

Family Procedure Rule Committee member reappointed

News story

The Lord Chancellor has announced the reappointment of Robert Edwards as a member of the Family Procedure Rule Committee for 3 years from 1 March 2021.



The Lord Chancellor has reappointed Robert Edwards as the Welsh/Cymru Cafcass (Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service) nominated member to the Family Procedure Rule Committee (FPRC) from 1 March 2021 to 29 February 2024.

FPRC was established under Section 77 of the Courts Act 2003 to make family procedure rules. Its aim is to make clear, easily understandable rules to create an accessible, fair and efficient family justice system.

Biography:

Robert Edwards is a lawyer at the Welsh Government and principal adviser to Cafcass Cymru, with responsibility for providing advice, representation and training to the organisation. Robert specialises in children law and previously worked in Welsh local authorities and private practice.

He has not declared any political activity.

Appointments and re-appointments to the FPRC are regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments and comply with the Cabinet Office Governance Code on Public Appointments.

Appointments to the FPRC are made under Section 77(2) of the Courts Act 2003 which provides that the Cymru Cafcass member is nominated by the Welsh Ministers and appointed by the Lord Chancellor in consultation with the Lord Chief Justice for England and Wales who has delegated this to the President of the Family Division.

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New UK scheme to drive trade with developing countries

The Government is today [19 July] launching a consultation on new trading rules that will help countries out of poverty – and help British businesses and consumers at the same time.

The Developing Countries Trading Scheme (DCTS) is a major opportunity to grow free and fair trade with developing nations. The proposed scheme would apply to 70 qualifying countries currently and include improvements such as lower tariffs and simpler rules of origin requirements for countries exporting to the UK. The scheme will allow countries to diversify their exports and grow their economies, while British households and businesses benefit from lower prices and more choice.

The UK currently operates a similar scheme rolled over from the EU, but as an independent trading nation can now take a simpler, more generous, pro-growth approach to trading with developing countries.

The proposed new UK scheme will mean more opportunity and less bureaucracy for developing countries, for example by simplifying rules of origin requirements for the least developed nations.

It will also help lower costs for UK businesses, leading to lower prices for consumers across a range of everyday products, by reducing tariffs on imports from low income and lower middle-income countries. For example, this could mean lowering tariffs on products including rice from Pakistan and trainers from Nigeria.

International Trade Secretary Liz Truss said:

Trade fundamentally empowers people and has done more than any single policy in history to lift millions of people around the world out of poverty.

Now the UK is an independent trading nation we have a huge opportunity do things differently, taking a more liberal, pro-trade approach that leads to growth and opportunity.

Countries like Bangladesh and Vietnam have proven it's possible to trade your way to better living standards, and our new Developing Countries Trading Scheme will help others do the same.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

Cutting tariffs for poorer countries enables them to trade their way to genuine independence – and I'm proud we lead the world in offering that opportunity.

Bangladesh and Vietnam have demonstrated that increasing trade through schemes like the UK's DCTS helped them grow their economy, improve living standards, and drive down poverty.

Vietnam's exports to the UK more than tripled between 2009 and 2019. Over this period, the country achieved an average growth rate of more than 6%, while poverty rates plummeted from more than 20% in 2010 to an estimated 5.9% in 2020.

UK total imports from Bangladesh more than doubled between 2009 and 2019, during which time the country achieved an average growth rate of 6.6%. Extreme poverty rates more than halved from 1991 to 2016/17.

The Government intends its new scheme to be best in class, and has studied programs in Canada, the US, Japan and the EU, before constructing an approach that takes some of the strongest elements of each and builds on them.

The consultation on the UK's new scheme runs for eight weeks and seeks the view of all sectors of society, including businesses, the public, civil society groups, consumers, associations, partner governments and any other interested stakeholders.

Views will also be sought from businesses and stakeholders with an interest across the globe.

[Frontline health and care staff can work rather than self-isolate](#)

From today (Monday 19 July), double vaccinated frontline NHS and social care staff in England who have been told to self-isolate will be permitted to attend work in exceptional circumstances and replaced by testing mitigations.

This will include staff who have been contacted as a close contact of a case of COVID-19 by NHS Test and Trace, or advised to self-isolate by the NHS Covid-19 app.

This measure is being introduced to alleviate pressure on NHS and social care services and will be contingent on staff members only working after having a negative PCR test and also taking daily negative lateral flow tests for a minimum of seven days, and up to 10 days or completion of the identified self-isolation period.

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The government is clear the change applies only to frontline NHS and social care staff where their absence may lead to a significant risk of harm.

The decision to allow NHS and social care staff to attend work after being told to self-isolate should be made on a case-by-case basis, and only after a risk assessment by the organisation's management.

This must be authorised by the organisation's local Director of Infection Prevention and Control, the lead professional for health protection, or the Director of Public Health relevant to the organisation.

Health Secretary Sajid Javid said:

As we learn to live with this virus, it's important that we ensure frontline staff can keep providing the best possible care and support to people up and down the country.

The government has backed healthcare services at every turn through this global pandemic and these new rules will fortify our collective defences against this awful virus, by allowing fully vaccinated frontline NHS and social care staff to continue to work when needed.

Careful consideration should be given by local NHS and social care organisations to the risk of onward transmission compared to the risk to delivery of critical services.

Staff who are permitted to attend work will remain under a legal duty to self-isolate as a close contact when not at work, but will be considered to have a 'reasonable excuse' under the Self-Isolation regulations to leave self-isolation to attend work where their absence could result in harm. They will continue to receive self-isolation reminders.

UK Health Security Agency Chief Executive, Jenny Harries, said:

With the number of cases continuing to rise, it is imperative that we do everything we can to manage this virus and support our NHS and social care services under the strain of increased demand and sustained pressure.

We have provided specific guidance to NHS and social care settings for circumstances where there is a significant risk to health or safety resulting from staff absence or a critical service cannot run.

This measure only applies to double vaccinated staff, who will only

be able to attend work after testing negative on PCR and daily lateral flow tests, and following a risk assessment and the supervision of the health service.

In order to mitigate the increased risk associated with attending work, the following mitigations must be implemented:

- The staff member should be fully vaccinated, defined as having received both doses of an MHRA approved vaccination, with 14 days having elapsed since the final dose.
- The staff member should undertake a PCR test and should self-isolate until they receive the result. They should only attend work if this result is negative.
- They should undertake daily LFD tests prior to starting work each day. Test results should be reported to NHS Test and Trace via the web portal and to their duty manager. Any staff member who has a positive LFD test during this period should not attend work and should arrange a PCR test as soon as possible.
- If the staff member develops any COVID symptoms, they should stay at home and immediately arrange a PCR test.
- Staff working during this 10-day period should comply with all relevant infection control precautions and PPE should be properly worn throughout the day. Any breaches should be reported immediately to their line manager.
- The staff member should not work with clinically extremely vulnerable patients or residents, as determined by the organisation.

Existing guidance will be updated by Public Health England today (Monday 19 July), and shared with NHS trusts and relevant social care organisations across England.

[Second round of Prime Minister's school rebuilding programme launched](#)

Thousands more pupils are set to benefit from new, modern, energy efficient school buildings as a further 50 schools are confirmed for the Prime Minister's ten-year rebuilding programme, to level up opportunities for all.

The rebuilds and refurbishments will create modern education environments, providing new facilities from classrooms and science labs, to sports halls and dining rooms. The new school buildings will also be net-zero carbon in operation, helping meet the Government's net zero target.

Transforming education for thousands of pupils, the 50 projects announced today build on the existing programme bringing the total number of schools

being upgraded to 100. The School Rebuilding Programme is due to deliver 500 rebuilding projects over the next decade, which will benefit tens of thousands of pupils over their lifetime.

The schools included in this round include primary, secondary and special and alternative provision schools, levelling up opportunities across the entire country

The Government is also today confirming another core funding boost for schools through the National Funding Formula. Every pupil is set to benefit from the largest funding increase in a decade as part of £14.4bn funding increase, first [announced](#) in 2019.

This will mean a £4.8 billion increase to school funding in the next academic year, and £7.1 billion in 2022-23. This is in addition to the three major interventions we have made to support education recovery in response to the COVID-19 pandemic – over £3 billion in total.

Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson said:

The environment children are taught in makes such an enormous difference to their education.

This programme will give thousands more young people the chance to learn in world class school facilities, levelling up opportunity and making sure every young person has the chance to succeed, progress and fulfil their potential.

As we build back better after the pandemic, with buildings that are net-zero in operation, this major ten-year rebuilding programme will help to shape the education of not only children now, but for years to come.

Ms Helena Mills CBE, CEO of BMAT EDUCATION, said:

We are delighted that Burnt Mill Academy has been chosen as one of the next 50 schools to be rebuilt through the Department for Education's Schools Rebuilding Programme.

This is fantastic news for our pupils, staff and the wider community in Harlow. This much-needed investment, in an area of high deprivation, will enable all of our children to learn in modern purpose-built school designed for 21st century learning.

Today, the Department for Education is also launching a consultation to gather views on how to prioritise schools for the remainder of the programme.

Funding for individual projects in the School Rebuilding programme will be determined when the scope and delivery plans at each school are developed.

Projects will range from replacing or refurbishing individual buildings through to whole school rebuilds.

The most advanced projects from the first round of the programme will begin construction in autumn 2021. The programme will help to create jobs, apprenticeships and training opportunities across England, with suppliers offering training and apprenticeships as part of their work on the projects.

The majority of the confirmed projects are expected to complete within three to five years.

The Government is also today confirming increased school core funding rates. From 2022-23, secondary schools across England will attract an average of £6,150 per pupil, an average increase of £160. Primary schools will attract an average of £4,800 per pupil, an average increase of £120.

Funding for small and remote schools is also being boosted by £53 million in 2022-23, recognising these schools are often at the heart of the rural communities they serve.

High needs funding, to support children with special educational needs and disabilities, is increasing by £780 million in 2022-23. This comes on top of the over £1.5 billion increase over the previous two years.

[More than 10 million people now using the NHS App](#)

- Over 6 million new users since the inclusion of COVID Pass showing vaccine status
- Over 1.2 million prescriptions requested and over 100,000 GP appointments booked via the app in May and June, saving valuable clinician time
- New NHS COVID Pass Verifier App launched this weekend to support businesses using COVID Pass as we cautiously proceed with roadmap

As many as 10.4 million people have now signed up to the NHS App, with over 6 million new users since the COVID-19 vaccination status service was added on 17 May.

The app's COVID-19 vaccine status service allows users easily to show their proof of vaccine, which will help people to travel abroad, start returning to workplaces and attend largescale events as we cautiously proceed with the roadmap.

Over 30 countries recognise the NHS COVID Pass as proof of their vaccination status. People who have been vaccinated with both doses will not have to

quarantine on their return to England from an amber list country – except France – from 19 July, providing they received their second jab at least 14 days prior, providing even greater freedom in travel over the summer months.

Two-thirds of UK adults have now received two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine and the government is on track to meet its target of offering all adults a second dose by mid-September.

The increase in app downloads also has potentially life-saving benefits as over 90,500 people have registered their organ donation preference via the app during May and June. Registering a preference helps NHS specialist nurses to quickly understand what people want to happen to their organs, and enables them to discuss their wishes directly with their family.

Users are also benefiting from easier access to NHS Services. During May and June over 1,248,800 repeat prescriptions were ordered and over 103,900 GP appointments booked via the app, saving patients and clinicians valuable time.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

As we cautiously reopen, the NHS COVID Pass will enable people to prove their vaccination status when travelling abroad and support venues and businesses to reopen safely, while protecting staff and the public.

The NHS App is a fantastic example of how technology supports us in delivering health care. Not only is the app helping us start to get back to doing the things we love, it is helping us book GP appointments, view test results and medical records, and make life-saving decisions such as organ donation which bring wider benefits to the health system.

Trials of the COVID Pass in domestic settings supported the beginning of a summer of sport and culture through the government's Events Research Programme. And from Monday businesses, events and services are being encouraged to use the COVID pass to help reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

As we begin to cautiously reopen, the government will work with organisations that operate large, crowded settings including nightclubs to use the NHS COVID Pass as a condition of entry.

To support businesses in using the COVID Pass the NHS COVID Pass Verifier App launched this weekend, as a fast, secure and easy way of allowing people to demonstrate their COVID pass is valid, giving staff confidence in the legitimacy of what is being presented to them.

The NHS COVID Pass Verifier App has been designed to support venues, businesses and those most at risk who would like to verify a person's COVID-19 status. Venues can conduct a visual check of an individual's NHS

COVID Pass with security features including an animated shimmer that cannot be screen grabbed. It is a fast, secure way to scan the 2D barcode on an individual's NHS COVID Pass and verify whether or not they have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19, had a negative test, or have recovered from the virus – allowing staff to check the legitimacy of what is being presented to them.

Guidance has already been made available to venues under the Events Research Programme making clear what checks staff should carry out to ensure individuals are showing genuine proof of their COVID-19 status.

Matthew Gould, Chief Executive of NHSX, said:

We built the NHS COVID Pass in weeks, delivered it on time, and are really pleased with its progress. With 6m more users on the NHS app, more on the way, and the prospect of putting the COVID Pass into other patient apps, we are creating a powerful platform for the NHS to do so much more for our citizens online.

We will see a further hike in demand for the NHS COVID Pass as businesses follow government guidance and consider using it at high risk venues and events.

We will continue listening to user feedback and keep improving the service.

Simon Bolton, Interim Chief Executive at NHS Digital, said:

The NHS App is currently the UK's most popular app with over 2.5 million new users last month alone.

Thousands of people are using the app every day to access their NHS COVID Pass and we've seen a big increase in the use of other features in the app, including registering organ donation preferences.

App users are also helping to free up time for GP surgeries by using the app to book appointments and order repeat prescriptions online.