



Queen's Bench Division

Queen's Bench General, Media and Communications

Information for Court Users

Date: 24 November 2020

During the current COVID-19 outbreak the work of the Queen's Bench Judges Listing 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 court business in the most efficient way possible, taking into account the current constraints, we are making certain changes to our usual procedure.

URGENT INTERIM APPLICATIONS -

Urgent interim applications i.e. where immediate action is required from the court, otherwise a situation will become irreversible will only be accepted electronically.

Professional court users should continue to send urgent interim applications via CE-File.

Unrepresented Litigants in person are encouraged to use CE-File, but if this is not possible urgent interim applications should be sent to qbjudgeslistingoffice@justice.gov.uk Applications must be accompanied with a receipt of payment by debit/credit card or a fee remission certificate (see Fees Office section), and an electronic bundle containing only those documents which it will be necessary for the court to read for the purposes of determining the application.

If you are not legally represented and you do not have access to email, you should contact the Queen's Bench Division by telephone between 10:00am and 5:00pm on 07562 434 296 (**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 Judge on duty.

In all cases where the urgent interim application cannot be sent via CE-File the electronic bundle:

- 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.

HEARINGS –

Hearings are currently being listed remotely and in court.

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'.

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.

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.

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.

A Cause List will be produced daily but it may be subject to change at short notice.

An electronic bundle should be provided at least three working days before the hearing. The guidance set out in Annex A to this note must be followed in respect of an electronic bundle



CONTACTING THE QUEEN'S BENCH LISTING OFFICE –

Until further notice a counter service will not be provided. All enquiries relating to Queen's Bench Listing should be sent to qbjudgeslistingoffice@justice.gov.uk and a member of the team will assist you.

FEES OFFICE –

How to Pay a Court Fee

Payment by CE-File –

Court users can pay a fee by Payment by Account (PBA) or debit or credit card on submission of documents via Ce-File. For more information, support, advice and to register to use CE-File, please use this link: www.gov.uk/guidance/ce-file-system-information-and-support-advice

Payment by Debit or Credit Card via the Phone or Email –

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 to the relevant department either by email, post or drop box which is situated at the main entrance of the Royal Courts of Justice.

Payment by Cheque –

Cheques should be made payable to HMCTS and either posted with the claim form and/or application form or placed in the drop box which is situated at the main entrance to the Royal Court of Justice.

Attending the Fees Office Counter -

From the 7 December 2020, the Fees Office counter will re-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 an appointment has been booked, Court Users are advised to enter the Royal Courts of Justice via the main Strand entrance and make their way directly to the Fees Office. Upon arrival you will be directed by staff to pay a fee or submit a remission application and then your documents will be placed in a drop box for the appropriate Court department. Once this has been done you should leave the Royal Courts of Justice via the designated exit.



Help with Fees Online

To apply for fee remission, go to the Help with Fees website 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.

General Fee Enquiries

For general fee related enquiries please contact the Fees Office on Feesrcj@justice.gov.uk

ANNEX A

Queen's Bench Judges - Electronic hearing bundles -

If an electronic bundle is ordered or requested by the court the bundle **must** be prepared as follows and be suitable for use with Adobe Acrobat Reader:

1. The document **must** be a **single** PDF.
2. The document **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).
3. 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).
4. The default display view size of all pages **must always be 100%**.
5. Texts on all pages **must be selectable** to facilitate comments and highlights to be imposed on the texts.
6. **The bookmarks must be labelled** indicating what document they are referring to (**best to have the same name or title as the actual document**) and also display the relevant page numbers.
7. 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.
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