and Judgment writing (Civil)
PAPER - II	Indian Penal Code & Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Indian Evidence Act & Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, Code of Criminal Procedure & Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita with special emphasis on framing of charges, Sessions trial, Bail, etc., Criminal Rules of Practice and Judgment writing (Criminal)

8. Reservation of Appointment:

- a. The rules relating to reservation and appointments for Other Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Economically Weaker Sections contained in Part II of the Kerala State and Subordinate Services Rules, 1958 (Rules 14 to 17) shall apply to appointment by direct recruitment.
- b. the reservation for Persons With Benchmark Disabilities shall be 4% as provided in Section 34 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, provided that the Medical Board constituted for assessment certifies that the candidate will be able to perform the duties of a Judicial Officer with the aid of Assistive Technologies and the candidate qualifies in the selection in terms of the Kerala State Higher Judicial Service Rules, 1961 and the scheme of examination framed thereunder.

9. **Probation:** Every person appointed as District and Sessions Judge by direct recruitment shall be on probation for a period of two years on duty within a continuous period of three years from the date on which he/she joins duty.

10. Scribe/ Compensatory Time for Candidates with Disabilities

- i. Differently abled candidates whose writing speed is affected can avail the services of a scribe. Such candidates should indicate their intention to avail the service of scribe in their online application. Only those candidates who opt the same at the time of application will be allowed to use the service of scribe.
- ii. The use of scribe will be governed by the guidelines prescribed by the High Court and candidates will have to produce a medical certificate and declaration at the time of the test in the prescribed format available in the recruitment portal (<https://hckrecruitment.keralacourts.in>). The qualification of the scribe should be one step below the minimum qualification prescribed for the post.

- iii. Differently abled candidates whether availing the facility of scribe or not, will be allowed compensatory time of 20 minutes and /or part thereof for every hour of the examination on production of medical certificate to the effect that the candidate has physical limitation to write. The format of medical certificate is given in the 'Downloads' section in the recruitment portal (<https://hckrecruitment.keralacourts.in>)

11. Steps for One Time Registration and submission of applications:

- a. Candidates must complete "One Time Registration" using 'Register' link in the website (<https://hckrecruitment.keralacourts.in>) before applying for the post, if not already done. Instructions for "One Time Registration" including guidelines for uploading photograph & signature and FAQ are given in "How to apply" link in the website. Candidates should read notification and the instructions under the "**How to apply**" link carefully before submitting online application and be ready with scanned images of photograph and signature, details of qualification, experience etc. Before uploading the photograph and signature, candidates should ensure that the same are in conformity with the "Guidelines for Photograph and Signature".
- b. Candidates who have already completed 'One Time Registration' shall ensure that all the entries in the profile page and related tabs are complete and up to date. They should also ensure that photograph and signature already uploaded by them are in conformity with the "Guidelines for Photograph and Signature".
- c. Candidates should take care to upload good quality photographs. Otherwise it would be difficult to identify the candidate from the photograph on the Admission Ticket. **If the candidate cannot be identified from the photograph printed on the Admission Ticket, the candidate will not be allowed to write the examination.** Detailed instructions are given in "**Guidelines for Photograph and Signature**", under the "**How to apply**" link. Specifications of the **photograph and signature** are as follows;

Sl. No.	Image	Height	Width
1	Photograph (maximum size 2MB)	200 to 250 pixels	150 to 180 pixels
2	Signature (maximum size 2MB)	100 to 130 pixels	150 to 180 pixels

- d. The online application form is common for Special Recruitment (Recruitment No.9/2025), NCA Recruitment (Recruitment No.10/2025) and Regular Recruitment (Recruitment No.11/2025).
- e. Candidates applying for more than one Recruitment Number shall make a single application by selecting the respective recruitments for which they want to apply. They need to pay a single application fee even if they apply against multiple recruitments. If they opt for applying separately, they will have to remit separate application fee for each recruitment and they will lose the '**common candidate**' status in the examination. **So, the eligible candidates who desire to apply for more than one recruitment should avoid applying separately to get the status of the 'common**

candidate' in view of the fact that common examination is prescribed for special recruitment / recruitments to Regular and NCA vacancies. After entering the required details in "My Profile" page and related tabs, candidates can apply for the post from "Apply Now" in the 'Dashboard' and proceed as per the instructions on the screen. Candidates must ensure that the details entered are correct by checking the preview of the application before submission of the application. **Once submitted, no changes/ editing/ modification can be made in the application.** Changes made in 'My Profile' page or related tabs after submitting an application will not be reflected in the already submitted application.

- f. Candidates are required to submit the application fee, as shown below:

Category of Applicant	Amount of Fee
SC/ST/Unemployed Persons with Benchmark Disabilities	Nil
All Others (even if the application is common for Regular and NCA vacancies)	₹1500

- g. Payment of application fee, if applicable, is the last stage of the application process and in such cases, applications without the successful payment of fee will be incomplete and will not be considered for selection process. Online and Offline payment methods are available for payment of application fee. For online payment, candidates shall follow the steps detailed for the same in "How to apply" link. **Candidates should ensure that the online payment is successful even though they have received message from their bank regarding successful payment of the amount.** Candidates can check the status of online payment using 'Verify E-Payment' button given against the corresponding application. Do not commence online payment again, in case, the amount has already been debited from your account. The payment may be in clearing and may take a few days to settle the amount. The amount may be refunded in some cases. Candidates are requested to check their bank account statement in such cases. In case, the online payment does not become success towards the last date for the offline payment, candidates have to pay the application fee through offline mode by presenting the system generated chalan at any branch of the State Bank of India (SBI) on any day specifically mentioned in the notification for the said purpose. In case, two payments (online & offline payment) are made in respect of a single application, e-mail shall be sent intimating the same upon which the extra payment made will be refunded.
- h. For offline payments, system generated chalan will be available from the date prescribed for the commencement of offline payment and can be downloaded from the 'My Applications Tab' under 'My Profile'. Offline payment can be made at any branch of State Bank of India within the time line specified in this notification. Copy of the paid chalan shall be retained by the candidate and be produced if called for.
- i. Payment of fee by Demand Draft/ Cheque/ Money Orders/ Postal Orders etc. will not be accepted. Fee once paid will neither be refunded nor can it be held in reserve for any other examination. Candidates are instructed to refer

to the 'Terms & Conditions and Policies with respect to payment', available in the payment page of the website.

- j. Candidates should keep a copy (soft/hard) of the application and keep it for future reference. They need not send the print out of the online application or any other documents to the High Court.
 - k. Online application validation rules are designed on the basis of Notification/Rules requirement. Candidates are advised to read the Notification/Rules carefully and refer "**How to Apply**" in the Recruitment Portal. Application submitted through online form does not imply that candidate has fulfilled all the criteria given in the Notification/Rules and application is subject to subsequent scrutiny and the same is liable to be rejected if found to be not fulfilling the eligibility criteria at any point of time.
12. The candidates should ensure that the details in the system generated printout of application are that of the candidates themselves. The candidates who make alterations or attempt to write the written test by making alterations in the Admission Tickets downloaded will be disqualified.
13. **Candidates who wish to apply from abroad** have to forward an email detailing their location with public IP address to the email id 'recruitment.hckerala@nic.in' and they will be allowed access to the recruitment portal in order to apply for the post. After completing online application process, such candidates have to inform the same via the above mentioned email.
14. A candidate shall submit only one application. An application once made will not be allowed to be withdrawn.
15. The candidate's copy of the Fee Payment Chalan should be retained by the candidate and produced if called for.
16. Full and correct information shall be furnished in the online application. Furnishing of false or incorrect information/documents or suppression of material information will disqualify the candidate at any stage of selection. **Anything not specifically claimed in the application against the appropriate field will not be considered at a later stage.**
17. **Admission Tickets/Call Letters for Written Test/ Viva voce:**
- i. Candidates should login to their profile to download the Admission Tickets/Call Letters (<https://hckrecruitment.keralacourts.in>).
 - ii. Admission Tickets for written test will be ready for download three weeks prior to the date of the written test and the Call Letters for viva voce will be ready for download two weeks prior to the viva voce and the candidate will be intimated through SMS/e-mail.
 - iii. If a candidate is unable to download his/her Admission Ticket/Call Letter, he/she should contact the High Court on '0484-2562235' during office

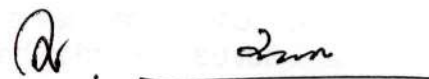
hours. Candidates are also advised to visit the recruitment portal of the High Court (<https://hckrecruitment.keralacourts.in>) at least once in a week to know about the schedule of the written tests/ viva voce.

18. Important dates with regard to submission of application:

Date of commencement of filing of online application and remittance of application fee through online mode	21/04/2025
The date of closure of filing of online application and remittance of application fee through online mode	19/05/2025
Date of commencement of remittance of application fee through offline mode/ Offline chalan will be available from	26/05/2025
Last date for remittance of application fee through offline mode	02/06/2025

19. For clearing doubts, candidates may call: 0484-2562235 on working days from 10 am to 4.30 pm.

(By Order)



Nixon M. Joseph
Registrar (District Judiciary)