



**THE UPPER TRIBUNAL
(ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS CHAMBER)**

TRIBUNAL PROCEDURE (UPPER TRIBUNAL) RULES 2008

**DIRECTIONS FOR GENERAL EXTENSION OF TIME
TO COMPLY WITH DIRECTIONS OF
THE UPPER TRIBUNAL
(ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS CHAMBER)**

Background

1. The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions is party to numerous proceedings before the Upper Tribunal (Administrative Appeals Chamber) (the “**Upper Tribunal**”).
2. Due to a spike in the number of Covid-19 cases in the office building in which the business unit of the Department for Work and Pensions known as the Decision Making and Appeals team (“**DMA**”) is based, that office was closed from 9th February 2021 and will remain so until such time as it is deemed safe for staff to return. DMA staff have not been able to attend the office to manage the administration of appeal work, including tasks such as scanning appeal bundles to send to those DMA staff now working from home.

Application for general extension of time

3. The Secretary of State, realising that she may as a consequence of the circumstances outlined above struggle to meet deadlines for her taking action in respect of Upper Tribunal proceedings to which she is party, has made an application for a general extension of time to comply with directions, or otherwise to provide submissions or comments.

Reasons for grant of general extension of time

4. While mindful of the need to avoid delay in proceedings, so far as compatible with proper consideration of the issues, given the extraordinary circumstances outlined in paragraphs 2 and 3 above, I consider it to be in the interests of justice to grant an extension of time. Given that these circumstances are likely to affect the Secretary of State’s ability to comply with directions and other time limits in many of the proceedings to which she is a party I consider it proportionate to grant a general extension of time to avoid the need for the Secretary of State to make individual applications for extensions of time on a case by case basis, which would place a disproportionate burden both on the Secretary of State and on the administrative office and judiciary of the Upper Tribunal.

