



Number 20

IFJ COVID-19 Updates.

27/05/20-03/06/20

These notes are a summary of information shared with IfJ and organisations involved in the justice system and those working with users of the system. In sharing these comments and providing links to resources, IfJ provides this material but does not accept responsibility for its content which may not represent the opinions of IfJ.

IfJ news

The regular Zoom meeting for IfJ members which began at the start of the pandemic continues, providing an opportunity to discuss current issues, experiences and to gain support during ongoing and evolving situation. -Notes on the meeting will be on the web site soon. The Update notes are divided in to: 'Remote process', Covid-19 transmission, children, Gov.UK, updates, other and resources.

Intermediaries Discussions and Experiences

Intermediaries have been discussing their experiences and challenges of working using social distancing guidance. A particular challenge when working with young children. Guidance suggests good practice should include laundering clothing at the end of each day-would this include gowns and wigs? is a question asked.

Intermediaries have discussed measure they themselves take laminating materials, keeping materials in plastic envelopes not using any communal toys, ensuring all surfaces have been wiped. The issue of wearing masks or not continues to be raised and very different views on this practice and the availability of masks. Some OIC are wearing masks and providing them. Issues of how best to manage materials post assessments-how long to leave them before handling them again, how to clean a wooded manakin .



Intermediaries have acknowledged that they feel there is a risk attached to continuing working in the current situation and will feel safer when track and trace is well established. It seems likely that assessment will not be permitted to take place in schools as a means of reducing infection in the schools.

Good practice in the remote Family Courts have been noted: VP being provided with a laptop to be able to see advocates and responded to a request that a larger screen was needed. There are many opportunities for distraction for a VP, images on screen and noise due to individuals failing to mute their devices. The issue of social distancing obviously produces some difficulties for communications between VP and intermediary.

A warning about child sex abuse 'surge' during lock down:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-52876226>

Remote Process

Discussions continue regarding the enormous array of information about remote hearings, what is acceptable and what technology is now being used such as WhatsApp.

Appeals Notes for Guidance Liverpool Crown Court May 2020

2020<https://www.dropbox.com/s/f0emw67vwqkm1dm/Appeals%20Notes%20for%20Guidance%20-%20LivCrCt%20May%202020.pdf?dl=0>

Good practice for remote hearings: Judicial College, Equal Treatment Bench Book document
Good-Practice-for-Remote-Hearings.pdf

Some light relief a lawyers poem deal with trials of delivering lockdown justice .

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/31/lawyers-poems-deal-with-trials-of-delivering-lockdown-justice>

ITV Granada Reports on Twitter about remote hearings:

<https://twitter.com/granadareports/status/1265666265642868737?s=12>

Socially distanced jury trial went like clockwork, says chambers::

<https://www.lawgazette.co.uk/news/socially-distanced-jury-trial-went-like-clockwork-says-chambers/5104454.article>



Covid-19 Transmission

Response from Public Health England to a question raised by solicitors re air quality and virus transmission *Public health advice is that there is a very low risk of the transmission of covid-19 through air handling systems, as the virus is not airborne. Air conditioning and air handling units are a key part*

[2020.05.27-HMCTS-Response-to-Greg-P-reply.pdf](#)

Georgia Luscombe discusses her experience of processes at a magistrate's court.

https://twitter.com/g_luscombe/status/1267444984304807936?s=21

Children

Assessing the needs of sentenced children in the Youth Justice System

2018/19

England and Wales

Youth Justice Board / Ministry of Justice Experimental Statistics bulletin

Published 28 May 2020

Assessing the needs of sentenced children in the Youth Justice System, England and Wales, April 2018 to March 2019 The statistics in this publication suggest that a large proportion of children who are supervised by YOTs exhibit a range of important, interdependent and interrelated needs which are captured as concerns within AssetPlus. The type and prevalence of these different needs may represent complex operational challenges around the delivery and provision of appropriate services to ensure best outcomes for children in the youth justice system.:

[Assets.publishing.service.gov.uk](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk)

Family courts are facing parents who have very different views on whether their children should attend school during the outbreak : <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2020/jun/02/parents-fight-in-court-over-whether-children-should-return-to-school-in-england>

Other

Survivors of domestic abuse told to give evidence in person at Commons:

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/may/28/survivors-of-domestic-abuse-told-to-give-evidence-in-person-at-commons>

The open family court: recalibrating the balance between privacy and scrutiny in family law. A journalist describes her day in a family court : <https://openfamilycourt.wordpress.com/>



The eyes have it >communication and face masks:

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2020/may/30/face-mask-eye-contact-communication-coronavirus>

Living with a learning disability and coping with abuse :

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/jun/03/they-used-to-call-me-retard-dark-time-dying-inside-shaun-webster-mbe-learning-disability>

Gov.UK guidance

Video enabled criminal hearings: guidance for defence practitioners:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/video-enabled-criminal-hearings-guidance-for-defence-practitioners>

Courts and Tribunals weekly update :

<https://twitter.com/hmctsgovuk/status/1267350207626465281?s=12>

Resources

'Speech-language pathology intervention in a youth justice setting: Benefits perceived by staff extend beyond communication'

Purpose: Young people in youth justice (YJ) settings face high-risk for unidentified language disorder, however, speech-language pathology (SLP) services are not routinely offered in such settings. The aim of this study was to explore and describe the perceptions and experiences of YJ staff in a custodial centre of the utility of having a speech-language pathologist working with young offenders.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17549507.2017.1297484?journalCode=iasl20&>

'Interrogating Vulnerability: Reframing the Vulnerable Suspect in Police Custody'

This article considers the definition of the term 'vulnerability' in relation to the suspect in police detention and more specifically in relation to the appropriate adult safeguard.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0964663920921921>

[Good-Practice-for-Remote-Hearings.pdf](#)