

Ministry of Justice

COVID-19 Stakeholder Update / 12.05.20 / part 2

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.
- [Independent public health monitoring](#) suggests the steps we have taken are successfully limiting deaths and the transmission of coronavirus in prisons. Those measures include restricted regimes and social distancing within prisons, the early release of low-risk offenders approaching their release date, creating more space with 500 temporary cells and the re-opening of a formerly closed prison at Medway.
- Our priority is to make sure we can keep everyone in courts safe. Some courts are now in a position, with approval from Public Health England and Public Health Wales, to take some first steps towards the [resumption of jury trials](#).

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>

As of 17:00 on MONDAY 11 MAY:

- 399 prisoners have tested positive for COVID-19 across 74 prisons;
- 493 prison staff have tested positive for COVID-19 across 69 prisons;
- 18 Prisoner Escort and Custody Services (PECS) staff have tested positive for COVID-19.

Further updates with the latest figures may be released later this evening to the media and will be included here the following day for information, so please do bear with us if they are superseded during the day.

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>

Legal Aid Agency

UPDATED: The Legal Aid Agency has updated advice setting out what it is doing to help providers continue legal aid services for clients during the COVID-19 outbreak. This includes updated guidance on using digital signatures; guidance on how LAA will refund remand cases following HMCTS roll out of video remand hearings; and relaxing the Controlled Work time limit for billing submissions. Read the full guidance online: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-legal-aid-agency-contingency-response>

Victims

NEW: The deadline for charities to apply for domestic abuse funding has been extended to 21 May 2020. Charities can bid for a share of £10 million funding to support victims of domestic abuse. Further information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/domestic-abuse-charities-can-apply-for-vital-funds>

Latest general guidance

- **NEW: Guidance to help employers, employees and the self-employed understand how to work safely during the COVID-19 pandemic:** <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>
- The Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-plan-to-rebuild-the-uk-governments-covid-19-recovery-strategy>
- FAQs on what you can and can't do during the COVID-19 outbreak: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>
- Guidance on how to stay alert and safe (social distancing): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>
- Guidance on staying safe outside your home: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-safe-outside-your-home>
- 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>

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)

Follow us on Twitter: [@MoJGovUK](https://twitter.com/MoJGovUK) [@hmpps](https://twitter.com/hmpps) and [@hmctsgovuk](https://twitter.com/hmctsgovuk)

Thomas Cracknell
External Affairs Manager
Strategic Communications
thomas.cracknell@justice.gov.uk
Mobile: 07562 431727
Find out more on [People Finder](#)
Follow us on Twitter [@MoJGovUK](https://twitter.com/MoJGovUK)