

# Reporting COVID-19 incidents to court and tribunal staff and professional court users

All suspected incidents and / or confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) within our court and tribunal buildings in England and Wales, and tribunals in Scotland, are reported to HMCTS. If you have been in a court or tribunal building and later test positive, you should inform managers in the relevant building at the earliest opportunity, as well as NHS Test and Trace.

If you get a positive test, [NHS Test and Trace](#) or local authorities' own contact tracing teams will contact you and ask you to share information about any [close contacts](#) (as per GOV.UK definitions) you had just before or after you developed symptoms. This information is handled in strict confidence and will only be kept and used in line with data protection laws.

To assist this process, we ask everybody to use the contact tracing app and QR code in our buildings. Contact tracing should only be paused within our buildings in those areas defined in [NHS guidance](#), which includes when behind a fixed Perspex (or equivalent) screen and fully protected from other people, or if storing your phone in a locker or communal area.

Where we are notified of positive (or suspected) cases in any of our buildings – whether that be a member of our staff or other court users – we initiate our own contact-tracing alongside the NHS test and trace service. Where there are two or more cases, we conduct an investigation.

## **Updating staff and professional court users**

We also update local stakeholders and court users of the situation, while maintaining the confidentiality of those directly affected. Updates may contain a combination of the following pieces of information, depending upon the circumstances of each incident:

- date we were informed of suspected incidents and / or positive cases
- date those involved were last in the building (only if it is not shared in a way/with other information which could lead to identification)
- areas of the building in which the individuals concerned have worked for a sustained period of time and/or where they are likely to have come into contact with the public (only if it is not shared in a way/with other information which could lead to identification)
- action taken, for example if a section 16 clean was completed, or if part or all the building will be closed temporarily

Any personal information we collect is only for sharing with public health authorities who may require it as part of any support they provide for complex incidents.

## **Local health protection teams**

In line with what is required of us, we alert local authority public health teams whenever the threshold for reporting is reached and act on their advice. This means that our policies, and how they are implemented at an operational level, are repeatedly reviewed by multiple experts who are independent of HMCTS.