

Press release: Even more people set to benefit from online court reform

- Courts and Tribunals (Online Procedure) Bill introduced to House of Lords
- sets up a new committee which will help people navigate online court systems
- cases will be progressed more efficiently and financial savings made

The Courts and Tribunals (Online Procedure) Bill forms part of the government's ambitious £1 billion Reform Programme and will establish a judicially chaired committee tasked with developing new, simplified rules around online services in civil, family and tribunal proceedings.

More than 35,000 applications for divorce have already been made online since the system was launched in May 2018, reducing errors in applications from 40% to less than 1%.

In addition, almost 60,000 applications were made to HMCTS' online civil money claims service during the past year with claims now taking, on average, 10 minutes to issue – down from 15 days using the former paper-based service.

The measures announced today will allow even more users to benefit from these online services.

Ministry of Justice Spokesperson in the Lords, Lord Keen, said:

From appealing their tax bill online to applying for divorce, every single day people up and down the country are already taking advantage of our ambitious court reforms.

This Bill will improve access to justice for all by providing clear and understandable rules to guide people through the many new digital processes we are introducing.

A dedicated Online Procedure Rule Committee will allow civil and family cases to be progressed more efficiently, as well as allowing financial savings across the justice system.

Easy to follow guidance will ensure online services are as simple as possible to navigate and increase access to justice while supporting the uptake of HMCTS' online services.

Notes to editors

- The Online Procedure Rule Committee will prescribe the process for making online procedure rules, which would then have to be signed by a majority of the committee before being submitted to the Lord Chancellor

for approval.

- The committee will be set up as soon as possible after royal assent of the Bill.