

## **Guidance Note for Hearings at 10 Old Bailey November 2020 to March 2021**

### **General**

In accordance with government guidelines 10 Old Bailey and the General Optical Council have social distancing protocols in place.

We suggest that you bring your own bottle of hand sanitiser and face mask with you to our venue. If you do not, hand sanitiser will be available upon entrance to the building and in all the rooms and should be used periodically once inside the office.

### **Access to 10 Old Bailey**

Access to the building for visitors will be from 9.00

If you haven't already signed the declaration form sent to you beforehand, you will be required to do this.

### **Lift to the 1st floor**

Only one person is permitted in each lift at a time. Please adhere to the one-way system in place and follow social distancing protocols by waiting for the lifts in the designated areas marked with footprints.

### **Arriving on the 1st floor**

All attendees will be asked to use hand sanitiser and face coverings at all times in communal areas before signing in at the reception desk. If you are exempt from wearing a face mask, please indicate that by wearing a visible exception card or advise the Hearings Officer or reception staff accordingly. A member of staff will greet you and take you to your designated area.

We also strongly recommend that you 'check-in' by scanning the GOC QR code on your NHS Test and Trace phone app.

### **Room allocation**

For the duration of the hearing all attendees will have access to either a private room or breakout area which will be allocated on arrival.

All rooms will be equipped with hand sanitiser and will be subject to a capacity limit which will be indicated on the door.

We expect face masks to be worn in each of our breakout rooms and upon entering and exiting our hearing room. Face masks can be removed when you are sitting at your allocated hearing desk and when you need to eat or drink.

Registrants and their representatives will be provided with a private breakout room to use for the duration of the hearing. If you are attending the hearing with more than two people you will be allocated to Lima (limited to four people).

Committee members and Legal Advisers will be provided with Tokyo/Paris for their private discussions (limited to six people)

Clinical Advisers will be allocated to an available breakout room, either Ottawa or Abuja (each limited to two people)

Case presenters will have access to either Ottawa or Abuja (each limited to 2 people)

Witnesses will be asked to wait in the witness break out area (Nairobi) until they are called to give evidence. The breakout area is limited to four people

Observers will be asked to wait in the reception area or may be asked to wait in a small breakout room if available.

### **Hearing Room**

At present only one hearing will take place per day and will be held in the main hearing room Athens.

Committee members and the legal adviser will enter via door 1. The registrant, representative, Hearings Officer, and Case Presenter will enter via door 2.

The table and chairs in Athens are set up to adhere to social distancing guidelines. Screens have also been put up to provide extra protection.

### **Facilities**

Toilets – these are located on the same floor as the hearing room. Access is via the door to the right of the lifts.

Refreshments - water will be available in the hearing room. Tea and coffee will be available next to the reception area and attendees must maintain a 2-metre distance when using the machine. Please follow the signage which requests that users sanitise hands before and after use. Visitors will need to bring their own lunch and other refreshments. Shops and supermarkets in the area are open to purchase lunch.

### **Timings**

Hearings will not start before 9:30 and will generally finish no later than 16:30 daily. Access to the building will start from 9.00 until 10.00 and the visitors need to have left by 5.00. Please speak to a member of staff if these timings cannot be adhered to.

### **Support**

If you would like to be accompanied to the hearing venue, please let us know in advance and we will try to accommodate. In the current circumstances, we would ask that support is limited to a single person who will also need to complete a declaration form.

### **Symptoms**

Anyone who has symptoms which may be Covid-19 related must not attend the hearing and must advise the Hearings Officer as soon as possible. If someone

experiences symptoms at the hearing, they must inform the Hearings Officer and go home immediately. In addition, anyone who develops symptoms within two weeks of attending a hearing must also notify the Hearings Officer.

They should also engage the government's track and trace guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>