



LORD PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT: COVID SAFETY MEASURES IN COURTS

I am taking this opportunity, in these difficult times, to re-inforce the rules which are in place to ensure that everyone who enters a court building is as safe as they can be. Although almost everyone is abiding by those rules, I am conscious that there have been lapses, perhaps inadvertent, by some of those coming to court.

As Scotland heads into a new period of tightened restrictions, I am determined to ensure that everything is done to keep our courts and tribunals operating effectively and safely. It is important that I set out how I expect all courts and tribunals users to conduct themselves to ensure that we all protect ourselves and each other.

In courts and tribunal buildings, everyone should:

- use the Safe2go app when entering the building
- wear a face covering (unless subject to an exemption) while moving in and around the building – this is a legal requirement
- use designated entry and exits to the building and rooms, and follow any one-way systems,
- respect the 2-metre physical distancing requirement, taking heed of floor markings and tape to indicate boundaries
- adhere to the limits on numbers advertised for specific rooms, lifts and toilets
- avoid using seats and areas marked as being out of use or restricted
- avoid having client consultations on court premises – these should occur outwith the building wherever possible
- ensure good personal hygiene by handwashing regularly and using hand sanitiser frequently when unable to wash hands with soap and water
- follow any instruction given to them by SCTS staff

In courtrooms and hearing rooms everyone should:

- wash or sanitise hands before entering and leaving the room
- be particularly careful to respect physical distancing requirements when moving about and ensure a face covering is worn when doing so
- only remove a face covering when in the designated area in the court.
- follow any instruction given to them by SCTS staff

Courts and tribunals must be regarded as safe places to attend for those working there and for those attending as accused or witnesses.

I and my judicial colleagues across the country will take any continued breaches very seriously indeed. In some instances we may need to reinforce the importance of respecting safety measures by highlighting to those breaching requirements that the court may regard any future breach and any repeated breach as constituting a contempt of court.

I expect everyone to take every step possible to ensure that they and their colleagues respect the measures introduced, to protect both themselves and others. Together we can keep the administration of justice going in a way that is effective, fair and safe for all.