



JACKSON,
ETTI & EDU



IP AFRICA NEWS

October, 2026

- Tanzania Formally Recognises ARIPO Trade Mark Registrations in New Legislative Amendments
- Tanzania's FCC Clarifies Acceptance of Foreign Trademark Certificates for Recordation
- Egypt Introduces Virtual Hearings for Trademark and Industrial Design Appeals
- Court of Appeal Reaffirms the Importance of Regulatory Compliance for Copyright Collecting Societies
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Vol 4/Q4/Issue 9.

In this edition: Tanzania's legislative recognition of qualifying ARIPO trade mark registrations; Tanzania's clarification on the use of foreign trademark registration certificates for recordation; Egypt's introduction of virtual hearings for IP appeals; renewed anti-piracy and copyright-related enforcement developments in Nigeria; WIPO's IP and Export Business Bootcamp; African trademark-watch updates; and news from Jackson, Etti & Edu.

Intellectual property landscapes across Africa continue to evolve, with recent legislative, regulatory and enforcement measures highlighting the importance of maintaining compliance, protecting intellectual property rights and using intellectual property strategically to support commercial growth. This edition examines key developments affecting brand owners, creators, technology businesses and IP practitioners across Nigeria and other African jurisdictions.



Tanzania has enacted the Written Laws (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act, 2026 (Act No. 6 of 2026), which came into force on 2 October 2026 and introduces significant amendments to the Trade and Service Marks Act (Cap. 326) and the Patents (Registration) Act (Cap. 217). Most notably, the amendments formally recognise qualifying ARIPO trade mark registrations designating Tanzania, providing greater statutory certainty following recent judicial developments that raised questions regarding the domestic effect of ARIPO registrations.

The amendments follow the Court of Appeal's decision in *Lakairo Industries Group Co. Limited and Others v. Kenafrika Industries Limited and Others*, Civil Appeal No. 593 of 2022, delivered on 26 September 2026, which created uncertainty regarding the recognition and enforceability of ARIPO trade mark registrations in Tanzania. Following that decision, ARIPO suspended Tanzania's eligibility for designation under the Banjul Protocol pending further developments.

Against this backdrop, section 159 of the 2026 Act introduces a new section 28A into the Trade and Service Marks Act. The new provision expressly recognises trade and service marks registered through ARIPO under the Banjul Protocol and designating Tanzania, as registered under Tanzanian law, provided the Registrar has not notified ARIPO that the mark shall have no effect in Tanzania. The provision applies to qualifying registrations made on or after 1 September 1999, when Tanzania acceded to the Banjul Protocol.

Other Significant Changes

In addition to clarifying the position of ARIPO registrations, the amendments introduce several important changes to Tanzania's trade mark regime.

1. The definition of a trade or service mark has been expanded to include non-traditional marks such as three-dimensional marks, colours and combinations of colours, packaging get-ups and holograms.
2. A new section 19A provides protection for qualifying well-known marks, even where their proprietors do not carry on business or have goodwill in Tanzania, subject to the applicable statutory conditions and assessment criteria.
3. Under section 16A, marks capable of distinguishing the goods or services of members of an association from those of non-members may be registered as collective marks in the name of the association.
4. Section 16B introduces a framework for certification marks, allowing marks that certify origin, material, mode of manufacture, quality, accuracy or other characteristics of goods or services to be registered, provided that the proprietor does not itself trade in the goods or services being certified. The amendments also establish rules governing the use, administration and enforcement of certification marks.
5. A new provision to section 26(2) allows the Registrar to advertise an application before acceptance where he considers that exceptional circumstances exist.
6. The 2026 Act also introduces important changes to Tanzania's patent framework. Patent protection will now subsist for twenty years from the filing date, while utility certificates will remain valid for ten years from the filing date, replacing the previous seven-year protection period. However, the legislation does not contain any express transitional provisions addressing patents granted before the amendments came into force.
7. The amendments recognise industrial designs registered through applicable regional or international systems designating Tanzania. Under the revised section 76, such registrations shall have the same effect as national registrations unless the Registrar communicates a refusal. Designs recognised before the amendment are deemed to be recognised under the new framework.

Why this matters

The statutory recognition of qualifying ARIPO trade mark registrations is one of the most significant aspects of the 2026 amendments, as it provides legislative clarity following the uncertainty created by the Court of Appeal's decision and subsequent suspension of Tanzania's designation under the Banjul Protocol. For businesses that have relied on ARIPO registrations designating Tanzania, the amendments provide greater certainty regarding the recognition of those rights under Tanzanian law.

The expanded categories of registrable marks create additional opportunities to protect distinctive product shapes, packaging, colours and other brand features. The introduction of collective and certification marks also provides associations, cooperatives and producer groups with additional tools to protect shared commercial identities and distinguish goods by origin, quality or other characteristics.

Businesses with intellectual property interests in Tanzania should review their existing portfolios and protection strategies in light of the amendments and seek local legal advice where the effect on existing rights or pending proceedings remains uncertain.



TANZANIA'S FCC CLARIFIES ACCEPTANCE OF FOREIGN TRADEMARK CERTIFICATES FOR RECORDATION

Tanzania's Fair Competition Commission (FCC) has clarified that trademark registration certificates issued in foreign jurisdictions may be used to support applications under Mainland Tanzania's mandatory trademark rights recordation regime.

The regime's implementation commenced on 1 December 2025, under the Merchandise Marks Act and the Merchandise Marks (Recordation) Regulations, 2025.

In a letter dated 28 July 2026, the FCC responded to questions raised by the Tanzania Intellectual Property Association concerning foreign registrations, the legal effect of recordation, enforcement and renewals. The FCC clarified that recordation applications may be supported by either Tanzanian trademark registration certificates or certificates issued by foreign trademark offices, subject to the applicable requirements.

The clarification is important for brand owners whose marks are registered abroad but who wish to record them for purposes of the Tanzanian regime. However, recordation should not be confused with substantive trade mark registration. The FCC has clarified that recordation is an administrative mechanism intended to assist with monitoring imports and identifying suspected counterfeit goods; it does not, by itself, create substantive trade mark rights in Tanzania.

Brand owners should therefore assess separately whether their marks require registration under Tanzania's trade mark legislation or protection through an applicable international registration mechanism extending to Tanzania. Recordation and trademark registration serve different purposes and should be considered as complementary parts of a brand-protection strategy.

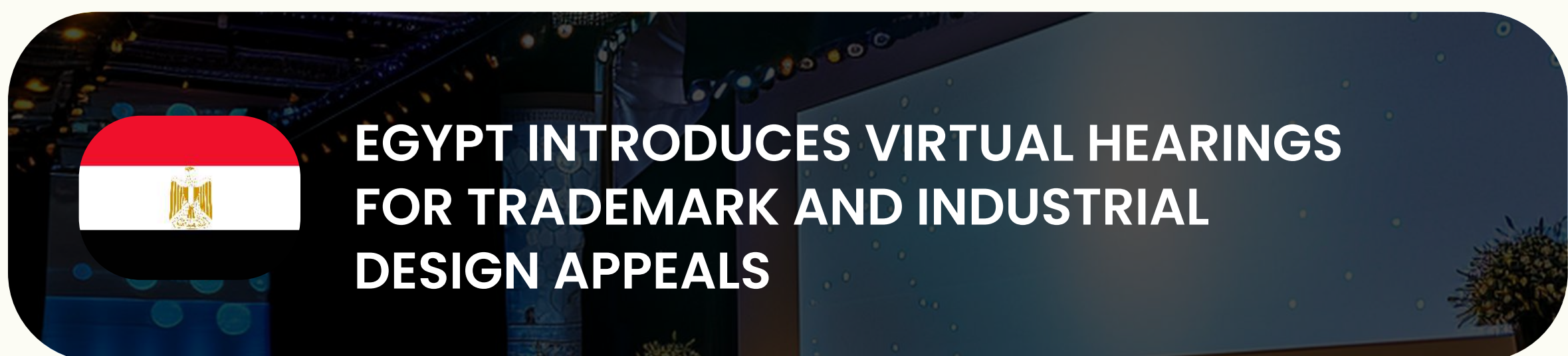
The FCC also addressed renewals of existing recordations. According to the reported clarification, the administrative renewal procedures and forms anticipated under the Regulations had not yet been formally introduced, and renewals continued to be handled administratively under the direction of the Chief Inspector.

Businesses should confirm the current process and requirements directly with the FCC rather than assume that the absence of a prescribed form removes the obligation to maintain a valid recordation.

Why this matters

The clarification reduces uncertainty for international brand owners seeking to comply with Tanzania's recordation regime. Owners may be able to rely on existing foreign trademark registrations for recordation purposes without first obtaining a corresponding Tanzanian registration.

Nevertheless, businesses should not assume that recordation alone will establish all the rights required to pursue trademark infringement proceedings. Brand owners with significant commercial interests in Tanzania should review their local registration position, recordation status, import channels and enforcement arrangements.



The Egyptian Intellectual Property Authority (EGIPA) has introduced virtual Appeal Committees for trade mark and industrial design proceedings as part of efforts to modernise intellectual property administration in Egypt. The initiative aligns with Egypt's National Intellectual Property Strategy and reflects the broader digitalisation of administrative procedures.

Implementation is being rolled out progressively, with appeal hearings moving predominantly to a virtual format. Under the new arrangements, hearings are conducted remotely, while supporting evidence must be submitted in both electronic and physical formats. Hearing sessions are also digitally recorded and stored on EGIPA's servers, although these internal recordings are not accessible to external parties.

Why this matters

The introduction of virtual appeal hearings may improve procedural efficiency and reduce the logistical demands associated with attending proceedings in person. However, the dual requirement for electronic and physical evidence means that parties must continue to manage documentary submissions across both formats.

Brand owners and businesses involved in trade mark or industrial design disputes in Egypt should review their internal procedures and coordinate with local representatives to ensure compliance with EGIPA's hearing arrangements and evidence-submission requirements. Businesses should also clarify any applicable filing deadlines, technical requirements and procedures for accessing hearing records before commencing or responding to an appeal.



COURT OF APPEAL REAFFIRMS THE IMPORTANCE OF REGULATORY COMPLIANCE FOR COPYRIGHT COLLECTING SOCIETIES

Nigeria's Court of Appeal, Lagos Division, dismissed an interlocutory appeal brought by the Copyright Society of Nigeria (COSON) against the Nigerian Copyright Commission ("NCC" or "Commission"). The appeal concerned the refusal to grant an interim injunction restraining the Commission from taking specified regulatory action against the society. The Court awarded costs of ₦200,000 against COSON.

COSON's challenge arose in the context of its dispute with the NCC over aspects of the regulatory framework governing its operations, including the Commission's authority over its operating approval and related activities.

The decision concerns interim relief. It should not be treated as a final determination of every issue in the underlying proceedings or as a comprehensive ruling on all questions concerning the parties' substantive rights.

Why this matters

The decision is relevant to collective management organisations, music publishers, performers, composers and other copyright stakeholders whose royalties depend on effective and lawful collective rights administration.

It highlights the importance of understanding the regulatory requirements applicable to organisations responsible for licensing works and collecting or distributing royalties. Rights holders and businesses using copyrighted works should conduct appropriate due diligence on the regulatory status and authority of any collecting organisation with which they engage.

The ruling also serves as a reminder that the refusal of an interlocutory injunction does not, by itself, resolve all substantive issues in the dispute. The progress and eventual outcome of the underlying proceedings remain relevant.



NCC SEIZES SUSPECTED PIRATED BOOKS WORTH APPROXIMATELY ₦7 MILLION IN ABUJA

The Nigerian Copyright Commission reportedly seized books with an estimated street value of ₦7 million during an anti-piracy operation at Garki Market in Abuja. The operation was conducted on 4 September 2026 following intelligence concerning the suspected storage and distribution of pirated literary works.

According to reports quoting the Commission, its enforcement team, led by the Director of Operations, Femi Ajala, recovered cartons and bags of books suspected to have been reproduced and distributed without the authorization of the relevant copyright owners. The premises were subsequently sealed as part of the enforcement action.

The operation forms part of the NCC's continuing efforts to combat copyright piracy and unauthorized distribution of creative works. Book piracy can undermine the commercial interests of publishers, authors, distributors and educational-content providers by diverting revenue from legitimate sales.

Why this matters

Effective copyright enforcement is important to protecting the commercial value of creative works and maintaining incentives for investment in publishing and content creation.

Copyright owners should ensure that ownership records, publishing agreements, authorisations, and licensing arrangements are properly documented. They should also maintain records that can assist in identifying unauthorised copies and establishing the scope of their rights.

Although seizures and other enforcement operations can disrupt suspected piracy, a seizure is not itself a final judicial determination of infringement or liability. Businesses and rights holders should distinguish enforcement allegations from findings made by a competent court.



WIPO INVITES NIGERIAN BUSINESSES TO IP AND EXPORT BUSINESS BOOTCAMP

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), through its Nigeria Office, has invited eligible Nigerian-owned businesses to apply for its IP and Export Business Bootcamp, scheduled to take place in Abuja on 27 and 28 October 2026.

The programme forms part of WIPO's Business Export Programme and is supported by the Funds-in-Trust Japan Industrial Property Global initiative. It is designed to help Nigerian businesses integrate intellectual property considerations into their export and international expansion strategies.

The programme is intended to cover the identification and management of intellectual property assets, protection in export markets, the use of national, regional and international protection systems, and practical approaches to integrating intellectual property into export planning. Sixty businesses are expected to participate, with a select group receiving additional tailored mentoring.

Eligible businesses are expected to be Nigerian-owned and registered, have an existing product, service, brand, creative work, technology or innovation, and demonstrate an interest or potential for exporting. Interested businesses should consult WIPO's official announcement for the full eligibility criteria and application requirements. The announced application deadline is 23 October 2026.

Why this matters

Intellectual property protection should form part of a business's export strategy from the outset. Rights obtained in Nigeria generally do not automatically provide equivalent protection in foreign markets. Businesses expanding internationally may therefore need to consider protection in each relevant jurisdiction and observe applicable filing and priority deadlines.

The bootcamp presents an opportunity for businesses to assess their intellectual property portfolios, identify gaps in territorial protection and develop strategies for managing intellectual property risks and opportunities associated with international expansion.

Businesses preparing to export should consider not only whether their trademarks, designs, patents and copyright are protected, but also whether their ownership records, licensing arrangements, distribution agreements and confidentiality measures are suitable for cross-border commercial activity.



AFRICAN TRADEMARK WATCH: JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS AND OPPOSITION MONITORING

Trademark journals remain an important source of information for identifying newly advertised applications that may conflict with existing rights. Businesses with African portfolios should monitor relevant publications regularly and ensure that potential conflicts are reviewed promptly.

The following publications were identified for monitoring in the period covered by this edition:

- **Nigeria**

The Nigerian Trademarks Registry has published its **Trademark Journal Vol. 1, No. 3, of 16th October 2026**. The publication advertises trademark applications and initiates the applicable **two-month opposition periods**.

- **Kenya**

The Kenyan Industrial Property Institute (KIPI) published its August and September 2026 Industrial Property Journals on **31 August 2026** and **30 September 2026**, respectively. The publications advertise trademark applications and initiate the applicable **60-day opposition periods**.

- **South Africa**

The Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) published the August 2026 Vol. 59 No. 08 Part I on **26 August 2026** and the September 2026 Vol. 59 No. 09 Part I on **30 September 2026**. The journals advertise trademark applications for public review and initiate the applicable **90-day opposition periods**.

- **Rwanda**

Rwanda Development Board (RDB) recently published the following Industrial Property Journal: Vol. 10, of 15 August 2026, published on 25 August 2026; Vol. 11, dated 31 August 2026 and published on 14 September 2026; and Vol. 12, dated 15 September 2026 and published on 29 September 2026. The journals provide public notice of trademark applications and allow interested parties to oppose the advertised marks within the applicable **60-day statutory opposition period**.

- **Tanzania**

The Business Registrations and Licensing Agency (BRELA) published its September 2026 Journal on 21 September 2026. The publication commenced the applicable **60-day statutory opposition period**.

- **OAPI**

The African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI) recently issued the Official Industrial Property Bulletin (BOPI) Publications of 28 August 2026, 11 September 2026, 25 September 2026. The publications advertise trademark applications and initiated the **3-month opposition period**.

- **ARIPO**

The African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO) published Trademark Journal Vol. XLIII, No. 8 (August 2026) on 31 August 2026. The publication initiated the applicable **3-month opposition period**.

Why this matters

Trademark watching is an essential component of brand-protection strategy. A monitoring programme helps rights holders identify potentially conflicting applications before registration and assess whether opposition, negotiation, coexistence or another response is appropriate.

Businesses should maintain a central calendar for relevant jurisdictions, record the source and date of each publication, and have local counsel confirm the applicable deadline and filing requirements. This is especially important where deadline calculation depends on the date of publication, the type of notice, statutory counting rules or official holidays.



JACKSON, ETTI & EDU BECOMES IIM-ACCREDITED TRAINING ORGANISATION FOR CERTIFIED DATA PROTECTION OFFICER TRAINING

Jackson, Etti & Edu (JEE) has been accredited by the Institute of Information Management (IIM) as an Accredited Training Organization (ATO) to deliver the IIM-Certified Data Protection Officer (CDPO) training programme.

The accreditation strengthens the Firm's capacity to support organizations in developing data protection, privacy and information-governance capabilities. It also reflects the growing importance of practical training and professional development as organizations respond to evolving data-protection obligations.

IP RANKINGS AND RECOGNITIONS

Managing IP – IP STARS 2026

The Firm reports recognition across five practice areas:

- Copyright and Related Rights — Tier 1
- IP Transactions — Tier 1
- Patent Prosecution — Tier 1
- Trade Mark Prosecution — Tier 1
- Trade Mark Disputes — Recommended

IAM / WTR 1000 2026

The Firm reports recognition as a Gold Firm.

IAM Patent 1000

JEE reports recognition as a Recommended Firm for patent practice in Nigeria.

ESQ Nigerian Legal Awards

The Firm's Intellectual Property Department was nominated for Intellectual Property & Digital Rights Team of the Year.

Individual Rankings

Our Intellectual Property team continues to earn recognition across leading international IP rankings and industry awards, reflecting the depth of our expertise and commitment to excellence. Below are the individual recognitions received by our team members across the 2026 rankings.



Uwa Ohiku

- Managing IP (IP Stars 2026) – Trade Mark Star
- IAM / WTR 1000 2026 – Silver



Chinyere Okorocha

- Trade Mark Star — Managing IP IP STARS 2026



Obafemi Agaba, SAN

- Managing IP (IP STARS 2026) – Trade Mark Star
- IAM / WTR 1000 2026 – Gold



Chinwe Ogban

- Managing IP (IP STARS 2026) – Notable Practitioner



Toyosi Odunmbaku

- Managing IP (IP STARS 2026) – Rising Star
- IAM / WTR 1000 2026 – Gold

**Tolu Olaloye**

- Managing IP (IP STARS 2026) – Notable Practitioner
- WIPR Influential Women in IP 2026 (one of two recipients of the recognition in Nigeria)

**Oloruntobi Opawoye**

- IAM / WTR 1000 2026 – Silver

**Kodichinma Anigbogu**

- Managing IP (IP STARS 2026) – Rising Star
- IAM / WTR 1000 2026 – Bronze

**Susan Akinade**

- Managing IP (IP STARS 2026) – Rising Star

IAPP: CHINWE OGBAN AUTHORS ARTICLE ON "THE RISING SIGNIFICANCE OF DATA PROTECTION IN SHAPING AFRICA'S DIGITAL FUTURE"

The article, published by the International Association of Privacy Professionals (IAPP), discusses the increasing importance of data protection in Africa's digital economy, highlighting regulatory developments, governance considerations and the role of privacy frameworks in promoting digital trust, innovation and sustainable growth across the continent. [Click here to read the full article.](#)

JEE PARTICIPATES IN PRIVCON 2026

Jackson, Etti & Edu sponsored PRIVCON 2026, the 4th Annual Privacy Conference, held on 1 September 2026 at The Civic Centre, Lagos.

Representing the Firm, Mercy Matthew, Deputy Head of the Commercial IP and Data Protection Practice, spoke during a session titled "Bitter Truths about Compliance Audit Returns and Third-Party Processors' Obligations."

The Firm's participation reflects its continuing engagement with industry discussions on privacy, data protection and compliance, and its commitment to contributing to the development of sound data-protection practices in Nigeria.

PRACTICAL TAKEAWAYS FOR BUSINESSES AND IP OWNERS

- **Protect brands and designs early:** Consider trademark and industrial-design protection for names, labels, packaging and other commercially significant product features.
- **Document ownership and commercial relationships:** Ensure agreements with distributors, agents, manufacturers and business partners clearly allocate intellectual property ownership, permitted use and responsibilities upon termination.
- **Monitor trademark publications:** Review relevant journals regularly and have local counsel confirm applicable opposition deadlines before they expire.
- **Maintain copyright records.** Keep clear records of ownership, assignments, publishing agreements, licences and authorisations.
- **Assess protection in export markets:** Do not assume that Nigerian rights automatically protect a brand, design or invention abroad.
- **Consider origin-based branding:** Businesses and producer groups whose products are linked to a particular geographical area should monitor developments in geographical-indications protection.
- **Treat customs recordation and trademark registration separately:** In Tanzania, assess both the recordation requirements and the substantive trademark protection needed for the business's enforcement strategy.
- **Verify regulatory status:** Rights holders should conduct appropriate due diligence on collecting organisations and other entities responsible for licensing or administering intellectual property rights.

LOOKING AHEAD

Recent developments in Nigeria and across Africa demonstrate the growing importance of intellectual property as a strategic business asset. From trade mark and patent law reforms to copyright regulation, border-enforcement measures, export-readiness initiatives and proposed geographical-indications legislation, businesses face an increasingly important need to manage intellectual property proactively.

Effective protection requires more than registration alone. Businesses should also consider ownership, contractual arrangements, market monitoring, enforcement, territorial coverage and the commercial use of their intellectual property. As regulatory systems continue to evolve and regional markets become more integrated, a coordinated and commercially focused IP strategy can help businesses protect their investments and maximise the value of their intangible assets.

This newsletter is intended for general information purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Readers should seek specific advice in relation to their particular circumstances and verify current legal and administrative requirements before taking action.

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