



Royal Court of Justice

Administrative Court

Information for Court Users

Date: 12 October 2020

During the current COVID-19 outbreak the work of the Administrative Court (ACO) will continue so far as possible. However, it is inevitable that the outbreak of the virus, and the Government and NHS guidelines on self-isolation, means that there are, and will continue to be, absences of both Judges and court staff. In order to deal with the court business in the most efficient way possible, taking into account the current constraints, we will continue to make certain changes to our procedures.

A) Applications for Immediate/Urgent Consideration (“Immediates”)

Until further notice the Administrative Court Office in London will no longer accept applications for immediate or urgent consideration over the counter or by post/DX.

“Immediates” applications – situations (a) where it is contended that irreversible action will take place unless the Court makes an interlocutory order, or (b) where judicial review proceedings need to be expedited, will now **only** be accepted electronically.

For avoidance of doubt, the process explained below should be used for any urgent interlocutory application –

1. Applications must be filed by email to administrativecourtoffice.immediates@hmcts.x.gsi.gov.uk accompanied with either a PBA number, receipt of payment by debit/credit card or a fee remission certificate (see Fees Office section G).
2. This inbox will be monitored Monday to Friday between the hours of 9:30am and 4:30pm. Outside of these hours the existing out of hours procedure will apply.
3. Your application must be accompanied by an electronic bundle containing **only** those documents which it will be necessary for the court to read for the purposes of determining the application. The bundle must be prepared in accordance with the guidance at Section B.
4. If you are not legally represented and you do not have access to email, you should contact the Administrative Court Office by telephone on 020 7947 6158 (**only to be used in an emergency**) so that details of your application may be taken by telephone and alternative arrangements made if permitted by the Senior Legal Managers / Judge on duty.
5. Any other urgent queries should be sent by email administrativecourtoffice.generaloffice@hmcts.x.gsi.gov.uk as high priority and with ‘URGENT’ in the subject line. Any such emails will be dealt with as soon as possible.



B) Electronic Bundles

In all cases where the application is filed by a legal representative the electronic bundle must be prepared as follows and be suitable for use with all of Adobe Acrobat Reader and PDF Expert and PDF Xchange Editor. The document:

- (a) **must** be a **single** PDF not exceeding 20mb in size;
- (b) **must** be numbered in ascending order regardless of whether multiple documents have been combined together (the original page numbers of the document will be ignored and just the bundle page number will be referred to)
- (c) Index pages and authorities **must** be numbered as part of the single PDF document (they are not to be skipped; they are part of the single PDF and must be numbered).
- (d) The default display view size of all pages **must always be 100%**.
- (e) Texts on all pages **must be selectable** to facilitate comments and highlights to be imposed on the texts
- (f) **The bookmarks must be labelled** indicating what document they are referring to (**it is best to have the same name or title as the actual document**) and also display the relevant page numbers.
- (g) The resolution on the electronic bundle **must** be reduced to about 200 to 300 dpi to prevent delays whilst scrolling from one page to another.
- (h) **The index page must be hyperlinked** to the pages or documents it refers to.

Any application filed by a legal representative that does not comply with the above rules on electronic bundles may not be considered by a Judge. If the application is filed by a litigant in person the electronic bundle must if at all possible, comply with the above rules. If it is not possible for a litigant in person to comply with the rules on electronic bundles, the application must include a brief explanation of the reasons why.

C) Non-Urgent Work: Civil Claims/Appeals

Until further notice, all usual civil business (i.e. non-urgent claims, appeals and applications) with the Administrative Court Office in London, must be filed electronically. Given present circumstances, you may experience a slight delay before claims/applications are issued, but the date the Claim Form or Notice of Appeal is received by the ACO will be recorded as the date filed. It remains the responsibility of the party sending an application or claim to ensure that it is filed within the applicable time limits.

Filing claims and appeals and issuing non-urgent applications

Represented Litigants -

1. All claims for judicial review, all regulatory/ statutory appeals, all planning matters, and all non-urgent interlocutory applications are to be filed electronically with the ACO using the Document Upload Centre. Please refer to the separate HMCTS "Professional Users Guide" for detailed information about the Document Upload Centre.
2. Requests to upload documents should be sent to AdministrativeCourtOffice.GeneralOffice@hmcts.x.gsi.gov.uk



3. You will receive an invitation from an ejudiciary.net email address to upload your documents. You should then upload the claim/appeal/application bundle (prepared in accordance with Section B), including a PBA number or receipt of payment by debit/credit card (see section G). If you are commencing a claim or appeal please also upload a further PDF document comprising an additional copy of the Claim Form/Notice of Appeal and the decision document challenged.
4. Once a claim/appeal has been issued, ACO staff will provide the case reference number to the parties by email.
5. Documents being uploaded must be in PDF format only, any other format will not be accepted by the system. The file size restriction (20MB) that applies to immediate applications applies to all non-urgent interlocutory applications.
6. The file size restriction does not apply to non-urgent applications for judicial review or appeals. If the papers in support of an application for judicial review or an appeal exceed 20MB, the claimant/appellant should file:
 - (a) a core bundle (no larger than 20MB) which includes, as a minimum, the Claim Form and Grounds/Notice of Appeal and Grounds, the decision challenged, documents regarded as essential to the claim/appeal, the letter before claim and the response, and the witness statement (or primary witness statement) in support of the claim/appeal; and
 - (b) a further bundle containing any remaining documents.
7. The guidance on the format of electronic bundles above, at Section B, applies to any bundle lodged in relation to non-urgent work. Each bundle must comply with the formatting requirements.

Litigants in Person -

1. All claims for judicial review, regulatory/ statutory appeals, and planning matters will be received electronically by the ACO and must be sent to administrativecourtoffice.generaloffice@hmcts.x.gsi.gov.uk accompanied with a receipt of payment by debit/credit card or a fee remission certificate (see section G).
2. When the claim/appeal has been issued, ACO staff will notify the parties by e mail of the case reference number.
3. The guidance regarding the format of electronic bundles at Section B applies to any bundles lodged in relation to non-urgent work.
4. The file size restriction that applies to immediate applications applies to all non-urgent interlocutory applications. It does not apply to non-urgent applications for judicial review or appeals. Nevertheless, it remains the case that the Administrative Court Office is unable to receive emails which are larger than 20MB. If the papers in support of an application for judicial review or an appeal exceed 20MB, the claimant/appellant should file:
 - a. a core bundle (no larger than 20MB) which includes, as a minimum, the Claim Form and Grounds/Notice of Appeal and Grounds, the decision challenged, documents regarded as essential to the claim/appeal, the letter before claim and the response, and the witness statement (or primary witness statement) in support of the claim/appeal; and
 - b. a further bundle (or bundles, none to exceed 20MB) containing any remaining documents.



5. Each bundle must comply with the formatting requirements set out at Section B.
6. If you are not legally represented and you do not have access to email, you should contact the Administrative Court Office by telephone on 020 7947 6158 so that alternative arrangements can be considered. The Court may permit filing in a different or additional format for good reason.

Responding to claims, appeals or application notices

Represented Parties -

Any response to a claim or appeal must be filed electronically with the ACO. Represented parties should file all documents, including all Acknowledgements of Service and Respondent's Notices, and any interlocutory applications using the Document Upload Centre. Any request to upload documents must be made by the professional representative by email to: Administrativecourtoffice.generaloffice@hmcts.x.gsi.gov.uk Parties must file an electronic bundle so that the case can be allocated to the judiciary to consider the application. The rules for electronic bundles, set out at Section B apply.

Litigants in Person -

Defendants/respondents who are litigants in person should send any Acknowledgement of Service or Respondent's Notice by email to the following address: Administrativecourtoffice.generaloffice@hmcts.x.gsi.gov.uk If you are not legally represented and you do not have access to email, you should contact the Administrative Court Office by telephone on 020 7947 6158 so that alternative arrangements can be considered. The Court may permit filing in a different or additional format for good reason.

D) Non-urgent work: claims in criminal causes or matters

Filing claims and issuing applications and case stated appeals

Represented Litigants -

1. Non-urgent claims for criminal judicial reviews or criminal case stated appeals are to be filed electronically with the ACO using the Document Upload Centre, including a PBA number or receipt of payment by debit/credit card (see section G) The Guidance at Section C applies, save that requests to upload documents should be made by email to administrativecourtoffice.crimex@hmcts.x.gsi.gov.uk
2. Interlocutory applications in criminal judicial review claims or case stated appeals should be sent by email to administrativecourtoffice.crimex@hmcts.x.gsi.gov.uk and include a PBA number or receipt of payment by debit/credit card (see section G)
3. In addition to enclosing the information relied on in support of the application, the email must state the timeframe within which consideration of the application is required. A copy of a draft of the order sought must also be provided.
4. The information on the preparation of bundles in support of claims and applications (including limits on file size) at Section B, and Section C (in the part for Represented Litigants), applies.



Litigants in Person –

1. Non-urgent applications for criminal judicial review claims, criminal case stated appeals (and non-urgent interlocutory applications) are to be filed by email sent to administrativecourtoffice.crimex@hmcts.x.gsi.gov.uk accompanied with a receipt of payment by debit/credit card or a fee remission certificate (see section G).
2. The ACO staff will provide the case reference number to the parties by email.
3. The information on the preparation of bundles in support of claims, case stated appeals and applications (including limits on file size) at Section B and Section C (in the part for Litigants in Person), applies.
4. If you are not legally represented and you do not have access to email, you should contact the Administrative Court Office by telephone on 020 7947 6158. The Court may permit filing in a different or additional format for good reason.

Responding to claims and case stated appeals

Represented Parties -

Any response to a claim or appeal must be filed electronically with the ACO. Represented parties should file all documents, including all Acknowledgements of Service and Respondent's Notices, and any interlocutory applications using the Document Upload Centre. Any request to upload documents must be made by the professional representative by email to: administrativecourtoffice.crimex@hmcts.x.gsi.gov.uk Parties must lodge an electronic bundle so that the case can be allocated to the judiciary to consider the application. The rules for electronic bundles set out at Section B apply.

Litigants in Person -

Acknowledgements of Service in relation to criminal judicial review claims or Respondent's Notices in relation to case stated appeals should be sent by email to: administrativecourtoffice.crimex@hmcts.x.gsi.gov.uk If you are not legally represented and you do not have access to email, you should contact the Administrative Court Office by telephone on 020 7947 6158 so that alternative arrangements can be considered. The Court may permit filing in a different or additional format for good reason.

E) Extradition appeals

Filing Appeals and issuing Application Notices

1. Extradition appeals must be sent electronically to administrativecourtoffice.crimex@hmcts.x.gsi.gov.uk including a PBA number or receipt of payment by debit/credit card (see section G)
2. Interlocutory applications in relation to extradition appeals must be sent to the following email address: administrativecourtoffice.crimex@hmcts.x.gsi.gov.uk including a PBA number or receipt of payment by debit/credit card (see section G)



3. If you are not legally represented and you do not have access to email, you should contact the Administrative Court Office by telephone 020 7947 6158 so that alternative arrangements can be considered. The Court may permit filing in a different or additional format for good reason.
4. After the period for lodging amended grounds of appeal has expired the professional representative should lodge an electronic permission to appeal bundle with the ACO using the Document Upload Centre. Please refer to the separate HMCTS "Professional Users Guide". Any request to upload documents must be made by the professional representative by email to: administrativecourtoffice.crimex@hmcts.x.gsi.gov.uk
5. Any further bundles (whether for renewed application for permission to appeal or for the hearing of the appeal) shall also be lodged electronically, using the Document Upload Centre.
6. If you are a litigant in person you may lodge the appeal bundle by email to: administrativecourtoffice.crimex@hmcts.x.gsi.gov.uk
7. You should contact the Administrative Court Office by telephone 020 7947 6158 to make alternative arrangements if you do not have access to email.
8. All electronic bundles must be prepared in accordance with the requirements listed in Section A.
9. Parties must lodge an electronic bundle so that the case can be allocated to the judiciary to consider the application. The rules for the preparation of electronic bundles, listed at Section B apply.
10. The file size restriction (20MB) that applies to immediate applications applies to all interlocutory applications in relation to extradition appeals.
11. The file size restriction does not apply to extradition appeals. If the papers in support of an extradition appeal exceed 20MB, the appellant should file:
 - (a) a core bundle (no larger than 20MB) which includes, the Appellants Notice, Grounds (or Amended Grounds of Appeal), the decision challenged (Ruling of District Judge or decision by the Secretary of State (Part 2 cases); the European Arrest Warrant (Part 1 cases) or the certification request by the Secretary of state and arrest warrant (Part 2 cases), the Respondent's Notice, and the witness statement (or primary witness statement) in support of the appeal, and any other documents regarded as essential to the appeal.
 - (b) a further bundle containing any remaining documents.
12. Each bundle must comply with the formatting requirements set out in Section B.

Responding to Appeals and Application Notices.

Responses to appeals must be filed electronically with the ACO.

Represented parties should file all documents, using the Document Upload Centre. Please refer to the separate HMCTS "Professional Users Guide". Any request to upload documents must be made by the professional representative by email to administrativecourtoffice.crimex@hmcts.x.gsi.gov.uk

Any further appeal bundle shall also be lodged electronically, using the Document Upload Centre.



If you are a litigant in person you may lodge your response and any appeal bundle by email to administrativecourtoffice.crimex@hmcts.x.gsi.gov.uk

If you are not legally represented and you do not have access to email, you should contact the Administrative Court Office by telephone 020 7947 6158 so that alternative arrangements can be considered. The Court may permit filing in a different or additional format for good reason.

All electronic bundles must be prepared in accordance with the requirements listed in Section B.

F) Determination of claims

Paper applications

Applications for permission to apply for judicial review, applications for permission to appeal, and interlocutory applications will continue to be considered on the papers, as usual. In the short term at least, the response times for all paper decisions is likely to increase.

Orders

Orders will be served on all parties by email.

Hearings

1. Hearings are currently being listed remotely and in court.
2. Remote hearings are being conducted by Microsoft Teams, BT Meet Me and Cloud Video Platform, and will be arranged by the court. CPR 39.3 (3) (g) permits the court to hold a hearing in private if 'the court considers this to be necessary, in the interests of justice'.
3. All court rooms have been risk assessed and comply fully with current Government and HMCTS social distancing guidelines. Hand sanitiser is available on entry to all courtrooms.
4. The List Office will contact parties prior to a hearing being listed to ascertain the preferred method of listing which will be communicated to the Judge presiding over the hearing for direction.
5. Parties should inform the court as soon as possible if a hearing is likely to be vacated or a representative cannot attend through illness/self-isolation.
6. A Cause List will be produced daily but it may be subject to change at short notice.



G) Fees (applicable to all claims)

Payment by Debit or Credit Card via the Phone or Email

From 5 October 2020, you can pay a court fee by debit or credit card by contacting the Fees Office on 0207 073 4715 between the hours of 10:00am and 16:00pm, Monday to Friday (except bank holidays) or by emailing RCJfeespayers@justice.gov.uk Once the payment has been processed you will receive a receipt which you should submit with the claim form and/or application form.

Payment by PBA

If you have a PBA account then you must include the reference number in a covering letter with any claim form and/or application you lodge so the fee can be deducted from this account.

Attending the Fees Office Counter

The Fees Office counter is open to the public during the hours of 10:00am and 16:30pm, Monday to Friday (except bank holidays). **Access to the Fees Office counter is on an appointment only basis. There is no walk-in facility.** An appointment to attend the counter can be made by contacting the Fees Office on 0207 947 6527 between the hours of 10:00am and 16:00pm, Monday to Friday (except bank holidays) or by emailing feesofficecounterbooking@justice.gov.uk (you must await confirmation before attending). Once the fee has been taken or the fee remission form completed the claim form and/or application form can be deposited in a drop box, which will be forwarded to the relevant ACO office to process.

Help with Fees

To apply for fee remission, go to the Help with Fees website (<https://www.gov.uk/get-help-with-court-fees>) and complete the step by step application process. Forward your 'HWF' reference to the Fees Office (feesrcj@justice.gov.uk) along with a copy of your claim form and/or application form. Please note, the number is confirmation of applying and is not confirmation of Remission entitlement. The Fees Office will process your application and contact you with the outcome of the Help with Fees application and will advise your next steps.