

Ministry of Justice

Covid-19 Stakeholder Update / 29.03.20

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 would find it helpful to know about your own communications plans and any intel that will help inform our communications moving forwards. If you know an organisation which should be added to the list please do get in touch at samantha.abrahams@justice.gov.uk or thomas.cracknell@justice.gov.uk.

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.
- Prisons are well prepared to take immediate action wherever cases or suspected cases are identified, including the isolation of individuals where necessary. We are issuing secure phone handsets to help offenders keep in contact with their families

HMCTS

From tomorrow, a network of priority courts will open to make sure the justice system continues to operate effectively during the coronavirus outbreak. The work of courts and tribunals will be consolidated into fewer buildings, maintaining the safety of all in the courts and in line with public health advice. Find out here which courts are open to the public for essential face-to-face hearings, staffed by key workers (but closed to the public) or suspended and temporarily closed to all: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/priority-courts-to-make-sure-justice-is-served>

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>

HMPPS

Prisons are well prepared to take immediate action wherever cases or suspected cases are identified, including the isolation of individuals where necessary. HMPPS has been working closely with Public Health England and NHS services, as well as criminal justice partners, to put robust contingency plans in place. The plans prioritise the safety of staff, prisoners, visitors and offenders under supervision in the community, whilst seeking to minimise disruption to normal services and ensure public protection. 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.

Latest general guidance

- The new Business Support campaign for Covid-19: <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-support/>
- Major new measures to protect people at highest risk from Coronavirus: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/major-new-measures-to-protect-people-at-highest-risk-from-coronavirus>
- Guidance for businesses: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-support-for-businesses>
- Home isolation / 'stay at home' guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>
- Social distancing / vulnerable people: <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)

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