

# New video tech to increase remote hearings in civil and family courts

- The Cloud Video Platform is being extended to civil and family courts
- Over 120 courts set to have more reliable video tech that improves remote court hearings
- Roll out is part of HMCTS recovery plan to ensure justice continues to be served

It follows the successful implementation of the Cloud Video Platform (CVP) across 60 crown courts and 93 magistrates' courts. The technology has been used in some 3,600 crown court hearings and more than 7,000 overnight remand cases heard by magistrates.

CVP can be accessed by any device that has a camera and a microphone – such as a mobile phone or tablet. Anyone can join easily, and securely, through a web browser, and sessions can be locked to make sure only appropriate parties join. Training rooms can also be set up so that sessions may be rehearsed before they go live.

Extending it to civil and family proceedings means that all courts in England and Wales will have the technology needed to hold remote hearings – giving users a safer, reliable, and more accessible service, while ensuring justice continues to be delivered.

Courts Minister, Chris Philp, said:

We have worked closely with the judiciary to continue thousands of hearings during the pandemic.

This new system will bolster our efforts to prioritise urgent cases and increase our capacity to hear them remotely – ensuring justice is delivered effectively and safely.

Today's (1 July 2020) announcement forms part of the wider [HMCTS recovery plan](#), which sets out how courts will tackle the expected increase in outstanding cases following the pandemic in a safe way. Plans include:

- Increasing capacity by identifying several new 'Nightingale' court sites to increase capacity
- Assessing whether there is a need to extend operating hours
- Determining how best to hold jury trials in a socially distanced way

Thanks to dedicated HMCTS staff and the judiciary, the number of criminal, civil and family cases involving remote technology has increased by 90% since the pandemic began. This has meant that domestic abuse victims could continue to obtain protection orders, children could be safeguarded, and dangerous

suspects would not be released from jail as their remand expired.

The CVP roll out will ensure that these vital cases continue to be heard safely and securely. The extension to county courts will take place over the next few months to cover every civil and family court site.

CVP is being rolled out to further Crown and Magistrates' courts this month, and it's scheduled to be available in all our criminal courtrooms by the end of July.

## **Notes to editors**