



Coronavirus Pandemic

The Upper Tribunal (Administrative Appeals Chamber)

Guidance for Users in Northern Ireland

1. This Guidance applies to the business of the Upper Tribunal (Administrative Appeals Chamber) (UTAAC) in **Northern Ireland**.
2. This guidance is made by the Chamber President of the UTAAC. The guidance will apply until further notice.
3. The office of the UTAAC in Belfast is located within the Tribunals Hearing Centre (THC) in the Royal Courts of Justice. At present, the THC is operating with a skeleton administrative support staff who are seeking to maintain the administration of a range of tribunals in Northern Ireland including the UTAAC.
4. There will be no face to face hearings. All listed hearings (by telephone or skype or other similar technology) will be heard remotely or, if the judge decides that is not reasonably practicable and in accordance with the overriding objective, will be adjourned until it is possible to hold a face to face hearing. Parties will be contacted in reasonable time before each hearing about the most effective and practical form of hearing. Parties are asked to be flexible and to understand that the Chamber may not be able to provide everyone's preferred form of hearing. Dial-in, Skype or other joining details will be provided for participants in hearings to use.
5. The parties should seek to comply with any directions that have been made. Where the impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic leads to delay in complying with directions, a brief explanation should be provided.
6. All new applications and appeals should be sent to the THC by email to the following email address: tribunals@courtsni.gov.uk. If it is not possible to use email, then post may be used and an explanation given as to why email has not been used.
7. All other correspondence and all other documents should be sent by email to: tribunals@courtsni.gov.uk
8. There has been no change to the time limits for appealing or complying with directions or the rules.
9. Post and emails, including new applications and appeals, will be dealt with in date order where it is practicable for the administrative staff to do so. Acknowledgement, reply and onward action are dependent on the overall demands on the THC.
10. Telephone calls will not be answered during this period, and there is no facility for leaving telephone messages.

11. Urgent applications must be made by email to the following address UTAACMailbox@justice.gov.uk and marked URGENT in the subject line. They will be dealt with as quickly as possible, but there is no guaranteed time scale.
12. If the Appellant is a person at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus under current government guidelines, this should be made clear in the subject line of the email by inserting “increased risk”.

Dame Judith Farbey DBE

27 March 2020