

Video Remand Hearings – Breach of Bail/Arrest Warrant Pilot
Guidance for Providers

Background

HMCTS colleagues have advised that they are aiming to pilot the introduction of Video Remand Hearings (VRH) at Thames Magistrates' Court in order to deal with a limited stream of cases.

The hearings will all be conducted remotely via Cloud Video Platform (CVP) with the intention that this will free up capacity across the Police and Court estate.

When Will the Pilot Commence?

The Pilot is expected to commence on Tuesday 5th October 2021 and finish on Friday 14th January 2022.

What Will the Pilot Cover?

It will cover breach of bail/arrest warrant matters which would have been dealt with at Bexley, Bromley, Croydon or Westminster Magistrates' Court.

It will not cover breach of community orders. It will only cover failure to appear (FTA) matters prosecuted by the CPS.

These 4 courts have been selected based on an analysis of the anticipated volumes of these types of cases that could be expected to feed in from police stations in the following areas:-

- Bexley
- Bromley
- City of London
- Croydon
- Greenwich
- Hammersmith & Fulham
- Kensington & Chelsea
- Lambeth
- Lewisham
- Southwark
- Sutton
- Westminster

Thames Magistrates' Court has been selected based on its capacity. Thames breach matters will not form part of the Pilot.

What Rota Arrangements Will There Be?

HMCTS colleagues have requested that in order to cover the Thames Magistrates' Court CVP hearings, they will need a duty solicitor allocated for each day of the week from Monday to

Friday from Tuesday 5th October until Friday 14th January, with a gap from Monday 20th December until Monday 3rd January (inclusive) when the court will not sit.

We have therefore produced a rota to cover these CVP hearings.

The rota slots have been allocated to court scheme members for Bexley, Bromley, Croydon and Westminster Magistrates' Courts. The rationale behind this is that those scheme members would have dealt with these breach matters before the Pilot.

How Will I Find Out About How to Access CVP etc?

The Police will identify that the case is in scope for VRH and advise the allocated solicitor of such, including the time that it has been booked in for.

Defence practitioners will access CVP via the following link, where they will be held in the lobby until Thames Magistrates' Court staff are ready.

Thames Court 2:

Video/Lync/Skype address:

hmcts2943@meet.video.justice.gov.uk

Web browser: [click here](#)

Providers can raise any practical issues regarding access to the system by emailing CVP.thames@justice.gov.uk, ensuring 'VRH' is noted in the subject field.

There will be defined hearing slots allocated so that providers know when to access CVP for the relevant hearing(s). Flexibility will be built-in to ensure that clients can liaise with their representative as required before/after hearings and apply for a representation order if appropriate (see below).

DSCC colleagues have been made aware of the Pilot arrangements in the event that the Police are unsure who is on the VRH Court Duty rota.

Funding Arrangements

A client detained at the police station for breach of bail or on an arrest warrant can opt to see their Own Solicitor, the Duty Solicitor or decline representation at the police station.

If the client opts for their Own Solicitor or the Duty Solicitor and they wish for that provider to continue representing them at their CVP hearing, that provider will need to apply for a Representation Order through the usual means (i.e. via the CRM14/E-forms system) in order to be 'covered' (funding-wise) to attend the CVP hearing.

If the detainee declines representation at the police station but subsequently decides that they would like to be represented by the CVP Duty Solicitor, the matter will be allocated to the Duty Solicitor on the Thames CVP rota at that time. Payment for their attendance at the CVP hearing will be subject to the usual court duty attendance rules.