Ministry of Justice

COVID-19 Stakeholder Update / 25.04.20
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.

- 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.

Ministry of Justice
NEW: COVID-19 testing extended to all essential workers and members of their households in England and Scotland who have symptoms.
This will include prisons, probation, courts and tribunals staff, the Judiciary, charities and workers delivering critical frontline services. Self-isolating workers can either book a test directly through a secure portal or be referred by their employer. Read the full guidance here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested

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
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

Latest general guidance

- Guidance for those involved in managing COVID-19 deaths: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-those-involved-in-managing-covid-19-deaths
- Guidance on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wage-costs-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme
- The 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 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