THE HIGH COURT OF KERALA

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HCKL/115/2026-REC 4-HC KERALA **Date : 19.11.2026**

NOTIFICATION

KERALA JUDICIAL SERVICE EXAMINATION - 2026

Online applications are invited from qualified candidates for appointment to the post of Civil Judge (Junior Division) (Pay : 77840 - 136520) in the Kerala Judicial Service 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 **23.11.2026** onwards. No other means/modes of application will be accepted. **(Candidates who had submitted applications pursuant to Notification No. HCKL/115/2026-REC4-HC KERALA dated 30.03.2026 shall also submit fresh applications pursuant to this notification in order to be considered for inclusion in the present selection process. Such candidates shall not be required to pay the application fee again, provided that the application fee prescribed under the earlier notification was duly paid. Candidates shall use the same user profile through which the earlier application was submitted.)**

SPECIAL RECRUITMENT

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

2. **Recruitment number: 26/2026** (Special Recruitment for filling up backlog vacancies of Persons with Benchmark Disabilities for the period from 1996 - 2023)

Category	No. of Vacancies
(A) Blindness and Low Vision	5
(B) Deaf and Hard of Hearing	6
(C) Locomotor Disability including Cerebral Palsy, Leprosy Cured, Dwarfism and Acid Attack Victims	3
(D) Autism, Specific Learning Disability and Mental Illness	1
(E) Multiple disabilities from amongst persons under categories **(A)** to **(D)**	

Method of recruitment: Direct recruitment [candidates belonging to the categories (A) to (E) mentioned above alone are eligible to apply].

NCA VACANCIES

[Those who apply for NCA vacancies can apply for the Regular vacancies also]

3. **Recruitment number: 27/2026** (3rd Re-notification relating to the select list prepared pursuant to notification No. HCKL/352/2023- REC 4, dated 19.01.2023).

   Number of vacancies: **Scheduled Tribes – 1** (Candidates belonging to **Scheduled Tribes/ Scheduled Castes** in the State of Keralam can apply for the post. However, only in the absence of candidates belonging to Scheduled Tribes community in the merit list, candidates from Scheduled Castes community will be considered for appointment).

   Method of recruitment: Direct recruitment (candidates belonging to the Scheduled Tribes/Scheduled Castes communities in the State of Keralam alone are eligible to apply).

4. **Recruitment number: 28/2026** (2nd Re-notification relating to the select list prepared pursuant to notification No.HCKL/589/2024- REC 4, dated 31.01.2024)

   Number of vacancies: **Scheduled Tribes – 1** (Candidates belonging to **Scheduled Tribes/ Scheduled Castes** in the State of Keralam can apply for the post. However, only in the absence of candidates belonging to Scheduled Tribes community in the merit list, candidates from Scheduled Castes community will be considered for appointment).

   Method of recruitment: Direct recruitment (candidates belonging to the Scheduled Tribes/Scheduled Castes communities in the State of Keralam alone are eligible to apply)

5. **Recruitment number: 29/2026** (1st Re-notification relating to the select list prepared pursuant to notification No.HCKL/1/2025- REC 4-HC KERALA, dated 31.01.2025)

   Number of vacancies: **Scheduled Castes – 1** (Candidates belonging to **Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes** in the State of Keralam can apply for the post. However, only in the absence of candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes community in the merit list, candidates from Scheduled Tribes community will be considered for appointment).

   Method of recruitment: Direct recruitment (candidates belonging to the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes communities in the State of Keralam alone are eligible to apply)

REGULAR VACANCIES

6. **Recruitment number : 30/2026**

   Number of vacancies : 3 (Probable)

   Method of recruitment: Direct Recruitment

   [As per Rule 5(3) of the Kerala Judicial Service Rules, 1991, out of every four vacancies arising in the category of Civil Judge (Junior Division), the first, second and third shall be filled or reserved to be filled up by direct recruitment and the fourth by recruitment by transfer. In the absence of the fourth regular vacancy, the method of recruitment to the regular vacancies is confined to direct recruitment only].

7. **Mode of selection:** The selection shall be made after holding competitive examinations at two successive stages. The first stage is the Kerala Judicial Service (Preliminary) Examination. The second stage is the Kerala Judicial Service (Main) Examination, consisting of a written examination and a viva-voce. The preliminary examination and main examination will be conducted on the basis of the Scheme and Syllabi given at clauses 10 to 13 of this notification. The preliminary as well as the main examination will be common for the candidates who apply in response to Special Recruitment (Recruitment No.26/2026), NCA Recruitment (Recruitment Nos.27/2026, 28/2026 & 29/2026) and Regular Recruitment (Recruitment No.30/2026).

8. **Qualifications:**

   A candidate for appointment as Civil Judge (Junior Division) by direct recruitment shall satisfy the following general conditions, namely;

   a) Shall be a citizen of India.

   b) Shall be a holder of a degree in Law recognized by the Bar Council of India for the purpose of enrolment as an Advocate.

   c) Shall have obtained the Law Degree preceding one year as on the date of this notification.

   [As per the Judgment dated 21.08.2026 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in Writ Petition (Civil) No.1110/2025 (Bhumika Trust Vs. Union of India and others)]

   d) Shall not have completed 35 years of age on the first day of January, 2026. The upper age limit shall be raised by five years in the case of candidates belonging to any of the Scheduled Castes or adult members of such castes and their children when such adult members are converted to other religions, or Scheduled Tribes and by three years in the case of candidates belonging to any of the Other Backward Classes, as provided in Rule 10(c) of Part II of Kerala State and Subordinate Services Rules, 1958. Ten 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 Rights 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, subject to the condition that maximum age limit shall not exceed 50 years.

   e) Shall be of good character.

f) Shall be of sound health having no bodily infirmities, which renders them unfit for appointment.

While applying for the post, candidates should ensure that they fulfil the eligibility and other norms mentioned in the notification. Save as otherwise provided, the qualification prescribed for the post shall be the one acquired by the candidate on or before the last date fixed for closure of application filing process.

9. **Reservation for appointment:**

a) Rule 15 (a) of Part II of the Kerala State and Subordinate Services Rules, 1958 shall be applicable for the NCA recruitments.

b) The rules relating to reservation of appointments contained in Part II of the Kerala State and Subordinate Services Rules, 1958 (Rules 14 to 17) shall apply to appointment by direct recruitment (Regular vacancies). .

c) the reservation for Persons with Benchmark Disabilities shall be 4% as provided in Section 34 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 and as specified in G.O.(P) No.5/2023/SJD dated 01.10.2023 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 Judicial Service Rules, 1991 and scheme of examination framed thereunder.

10. **Scheme of the Preliminary Examination:**

The preliminary examination will be conducted on **07.02.2027** (tentative). It consists of one paper of objective type screening test based on the syllabus given below containing 100 multiple choice questions, each question carrying two marks. Maximum marks will be 200 and one mark will be deducted for each incorrect answer. Duration of the preliminary examination will be two and a half hours. The preliminary examination is conducted for the purpose of shortlisting the candidates and the marks obtained in the preliminary examination shall not be counted for determining the final order of merit of the candidates.

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 examination. Only those candidates who are declared by the High Court to have qualified in the preliminary examination will be eligible for admission to the main written examination provided they are otherwise found eligible for admission to the main examination. Short list of candidates selected for the main examination will be published in the Notice Board and in the recruitment portal of the High Court. Separate short list will be published for Persons with Benchmark Disabilities in the Preliminary Examination.

11. **Syllabus for the Preliminary Examination:**

Part - A	Code of Civil Procedure, Indian Contract Act, Negotiable Instruments Act, Transfer of Property Act, Specific Relief Act, Kerala Buildings (Lease and Rent Control) Act
Part - B	Code of Criminal Procedure **&** Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, Indian Penal Code **&** Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Indian Evidence Act **&** Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam
Part - C	Constitution of India, Legal G.K., Reasoning & Mental ability

12. Scheme of the Main Examination:

a) **Written Examination:** The Kerala Judicial Service Main (Written) Examination consists of 4 papers based on the syllabus given below. Each paper carries 100 marks and the duration for each paper will be three hours. The number of candidates for viva voce shall not ordinarily exceed three times the number of notified vacancies. Separate short lists will be published for Persons with Benchmark Disabilities in the Main (Written) Examination.

b) **Viva-Voce**: Maximum marks for viva voce shall be 50. Only those candidates who are shortlisted as per the above scheme shall be called for viva-voce. The cut off marks in the viva-voce is fixed at 40% for General and OBC candidates and 35% for 'Persons with Benchmark Disabilities' and candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes community. Fraction of half or more than half shall be regarded as full marks and less than half shall be ignored. The marks secured by candidates in the viva-voce shall be added to the total marks secured by them in the Main (written) examination.

13. Syllabus for the Main (Written) Examination

Papers	Subjects
Paper–I	English Grammar, General Essays (two), Translation of Malayalam Depositions/Documents to English and vice-versa, Precis writing.
Paper–II	Part–A: Indian Contract Act, Transfer of Property Act, Limitation Act, Specific Relief Act, Easements Act, Kerala Buildings (Lease and Rent Control) Act, Hindu Succession Act, Indian Succession Act - Parts V, VI & X, Dissolution of Muslim Marriage Act. Part–B: Kerala Court Fees and Suits Valuation Act, Kerala Stamp Act, Kerala State Legal Services Authorities Act, The Kerala Panchayath Raj Act -Ch. X, XI, XXIA &XXIII, Kerala Municipality Act - Ch.IX, X, XXIV & XXV, Negotiable Instruments Act (except Ch. XVII), Registration Act.
Paper–III	Part–A: Indian Penal Code **&** Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Indian Evidence Act **&** Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, Abkari Act, Negotiable Instruments Act -Ch. XVII, The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act. Part–B: Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, Kerala Police Act, Probation of Offenders Act, Forest Act, N.D.P.S. Act (provisions relating to bail and trial by Magistrates).
Paper–IV	Part–A: Code of Civil Procedure, Civil Rules of Practice, Kerala Civil Courts Act, Order in Interlocutory Application/ Framing of issues/Judgment writing (Civil) Part–B: Code of Criminal Procedure **&** Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, Criminal Rules of Practice, Framing of charges/Order in Criminal Miscellaneous Petitions/ Judgment writing (Criminal)

14. 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 'Downloads' section 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, 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 of the High Court *(*https://hckrecruitment.keralacourts.in*)*.

15. **Training:** Every person selected for appointment shall be designated as "Trainee Judicial Officers" and shall undergo a compulsory period of one year of intensive training at the Kerala Judicial Academy.

During the training period, they shall be paid a fixed emolument equivalent to one-half of the remuneration payable to a Civil Judge (Junior Division), in addition, be entitled to the facilities and other benefits ordinarily made available to trainees in the Kerala Judicial Academy.

Upon successful completion of the aforesaid training, the Trainee Judicial Officers shall undergo a further period of one year of structured Law Clerkship. The first six months they shall work as a Law Clerk under the supervision of the Principal District/District and Sessions Judges or Members of the Higher Judicial Services, and the remaining six months under the supervision of a Hon'ble Judge, High Court of Kerala.

During the period of Law Clerkship, the Trainee Judicial Officer shall be paid same emoluments as admissible during their training in the Kerala Judicial Academy, with no further allowance, etc.

Upon completion of the Law Clerkship, the Hon'ble Judge, under whose supervision the Trainee Judicial Officer has served, shall place a reasoned evaluation report concerning the performance and suitability of the trainee. Upon such evaluation being found satisfactory, the Trainee Judicial Officer shall be appointed to the regular post and shall thereafter be entitled to the regular pay scale and other service benefits attached to the post.

[As per the Judgment dated 21.08.2026 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in Writ Petition (Civil) No.1110/2025 (Bhumika Trust Vs. Union of India and others)]

16. **Probation:** Every person appointed shall be on probation for a total period of two years on duty within a continuous period of three years from the date on which the person joins duty.

17. **Tests:** Every person appointed shall, within the period of probation, pass the Account Test for Executive Officers of the State of Keralam or the Account Test (Lower) unless the appointee has already passed either of those tests.

18. Pre-examination training to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes candidates:

A pre-examination training of a short duration will be conducted by the Kerala Judicial Academy for the candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes communities who qualify for the Main (Written) Examination. Such training shall be given only if there are sufficient number of candidates in the said categories who pass the Preliminary Examination. No fee will be charged for the training. However, candidates will not be eligible for any stipend or allowance for attending the training. The expenses for boarding and lodging will not be met by the High Court.

19. 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	200 to 250 pixels	150 to 180 pixels
2	Signature	100 to 130 pixels	150 to 180 pixels

d. The online application form is common for the Special Recruitment (Recruitment No.26/2026), NCA Recruitment (Recruitment Nos.27/2026, 28/2026 & 29/2026) and Regular Recruitment (Recruitment No.30/2026).

e. Candidates applying for more than one Recruitment Number shall make a single application by selecting the respective recruitments 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 and recruitment 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 other categories	₹1250/-

g. Candidates who had submitted applications pursuant to Notification No. HCKL/115/2026-REC4-HC KERALA dated 30.03.2026 shall not be required to pay the application fee again, provided that the application fee prescribed under the earlier notification was duly paid. Candidates shall use the same user profile through which the earlier application was submitted.

h. Payment of application fee, if applicable, is the last stage of the application process and in such cases, the applications without the completion of fee payment process 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, email shall be sent intimating the same upon which the extra payment made will be refunded.

i. For offline payments, chalan can be downloaded from the website and the payment can be made at any branch of State Bank of India within the time line specified in this notification. Copy of the Fee Payment chalan shall be retained by the candidate and be produced if called for.

j. 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.

k. 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.

l. 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.

20. Candidates should ensure that the details in the system generated printout of application are that of the candidates themselves. Candidates who make alterations or attempt to appear for the examination by making alterations in the Admission Tickets downloaded will be disqualified.

21. 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.

22. Candidates who are in the service of the Government of India or any of the State Governments should mention the same in the online application form and they should obtain 'No Objection Certificate'/'Service Certificate' from their Head of Office/Department.

23. A candidate shall submit only one application. Application once submitted cannot be withdrawn.

24. Full and correct information shall be furnished in the online application. Furnishing of false or incorrect information 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.

25. 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.

26. <u>Important dates with regard to submission of application</u>:

Date of commencement of application filing process/ fee payment through online mode	**23.11.2026**
The date of closure of application filing process/ fee payment through online mode	**16.12.2026**
Date of commencement of remittance of application fee through offline mode	**19.12.2026**
The last date for remittance of application fee through offline mode	**24.12.2026**

27. For clearing doubts, candidates may call '0484-2562235', on all working days between 10:00 a.m and 04:30 p.m.

(By Order)

Rajeev K.S.
Registrar (Recruitment)