**OFFICE OF THE INDUSTRIAL TRIBUNALS AND FAIR EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL**

**Covid-19 (Coronavirus) Safety Guidance for Users**

As part of our response to coronavirus, additional precautions have been taken to make sure the tribunal’s office, staff, judiciary and users are kept safe, secure and clean. In order to do this, some changes have had to be made. The guidance below will let you know what to expect. It will be kept up to date and reviewed regularly as Executive guidelines and Public Health Agency information changes.

All reasonably practicable measures to implement a safe environment during the current emergency have been taken, but equally, users also have a responsibility to ensure that when in attendance at Killymeal House, you adhere to all the guidance and restrictions that have been put in place.

A detailed and thorough risk assessment has taken place and has been agreed with Departmental Health and Safety and the Trade Union. The risk assessment can be found on our website – [www.employmenttribunalsni.co.uk/covid-19](http://www.employmenttribunalsni.co.uk/covid-19). A thorough deep clean has taken place and additional cleaning is being maintained on a daily basis.

Staff and Judiciary have been provided with guidance which sets out the requirements expected from them to ensure that a safe environment is maintained.

Social distancing measures have been put in place throughout the building which include strict entry and exit systems and restricting the number of people in waiting areas, consultation rooms and hearing rooms.

If you have recently returned from abroad and are subject to quarantine measures as stipulated by the Executive, **do not** attend Killymeal House. Please contact the office on (028) 9032 7666and inform a member of staff that you are unable to attend.

**Contact Tracing**

If you have been contacted by the Public Health Agency (PHA) and have been asked to quarantine, **do not** attend Killymeal House. Please contact the office on (028) 9032 7666and inform a member of staff that you are unable to attend.

In support of the track and trace system, we need to provide the PHA with contact details of users of the building in the event of a COVID-19 incident. The claimant(s) and the respondent(s) in each case will be designated as the “lead member” for each party. That person will be responsible for providing the PHA with contact details of their witnesses and/or supporters if they are asked to do so by the PHA. The lead member of each party will be asked to confirm the contact details we have on record on arrival at Killymeal House.

If you develop symptoms within 2 weeks of attending Killymeal House you should contact the PHA and advise them that you have been in the building.

**Wearing of face coverings**

As of Monday 12th October, you must wear a face covering on entry to our premises and throughout the duration of your visit unless an exemption applies to you. Please note that a judge may require you to remove your face covering when providing evidence.

**Food and water in our building**

Make sure you bring sufficient food and bottled water (plastic bottles only) with you. We have closed out water dispensers and removed water carafes and glasses from our hearing rooms. The vending machine on the ground floor is operational.

**ON ARRIVAL**

You will have been advised of the time slot within which you must arrive at Killymeal House in your notice of hearing letter. It is important to ensure that you arrive during this period of time only. This will ensure that footfall within the building is minimised and will assist in reducing a queue outside the building. Please play your part by observing the social distance while queuing. Do not enter the building until you are invited to do so.

Only one person may enter the reception area at a time so you must remain behind the taped line until you are called forward.

A sanitising station has been set up on your right hand side as you enter the building. You **must** sanitise your hands before progressing further.

Reception staff will:

* Ask you to confirm your name;
* Ask you to confirm your contact details if you are the “lead member”;
* Ask you to confirm that you do not have any symptoms of Covid-19; and
* Will direct you to your waiting area. Please remain there until your hearing clerk advises you to move to the hearing room.

**NOTE:** If you appear to have symptoms you will not be invited into the building. You will need to contact the tribunal and your legal representative by phone.

The maximum capacity of the waiting area is 13. Only designated seating may be used while you wait and you must observe social distancing.

Consultation rooms are available for use **before a hearing only.** Please note that the maximum capacity of consultation rooms is 3.

Should the tribunal rise, attendees will be directed by the hearing clerk to either remain seated or return to the waiting area.

**PLEASE DO NOT MOVE ANY FURNITURE – FOR YOUR SAFETY ALL FURNITURE HAS BEEN PLACED TO ADHERE TO SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES.**

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| To ensure your safety, we will: | To ensure your safety, you should: |
| Minimise the risk of exposure to coronavirus by:   * Undertaking a Covid Secure risk assessment * Completing a deep clean in advance of the re-opening of the building * Facilitate home working for staff who can work from home where necessary * Ensure that staff and judiciary who have symptoms of coronavirus do not come to work * Provide all staff and judiciary with safety guidance | * Not attend Killymeal House if you are displaying any of the symptoms of coronavirus * Only visit Killymeal House if you have an essential reason and remain there only as long as is necessary * Read the risk assessment available from the website and be aware of the measures that have been introduced * Follow the directions of staff * Wear a face covering on entry and throughout the duration of your visit unless you are exempt from wearing one and otherwise as directed by an Employment Judge for the purposes of providing evidence. |
| Minimise the risk of surface transmission by:   * Putting in place additional cleaning regimes to focus on touch points and regular toilet cleaning * Ensuring adequate supplies of warm water, soap and sanitising agents * Providing additional hand sanitising facilities at key locations throughout the building * Prohibiting the passing of papers | * Sanitise your hands on entrance to the building * Wash your hands with soap and water throughout the day – this is the most effective way of cleaning your hands * Let a member of staff know if you notice that soap/sanitising agents are running low * Avoid touching anything you do not need to touch * Use Whatsapp or text to communicate with your representative during the hearing |
| Minimise the risk of airborne transmission by:   * Implementing social distancing measures outside and throughout the building * Displaying signage to indicate how to maintain social distancing * Displaying signage indicating the maximum capacity of rooms * Providing face coverings where required | * Observe the social distancing measures that have been set out * Follow the directions in respect of the one way system * Follow the directions of OITFET staff * Do not remove signage or hazard tape * Close the toilet lid before flushing |
| Ensure social distancing on arrival by:   * Staggering arrival times and hearing start times * Socially distanced and taped areas outside the entrance for the purposes of queueing * Providing a sanitising station on entry to the building * Allowing entrance one at a time * Allowing usage of the lift by one person at a time only * Reception staff recording entry and exit times in visitors book | * Arrive only within the allotted time prescribed in your notice of hearing letter * Sanitise on entry * Follow directions of reception staff * Do not remove signage or hazard tape * Follow signage in respect of the one way system |
| Ensure social distancing in waiting areas, consultation rooms and hearing rooms by:   * Indicating the maximum occupancy of rooms * Socially distanced and taped areas for furniture and queueing systems * Displaying signage indicating the one way system * Providing additional sanitising stations at key points * Designating seating in each hearing room and entering the room in a specified order * Limiting movement within the hearing room   We may need to use more than one hearing room where the capacity of the room does not meet the needs of the hearing. Where this is the case, the rooms will be linked by digital technology. | * Follow the direction of the hearing clerk in respect of entrance to the hearing room and sit only in your designated seat * Maintain social distancing when entering and leaving the hearing room * Do not remove signage or hazard tape * Follow signage in respect of the one way system * Once your hearing is over for the day, leave the building immediately |