**Office of the Industrial Tribunals and Fair Employment Tribunal**

**“*Live Life Covid Aware”***

The aim of the ‘Live Life Covid Aware’ advice is to help ensure a consistent approach across the NICS, and a common interpretation of current health advice within the workplace environment. Experiences during the pandemic have highlighted the importance of respiratory hygiene and infection resilient environments. The risk of transmission of coronavirus will now be treated like other infectious respiratory illnesses, and the Office of the Industrial Tribunals and Fair Employment Tribunal will update its statutory Workplace Health and Safety Risk Assessments to reflect this.

We remain aware that the pandemic is not over and adopting the new NICS advice does not mean that all of our existing mitigations will disappear. We will continue to work with other departments, the Public Health Agency and the Health and Safety Executive to ensure that we comply with health and safety standards and with the updated Executive advice.

***Safety in Killymeal House***

Many of the mitigations that have become familiar to us during the pandemic will remain in place to varying degrees, but with an onus now on individuals to make good choices to protect our own health and those around us.

Our key mitigations remain:

* Social distancing
* Face coverings
* Ventilation
* Hand Hygiene
* Protective Screens

In the pages that follow, we explain how each of the safety measures above will be implemented in practice within our Court and Tribunals venues, outlining the steps we will take, and describing the safe behaviours that we will encourage our staff, and all service users to adopt.

***Outbreaks in the Workplace***

There is no requirement to report workplace outbreaks of respiratory infections to your local public health team. Internally however, staff should (as is the case with any illness) advise their line manager if they are ill or have any of the symptoms. If you experience high levels of people with respiratory symptoms in the workplace the actions detailed above here and throughout the document will help to reduce the spread.

**Social Distancing**

We will adhere to 1m social distancing throughout the building i.e. in administration areas, waiting areas and hearing rooms. Furniture has been reconfigured to accommodate this and you are asked not to move/remove chairs or tables.

Capacity in the hearing rooms has now been increased as follows:

Hearing rooms 1, 4 and 8 – maximum capacity 19

Hearing rooms 2, 5 and 9 – maximum capacity 14

Hearing rooms 3, 6, 7 and 10 – maximum capacity 13

We will no longer designate seats which may or may not be used. We will insist that practitioners and other tribunal users respect the personal space of our staff.

We will encourage all users of the building to observe safe behaviours and post reminders about the effectiveness of social distancing.

In waiting areas we will no longer designate seats which may not be used however, we will encourage safe behaviours to continue here, as well as in lifts and stairwells. Capacity in consultation rooms will be increased to 6.

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| **What we will do** | **What you need to do** |
| Minimise unnecessary attendance | Stay 1m away from the judicial bench |
| Assign maximum hearing room capacity | Keep distance from people outside your party |
| Reopen consultation rooms safely | Not enter crowded lifts |
| Encourage all to stay vigilant to symptoms | Not come if feeling unwell |

**Face Coverings**

There is no legislative requirement for face coverings to be worn.

Staff are free to wear a face covering at any time in work and are strongly recommended to wear one when moving around the building and particularly when they are in areas used by the public.

We will continue to encourage the use of face coverings in waiting areas, consultation rooms and hearing rooms to minimise the risk of transmission of a respiratory illness.

Face coverings will be available in reception.

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| **What we will do** | **What you need to do** |
| Encourage the use of face coverings | Wear face coverings |
| Provide face coverings | Ask us for a face covering if you have none |

**Ventilation**

We will continue to prioritise ventilation as one of the most effective mitigations against all respiratory illnesses. We will continue to maximise ventilation through mechanical and natural means i.e. through our air conditioning system and the opening of windows.

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| **What we will do** | **What you need to do** |
| Adjust mechanical ventilation to maximise circulation of fresh air | Avoid poorly ventilated and over-crowded areas |
| Open windows regularly | Regularly open windows |
| Restrict access to poorly ventilated rooms |  |

**Hand Hygiene**

We will continue to promote respiratory and hand hygiene practices. We encourage staff and tribunal users not to attend Killymeal House if they have symptoms of respiratory illness. We will encourage regular hand washing and will continue to provide sanitising liquid at accessible points throughout the building.

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| **What we will do** | **What you need to do** |
| Encourage regular hand washing | Catch, Kill, Bin |
| Provide hand sanitising stations | Wash hands well and often |

**Protective Screens**

We have made extensive use of Plexiglas screens since the onset of the pandemic as a key mitigation against droplets of the virus. We will not actively seek to remove any of the screens that have been installed, except where they are an impediment to service delivery and can be replaced by an alternative mitigation e.g. social distancing, face coverings.

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| **What we will do** | **What you need to do** |
| Continue to use screens in reception | Stay behind the screen in reception |
| Continue to use screens in admin area |  |