

**Thursday 14 January 2021**

**COVID-19: Operational notice for external court users of Reading Magistrates' Court**

HMCTS has been notified of a small number of positive COVID-19 tests among people who attended our site within the last seven days. We wish them a speedy recovery.

As a precautionary step, the areas they occupied or visited have been deep cleaned.

Anyone they identified as having been in close contact (which includes spending more than 15 minutes within two metres of somebody, face-to-face contact of less than one metre, skin-to-skin contact, or sharing a vehicle), is notified immediately by the court or tribunal they attended, as well as by NHS Test and Trace.

We continue to advise all court users to be aware of and look out for any symptoms of COVID-19, such as:

- a new, continuous cough
- fever (a temperature of 37.8°C or higher)
- loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia).

If you develop symptoms, however mild, you should follow the guidance and stay at home for 10 days from when your symptoms started and refer to the testing guidance on GOV.UK.

I understand the level of concern this may cause but I want to assure you that we are taking this situation very seriously and are responding responsibly, proportionately and in accordance with NHS and public health advice.

Our buildings are not considered close contact settings and the measures we have put in place, as part of our COVID-19 risk management arrangements, are extensive and satisfy public health guidelines for a COVID-secure environment. These include:

- social distancing
- modified search on entry procedures
- adequate supplies of consumables such as soap and hand sanitiser
- floor markings and signage
- one-way systems if necessary
- wearing of face coverings in all public areas
- frequent cleaning.

This information is being shared with our local justice partners and professional court users.

**Lynn Storey**

Operations Manager

Thames Valley Magistrates' Court