



# HM Courts & Tribunals Service

## Video Hearings service is coming to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber)

The Video Hearings ('VH') service is the new HMCTS strategic service for delivering remote hearings. It has been specially designed to offer the judiciary, legal professionals, representatives and members of the public an experience that more closely represents the formality of a court or tribunal hearing. The Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) will begin using the VH service in week commencing 27 February 2023.

I'm writing to encourage you to prepare for the introduction of the VH service and to explain the steps you and your I.T department will need to take.

### Getting ready to use the VH service

If you're joining a video hearing from a corporate IT network or a virtual private network (VPN), your company security policies and firewalls may need to be changed. This will allow the VH service to send and receive sound and video from the hearing to your internet browser.

The VH service is a web-based service, so it's essential to ask your I.T department to **check that firewall settings on your network will not block access**. Your organisation could experience delays to your hearing(s) or be prevented from joining hearings altogether if your organisations' firewall blocks access to the VH service.

To allow us to resolve any I.T issues that may arise I.T. firewall checks should take place 4 weeks before hearings move to the VH service. Your organisation will be able to attend an optional check-in session to test that all systems are working properly.

### Next Steps

Please share this link to find [guidance for I.T department](#) on how to enable joining the VH service from a corporate network and how to change firewall settings. This will ensure the VH service is recognised by your internet browser as a safe and secure site for sending and receiving sound and video from the hearing.

### Check-in sessions

As soon as your firewall settings have been addressed, email

[VHServiceCheckIn@justice.gov.uk](mailto:VHServiceCheckIn@justice.gov.uk) confirming:

- the name and location of your organisation
- the name and email addresses of two contacts.
- the jurisdiction that your enquiry relates to (UT Lands)

We'll then offer you a check-in session to test that all is well before your first hearing. We're expecting high demand for these sessions so please don't delay.

## **What's VH like to use?**

As a GOV.UK-style service, VH has been designed to be intuitive to follow, and users do not need training. Here is a [3 minute overview](#) showing you how the service works.

## **About the service**

As part of the wider [HMCTS Reform Programme](#), the VH service offers a number of benefits over 'off-the-shelf' solutions you may have used previously including: -

- a specific design for court and tribunal hearings, meaning that the experience has the appropriate formality.
- a virtual waiting room, so participants are kept informed through onscreen messages if the hearing is delayed or paused.
- private consultations can be held in the margins of the hearing using secure rooms accessed at the touch of a button.
- support from HMCTS staff in the run-up to the hearing and on the day.
- a guided self-test to check equipment and connection before the day of the hearing
- integration with other HMCTS systems to provide a better service to public and professional users.

We have produced guidance on [how the Video Hearings service works and how to take part in a hearing](#) to help you prepare.

**If you have any questions, please contact us at [lands@justice.gov.uk](mailto:lands@justice.gov.uk)**