

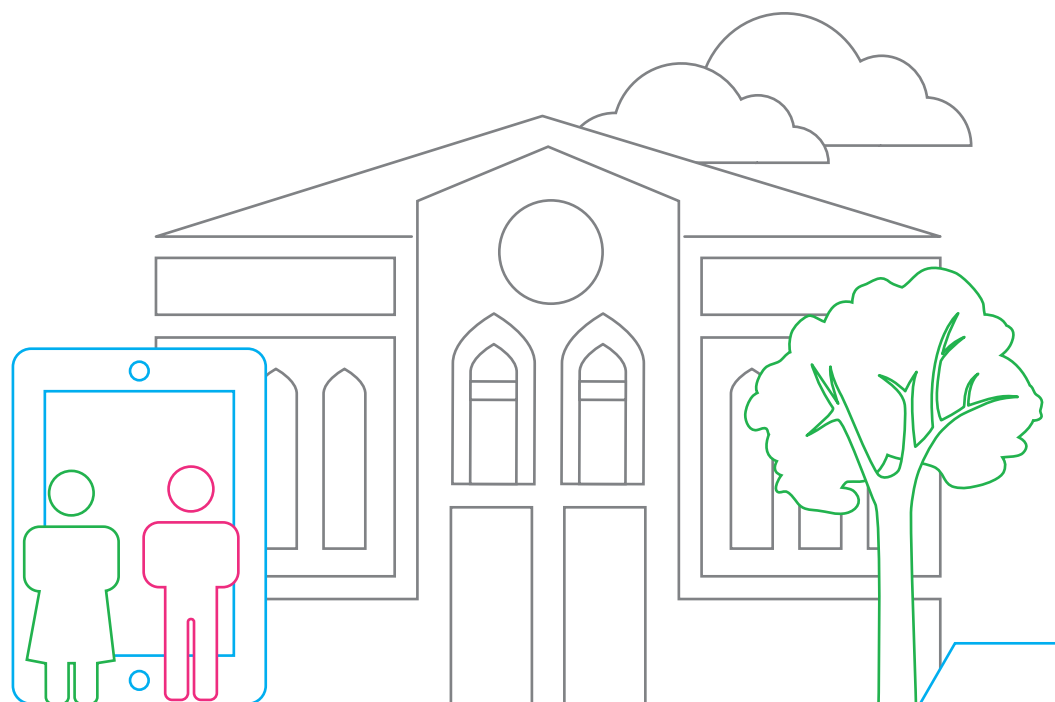


HM Courts &
Tribunals Service

HMCTS COVID -19 Assessment Tool

May 2020

Location:	
Date:	
Name:	
Other accompanying person(s):	



Background

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- HMCTS is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all staff, judiciary and visitors to its sites by protecting them from harm, so far as it is reasonably practicable while they are on the premises.
- HM Government has outlined the risks posed by the Covid-19 virus and the control measures necessary to protect people from infection. The first control is to avoid exposure to the virus by working from home or taking part in court and tribunal hearings virtually. It is recognised that this is not always possible, so other measures are necessary to reduce and control the risk of exposure.
- This document is to aid each Senior Person on Site to implement those measures, monitor compliance with them and escalate any issues which fall outside of their control to the appropriate level, so the required actions can be addressed and interim controls put in place.

Who conducts the assessment?

- It should be conducted by the **Senior Persons on Site** (SPoS), or nominated competent person. This review and any subsequent action plan should, wherever possible, be completed in conjunction and consultation with the following people:
 - A Trade Union representative
 - The site Supervisor or Court/Tribunal Security Officer (OCS)
- In line with the guidance other staff members can be involved in contributing to the assessment by raising questions or concerns with the Senior Person on Site, if they wish.
- All areas of the site must be included in the review. For example, if there are other teams based at the site e.g. Enforcement or external agencies using our building such as Probation, their area must be covered too. Each section is marked to show whether the assessment applies to public or staffed areas.
- The SPoS will always retain the responsibility for the assessment completion and, where necessary, resulting action plan. Regional Support Units are required to have oversight all action plans in place.
- Managers should share the completed assessment tool and communicate weekly with all staff deployed to the site to ensure they are kept up-to-date with how safety measures are being implemented or updated. This should include simple, clear messaging to explain the action plan, guidelines, using images and clear language and making staff aware of anything they need to do differently.
- Courts users who have any concerns about local measures should notify an onsite member of staff or Security Officer in the first instance, or alternatively contact us at HMCTS.COVID-19ResponseTeam@justice.gov.uk

Reporting issues

- This COVID-19 Assessment Tool must be completed in full including, where necessary, the Action Plan. Any issues identified must be risk managed to ensure ongoing safety, and reported upwards to the relevant Regional Support Unit and Cluster Manager as soon as possible for immediate resolution, detailing the required action and resolution time/date.
- It is expected that most issues can be resolved quickly, such as the replacement of hand soap from local stocks or immediate adjustments to local procedures (e.g. marshalling).
- Any actions that require significant additional works to the building must be referred up to the Regional Facilities Manager in the first instance.
- If the SPoS needs further advice or guidance contact the relevant Regional Security and Safety Officer (RSSO) contact details are available on the HMCTS intranet 'Security and Safety' – '[Contacts page](https://intranet.justice.gov.uk/about-hmcts/finance-and-governance/governance-assurance/security-fire-and-health-and-safety-policy/regional-security-fire-or-health-and-safety-officers/)'. <https://intranet.justice.gov.uk/about-hmcts/finance-and-governance/governance-assurance/security-fire-and-health-and-safety-policy/regional-security-fire-or-health-and-safety-officers/>
- In determining the overall RAG status, the SPoS must consider actions across all of the sections. Descriptions of the RAG status are explained below.
- **Green:** measures are in place and no issues for action.
- **Green*:** any local adaptations in use, are as good as the measures outlined.
- **Amber:** the issue(s) identified have an action plan and timescales for resolution in place. Any interim workarounds in use e.g. closing specific rooms or sections of the building, can be sustained without needing to close the whole building.
- **Red:** issue(s) affecting safety, requires closure of the building.
- For any **major issues (Red)** will require temporary closure of the site the SPoS must immediately:
 - Report upwards to the relevant regional Delivery Director (Senior Civil Servant, and Statutory Duty Holder)
 - Copy to the relevant Regional Support Unit (RSU), Cluster Manager, HMCTS Gold Command, Regional Facilities Manager
 - Action plan for re-opening is put in place

Review

The Assessment should be reviewed weekly, and kept up to date when:

- There have been any significant changes since completing the latest assessment.
- Concerns are raised by staff or other users, or as a result of an incident.
- The assessment is no longer considered valid.

Action Plan

Date:	Previous RAG rating	Current RAG rating
Date for next review:		
Actions identified		Timescale for completion
Statement of assurance I confirm that the assessment has been completed and I am assured that appropriate measures are in place. Where an action plan is in place there is a target date for the resolution of all the issues and a date for review. Signed (SPoS)		
Statement of completion I confirm that the assessment has been completed and I can confirm measures are in place and the action plan reflects the review.		
Signed (SPoS)		
Signed (TU Rep)		
Signed (Security Supervisor)		

Section 1 - Queuing and entry to the building (public areas)

Our [public guidance](#) informs users of the measures in place when queuing and entering the building.

1. Queuing: to help keep people 2 metres apart when queuing and going through security, the following measures should be implemented :

- The Court Security Officer, or member of court staff, asking each court user to enter the building to ensure people do not enter until they are called forward
- Space markings on the floor for social distancing
- Rope or Tensa barriers (considered is appropriate for the building)

2. Entry to the building: to ensure we follow the latest NHS guidelines on checking for symptoms for COVID-19 the following measures should be implemented:

- All court users, including legal professionals, personnel from stakeholder agencies and those signed up to the Professional Access Scheme will be asked to confirm that they do not have any symptoms of coronavirus in line with PH guidelines i.e. persistent cough and/or a fever.
- If anyone appears to have, or discloses that they have, symptoms consistent with COVID-19, they will be refused entry to the building by Court Security Officers.

Confirmation that appropriate measures for queuing and entering buildings are in place. If they are not, explain why, recording any actions and local adaptations and notifying your Cluster Manager and Regional Support Unit.

Section 2 - Bag searches (public areas)

Our [public guidance](#) informs users of the measures in place when conducting bag checks.

Consider how the following measures are applied:

- 3. Social distancing:** to maintain a 2 metre gap between the Court Security Officer and the user while the bag search is being conducted and when items are returned, the following measures should be implemented:
 - Space markings on the floor
 - Rope or Tensa barriers. (considered if appropriate for the building)
- 4. Reducing physical contact:** to minimise the risk of exposure (the potential risk of individuals sneezing or coughing directly at each other) the following measures should be implemented:
 - Bag searches will be conducted as a "hands off" check. No physical contact is made with the individual
 - Court users will be asked to open their bag and show the Court Security Officer its contents by emptying items into a tray and then stepping back to a safe distance
 - The Court Security Officer will conduct a visual check for restricted items, avoiding where possible, physically touching bags/items. If a bag/item needs to be touched, the Court Security Officer will have access to protective gloves and hand sanitiser to maintain hand hygiene
 - The Court Security Officer will then step back to a safe distance and advise the court user to collect their belongings.
 - The trays used will be cleaned between use and stocks for cleaning material are kept up to date.
 - Confirm that OCS have supplied their guards with a sufficient stock of PPE, and there is a process in place OCS to inform the SPoS if stock levels are low, and to inform the SPoS if searching cannot be undertaken.
 - SPoS and Security to have an agreed process to inform the list office/legal adviser team if someone is turned away on the day, including information on the reason

Confirmation that appropriate measures for the bag search process are in place. If they are not, explain why, recording any actions and adjustments and notifying your Cluster Manager and Regional Support Unit.

Section 3 - Archway detectors (public areas)

Our [public guidance](#) informs users of the measures in place when conducting Archway Detector checks.

5. Moving to use of hand-held detector:

- Give verbal instructions in order to identify the cause and following these requests the court user will pass through the archway until the alert no longer sounds or the officer is satisfied as to the cause of the activation.
- Should the detector sound for a third time, the Court Security Officer will use a hand-held metal detector to locate the item for which further statements appear in the next section.

Confirmation that appropriate measures for using archway detectors are in place. If they are not, explain why, recording any actions and adjustments and notifying your Cluster Manager and Regional Support Unit.

Section 4 – Use of hand-held detectors -wands (public areas)

Our [public guidance](#) informs users of the measures in place when conducting hand-held detector checks.

- 6. Reducing physical contact:** to minimise the risk of exposure (the potential risk of individuals sneezing or coughing directly at each other) the following measures should be implemented:
- Court users will be asked to confirm they agree to the search procedure before it begins, with those who decline being advised the 'wanding' is necessary to comply with security requirements.
 - If a court user declines they will be asked to leave the building and make contact by phone or email if they further decline to consent
 - The Court Security Officer will announce they will have to reduce the 2 metre distance and communicate their actions out loud before carrying them out.
 - Court users will be asked to turn away from the Court Security Officer so that they are not be face-to-face at any point during the search
 - As the 2 metre distance has been reduced the 'wanding' will be conducted as promptly and effectively as possible by the Court Security Officer, starting at the back of the individual, working forward to cover their front. They will not touch the person's body

Confirmation that appropriate measures for using hand held detectors are in place. If they are not, explain why, recording any actions and adjustments and notifying your Cluster Manager and Regional Support Unit.

Section 5 - Social Distancing (public areas)

Our [public guidance](#) informs users of the social distancing arrangements in place to help maintain a 2 metre distance. These will vary between individual buildings depending on layout.

7. Signage: HM Government and HMCTS social distancing posters to be displayed in prominent locations throughout the building including the interior and exterior doors from the entrances and throughout the building

8. Social distancing will need to be regularly assessed in public areas ensuring the 2 metre social distancing is maintained across all floorspace, as well as the likely pinch points and busy areas.

- In the event of social distancing is compromised by congestion, marshalling will be used to direct people appropriately. If necessary, a one in one out system may be required.

9. Lifts: to maintain social distancing in lifts and in the waiting areas around lifts the following measures should be considered:

- A one-in, one-out, system to be used for lift entry and exit. This could include use of posters and/or marshalling
- Distancing markings to be used to maintain 2 metre spacing for queueing
- If the lift is large enough for more than one person, distancing markings in the lift itself

10. Toilets: to maintain social distancing in toilets and in the waiting areas around toilets the following measures should be considered

- If the toilets are large enough, a one-in, one-out, system to be used for toilet entry and exit This could include use of posters and/or marshalling
- Distancing markings to be used to maintain 2 metre spacing for queueing

11. Counters and reception areas: to maintain social distancing in counter and reception areas the following measures should be considered:

- Distancing markings to be used to maintain 2 metre spacing for queueing
- For high use counters the deployment of existing counters with glass barriers or plexiglass barriers

12. Corridors and waiting areas: to maintain social distancing in corridors and waiting areas the following measures should be considered:

- Court/tribunal users to only enter or exit courtrooms when instructed to do so to avoid cross-traffic in doorways and to ensure a safe number of people in court and the public galleries
- A selected number of seats in seating areas to be taped off or otherwise clearly marked as 'not for use' to maintain 2 metre separation
- If the design of the building allows it, one-way flow measures

13. Consultation rooms: to maintain social distancing in consultation rooms the following measures should be considered:

- Signage to indicate maximum occupancy in the room e.g. only suitable for 1:1
- Floor markings indicating where seats should be positioned and not moved
- Removal of desks and chairs according to maximum occupancy numbers
- Consider options to reduce the number of consultation rooms in the building

14. Professional user rooms/ interpreter rooms: to maintain social distancing in these rooms the following measures should be considered:

- Signage to indicate maximum occupancy in the room e.g. only suitable for 1:1
- Removal of desk and chairs according to maximum occupancy number.
- Floor markings indicating where seats should be positioned and not moved
- Furniture layout may need to be reconfigured and screening considered where possible.

15. Court Security Officers to monitor public areas using CCTV or as part of their patrols. Where social distancing requirements are breached, appropriate action to be taken to address, through security officer or staff marshalling.

Confirmation that appropriate measures for social distancing in public areas are in place. If they are not, explain why, recording any actions and adjustments and notifying your Cluster Manager and Regional Support Unit.

Section 6 - Social distancing - Courtrooms and hearing rooms (public areas)

Our [public guidance](#) informs users of the social distancing arrangements in place to help maintain a 2 metre distance. These are also applicable in the courtroom/hearing room.

These will vary for the different buildings depending on layout and the type of work.

16. Signage: HM Government and HMCTS social distancing posters to be displayed in prominent locations throughout the building including the interior and exterior doors from the entrances and throughout the building

17. Entry and exit to the courtroom/hearing room: to maintain social distancing when entering and leaving courtrooms/hearing rooms the following measures should be considered:

- For areas where queuing will occur floor marking tape is used, for example corridors leading to entrances
- Floor markings and directional arrows to indicate one-way flow around the courtroom
- Marshalling by staff is deployed in the court room to ensure people are directed to take the correct seat

18. Spacing of seating: to maintain an adequate number of empty seats between court/tribunal users. Measures could include:

- A selected number of seats in seating areas to be taped off or otherwise clearly marked as 'not for use'. This includes rows in front and behind
- Numerical labelling of seats, or seats for specific users e.g. prosecution and defence
- The movement or removal of unfixed seats
- The movement or removal of fixed seating will require consultation with the Regional Facilities Manager before forming part of any action plan

19. Other measures in the courtroom/hearing room: in addition to social distancing measures, the following **hygiene** measures should also be considered

- Hand sanitiser to be available for users
- The use of documents, iPads and laptops in court is such that they are used by only one person and no double handling takes place. This may also include provision of wipes.
- The judiciary announce regular hand-washing breaks during hearings
- Holy books/scriptures, oath or affirmation cards/laminated sheets are not shared. The oath or affirmation is instead read out and then repeated.

Confirmation that appropriate measures for social distancing in public areas are in place. If they are not, explain why, recording any actions and adjustments and notifying your Cluster Manager and Regional Support Unit.

Section 7 - Social distancing (staff areas)

When reviewing the **social distancing in staff and judicial areas**, consider how the following standards/measures are being applied.

20. Coming to work and leaving work: to maintain social distancing, on arrival and departure wherever possible, and to ensure hand washing upon arrival.

21. Moving around buildings: to maintain social distancing wherever possible while people travel through the workplace, the following measures should be considered.

- Floor markings and directional arrows to indicate one-way flow around the office
- Reducing movement by discouraging non-essential trips within our buildings
- Making sure that people with disabilities are able to access lifts.
- Review desks in high-use thoroughfares which may need to be put out use e.g. next to printers, outside toilets and kitchen areas

22. Workplaces and workstations: to maintain social distancing between individuals when they are at their workstations, the following measures should be considered.

- Review office layouts and processes to allow people to work further apart from each other. This can include seating areas or individual desks being taped off
- Use of floor markings to help staff keep to a 2 metre distance
- Do not use hot desks and spaces
- Provide supplies to allow for cleaning and sanitising workstations and shared equipment between different occupants.

23. Meetings: to reduce transmission due to face-to-face meetings and maintain social distancing in meetings, the following measures should be considered.

- Reviewing the use of tea points and kitchen areas to avoid congestion
- Staggering break times to reduce pressure on break rooms or canteens
- Reconfiguring seating and tables to maintain spacing and reduce face-to-face interactions
- Encouraging staff to remain on-site and, when not possible, maintaining social distancing while off-site
- As far as is practicable, a one-in, one-out, system to be used for toilet entry and exit.

24. Common areas: to maintain social distancing while using common areas, the following measures should be considered.:

- Staggering break times to reduce pressure on break rooms or canteens
- Reconfiguring seating and tables to maintain spacing and reduce face-to-face interactions
- Encouraging staff to remain on-site and, when not possible, maintaining social distancing while off-site
- As far as is practicable, a one-in, one-out, system to be used for toilet entry and exit.

Confirmation that appropriate measures for social distancing in staff areas are in place. If they are not, explain why, recording any actions and adjustments and notifying your Cluster Manager and Delivery Director.

Section 8- Hygiene and cleaning (public and staffed areas)

Please ensure you are familiar with page 2 of the [Building Champions document](#) before completing this section

Our [public guidance](#) informs users of the cleaning and hygiene measures in place

25. Signage: HM Government hand washing posters will be displayed in prominent locations, particularly in and near toilets and waiting areas. (The posters can be found within the posters section in this link <https://intranet.justice.gov.uk/about-hmcts/operations-directorate/business-continuity/covid-19/important-information-and-materials/>)

26. Cleaning the building: to help reduce the spread of the virus and maintain the cleanliness of court and tribunal buildings the following measures should be considered

- Cleaned throughout daily, and at night
- Cleaners returning at frequent intervals to common touch points such as lift buttons, public waiting areas, staff reception etc
- Shared items such as leaflets, magazines, children's toys, books, TV remotes etc are removed from waiting and general areas
- Rubbish is promptly disposed of. There are an adequate number of bins and they are emptied at regular intervals.

27. Toilets: to help reduce the spread of the virus and maintain the cleanliness of court and tribunal buildings the following measures should be considered

- Soap and hand drying facilities are available, and easily located for court users
- Staff monitor these regularly throughout the day, checking that taps, sinks and toilets function as expected
- Cleaners are able to respond promptly to any maintenance or replenishment requirements.

28. Hygiene measures: to help reduce the spread of the virus and follow Public Health advice the following measures should be considered:

- Staff to clean their hands at regular intervals when handling paperwork and afterwards, by either washing their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or by using hand sanitising gel
- Hand washing facilities or sanitiser are available for court users
- The location(s) of hand sanitiser for public use is clearly signed on entry to the building
- The locations must be set up so they do not compromise wider social distancing measures

29. Responding to incidents: to help reduce the spread of the virus and maintain the cleanliness of court and tribunal buildings the following measures should be considered:

- Responding swiftly to complaints received of any areas of poor hygiene
- Should there be any instance of a confirmed case of COVID-19 a system is in place to ensure a deep clean can be completed imminently

Confirmation that appropriate measures for hygiene and cleaning are in place. If they are not, explain why, recording any actions and adjustments and notifying your Cluster Manager and Regional Support Unit.

Section 9 - Access to drinking water and refreshment facilities (public areas)

Our [public guidance](#) informs users of the measures in place relating to food and water in our buildings

30. Provision of food and water: to comply with the Public Health advice and guidance the following measures should be considered

- Glass bottles are not permitted and should be confiscated or disposed of by security before entering the building
- Carafes and glasses are not in use in courtrooms/hearing rooms
- Bottled water is provided, by exception, in the courtroom/hearing room
- All refreshment facilities and canteens will remain closed.

Confirmation that appropriate measures for accessing drinking water are in place. If they are not, explain why, recording any actions and adjustments and notifying your Cluster Manager and Regional Support Unit.

Section 10 - Custody suites

Our public guidance informs users of the measures in place relating to custody suites in our buildings.

Prisoner Escort and Custody Services (PECS) have primary responsibility for conducting custody suite assessments. Hygiene and cleaning assessment (section 8) also applies to custody suites.

Discussions must be held and agreement sought from HMPPS PECS Contract Delivery Managers (CDMs) to confirm (i) the current status of the custody suite, (ii) identify any mitigating actions needed, and (iii) ensure these are carried over into the Assessment Tool action plan.

Confirmation that appropriate measures for custody suites are in place. If they are not, explain why, recording any actions and adjustments and notifying your Cluster Manager and Delivery Director.

Section 11 - Face coverings and the use of PPE (mask and/or gloves) in public areas

The following public guidance has been released on the wearing of face covers.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres>

31. Use and disposal: wearing a face covering does not protect you, but it may protect others if you are infected but have not developed symptoms. The following measures should be considered:

- Face coverings are distributed to HMCTS staff in line with national policies, remembering that the discretion on the use of face covering in a courtroom is a judicial one.
- PPE (masks and gloves) are available for First Aiders to wear to attend any first aid incident
- Anyone choosing to wear their own face coverings should do so in line with the Public Health guidance.
- Face coverings are made available to users, on request.
- Gloves are available to staff to protect the skin on their hands from the effect of hand sanitiser, where their roles require this gel to be applied at intervals.
- Face coverings and gloves are disposed of carefully in a 'no touch' bin, and people advised to immediately wash their hands with soap and water or use a hand sanitiser

Confirmation that appropriate measures for using face coverings or PPE are in place. If they are not, explain why, recording any actions and adjustments and notifying your Cluster Manager and Regional Support Unit.

Section 12 - Ventilation

The Regional Facilities Manager will engage with the Senior Person on Site regarding any particular ventilation issues which need to be considered as part of this assessment. Any issues should be recorded in the action plan.

Confirmation that there has been consultation with the Regional Facilities Manager regarding the ventilation systems and there are no known issues. Any actions and adjustments should be explained and recorded here, notifying your Cluster Manager and Regional Support Unit.

Description	Link	Last updated
Organisational Risk Assessment (Page 2)	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/885607/HMCTS_Organisational_Risk_Assessment_v1.0.pdf	20 May 2020
Health and Safety contacts (Page 3)	https://intranet.justice.gov.uk/about-hmcts/finance-and-governance/governance-assurance/security-fire-and-health-and-safety-policy/regional-security-fire-or-health-and-safety-officers/	20 May 2020
Regular updates – Working safely (Page 3 & section 11)	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres	20 May 2020
GOV.UK – Coronavirus Guidance (Page 3)	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance	20 May 2020
Guidance documents on cleaning and hygiene requirements (Page 3)	https://intranet.justice.gov.uk/about-hmcts/property-directorate/covid-19-guidance-documents/	20 May 2020
Guidance for employees (Page 3)	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19	20 May 2020
Intranet guidance from the Property Directorate (Page 3)	https://intranet.justice.gov.uk/about-hmcts/property-directorate/covid-19-guidance-documents/	20 May 2020
“Keeping court and tribunal buildings safe, secure and clean” - HMCTS public guidance (top of each section of the assessment)	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/keeping-court-and-tribunal-buildings-safe-secure-and-clean	20 May 2020
Signage (section 8): Hand washing posters link	https://intranet.justice.gov.uk/about-hmcts/operations-directorate/business-continuity/covid-19/important-information-and-materials/	20 May 2020