

Ministry of Justice

Covid-19 Stakeholder Update / 11.04.20

Weekend Service

This is the Ministry of Justice's regular stakeholder communications update service. This is intended to signpost the latest Covid-19 guidance and central government updates.

We encourage organisations to share these updates with your wider networks to ensure a wide circulation of important communications. For monitoring and evaluation purposes, we'd gratefully receive information on who you are sharing this with.

We would also find it helpful to know about your own communications plans and any intel that will help inform our communications moving forwards. Please do get in touch at stakeholder.intel@justice.gov.uk.

Service over the Easter Bank Holiday weekend

This will be our last daily update until after the Bank Holiday. Service will resume on Tuesday 14th April.

Please find today's update below.

- We have robust and flexible plans to ensure we can continue to deliver key services across the justice system.
- A network of priority courts will remain open during the coronavirus pandemic to make sure the justice system continues to operate effectively.
- Selected lower-risk offenders, within weeks of their release dates, and pregnant women in custody who do not pose a high risk of harm to the public will be temporarily released from prison. Additionally, works have begun to deliver 500 temporary, single occupancy units at seven jails. This will increase space in prisons and limit the spread of Coronavirus helping protect staff, prisoners and the NHS.

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Recognising the frontline staff working in the Justice sector. At 8pm last Thursday, to coincide with the national 'clap' for critical workers, the MOJ, HMPPS and HMCTS published content across their social media channels - showing appreciation for the hardworking #JusticeHeroes and #HiddenHeroes who are going the extra mile to deliver essential public services during this time.

We would welcome your support by retweeting or liking our videos & infographics - or by posting a message of support to your own followers (using the hashtags #JusticeHeroes and #HiddenHeroes).

Twitter - <https://twitter.com/MoJGovUK>

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/ministryofjusticeuk/>

LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/1058791/>

Instagram – <https://www.instagram.com/mojgovuk/>

Victims and witnesses

NEW: At the No10 press conference today, the Home Secretary Priti Patel announced an additional £2 million to support charities to further expand services for those at risk of domestic abuse. The following page contains more information about help offered to domestic abuse victims: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help>

HMPPS

Prisons and probation services have implemented significant changes to comply with the Government's social distancing rules and to protect staff and service users. The service has been working closely with public health experts, as well as criminal justice partners, to ensure that robust contingency plans are in place and immediate action can be taken wherever cases are identified. The following page will continue to be updated when new advice is available: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-and-prisons>

Please note: we are unable to provide updated Covid-19 case information over the weekend. This information will continue to be communicated during weekday updates.

HMCTS

Updated guidance has been published on applying for a domestic violence injunction as an unrepresented applicant during the coronavirus outbreak. It explains the arrangements in place during the coronavirus pandemic, including making sure that a court is open before sending an application and that hearings can take place by remote means whenever possible. Read the full guidance here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/applying-for-a-domestic-violence-family-law-act-injunction-for-unrepresented-applicants>

During this unprecedented public health emergency, we are adjusting practices and taking steps to minimise the risk to the judiciary, court staff and users. Any changes to individual hearings will be communicated directly to those affected in the usual way, by email and/or phone. The following page will continue to be updated when new advice is available: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-courts-and-tribunals-planning-and-preparation>

HMCTS maintain a daily operational summary service on courts and tribunals from Monday to Friday during the Coronavirus outbreak. HMCTS aim to update this page daily by 9am: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hmcts-daily-operational-summary-on-courts-and-tribunals-during-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

Latest general guidance

- The new Business Support campaign for Covid-19: <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-support/>
- Guidance on protecting vulnerable people from Covid-19: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>
- Home isolation / 'stay at home' guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>
- Guidance on social distancing: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people>

Please continue to refer to [GOV.UK/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus) for the latest information on the situation in the UK and the Government's response. For information about the illness and symptoms visit [nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus)