

Ministry of Justice

COVID-19 Stakeholder Update / 22.05.20

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The Ministry of Justice COVID-19 Stakeholder Update signposts the latest COVID-19 news and guidance from government. To help us ensure our communications continue to meet your needs, we would be grateful if you could answer **five quick questions** and share your views. Responses are anonymous. **The survey can be found [here](#).**

The stakeholder update will not be issued over the bank holiday weekend, other than to communicate major announcements.

- We have robust and flexible plans to ensure we can continue to deliver key services across the justice
- [Independent public health monitoring](#) suggests the steps we have taken are successfully limiting deaths and the transmission of coronavirus in prisons. Those measures include restricted regimes and social distancing within prisons, the early release of low-risk offenders approaching their release date, creating more space with 500 temporary cells and the re-opening of a formerly closed prison at Medway.
- Our priority is to make sure we can keep everyone in courts safe. Some courts have now, with approval from Public Health England and Public Health Wales, begun the resumption of jury trials with new juries having been sworn in at Cardiff Crown Court, The Old Bailey, Manchester Minshull Street and Bristol Crown Court.

Judicial Office

NEW: Message from the Chair of the Jury Trials Working Group on resumption of jury trials. This week juries were sworn in at four courts: Manchester Minshull Street, Bristol, Cardiff and The Old Bailey. This marked an important first step to implement the plan to restart jury trials and the feedback received from participants, including court staff, jurors, witnesses and legal professionals, has been positive. Further new trials are listed to start in Reading, Warwick and Winchester next week. Read more here: <https://www.judiciary.uk/announcements/message-from-the-chair-of-the-jury-trials-working-group-on-resumption-of-jury-trials/>

HMCTS

HMCTS is maintaining a weekly operational update which will be published on GOV.UK this evening. An email will go to subscribers on Monday evening (instead of Sunday because of the Bank Holiday) with a reminder. On Tuesday morning a link to the weekly update will be published on Twitter. HMCTS will only email again if there are any urgent or significant changes during the week. Subscribe

here: https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKHMCTS/subscriber/new?qsp=UKHMCTS_1

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>

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>

As of 17:00 on THURSDAY 21 MAY:

- 437 prisoners have tested positive for COVID-19 75 prisons;
- 575 prison staff have tested positive for COVID-19 across 77 prisons;
- 24 Prisoner Escort and Custody Services (PECS) staff have tested positive for COVID-19.

These are interim figures as reported by prisons and PECS providers and are subject to revision as more information becomes available.

Latest general guidance

- All UK Government Coronavirus guidance and support: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- Staying alert and safe (social distancing): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>
- The UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-plan-to-rebuild-the-uk-governments-covid-19-recovery-strategy>
- Find out how to make your workplace COVID-secure: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>
- Getting financial help and keeping your business safe: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support>

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)

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