



Covid Policy

September 2024

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Purpose of this document

1. This policy is designed to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission whilst the Inquiry hosts its hearings.
2. This document is aimed at all Inquiry staff attending hearings. This includes secretariat, legal teams, contractors and security staff.
3. This document also applies to all visitors attending hearings, including core participants, legal representatives, media and the general public.
4. All UK Government mandated COVID-19 restrictions have now been lifted, however please keep in mind that some staff and visitors to the hearing centre may be vulnerable. Please respect all attendees' individual wishes on social distancing and mask wearing.

Symptoms of illness and COVID-19 testing

5. While we are no longer required to do a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test if we have symptoms of COVID-19, the Inquiry is asking all staff and visitors to take a lateral flow test before attending the hearing centre if they are feeling unwell and showing symptoms of COVID-19.
6. Similarly, while we are no longer required to self-isolate if we test positive for COVID-19, the Inquiry is asking those who test positive to stay at home, and, only if possible, to take part in the hearings online.
7. We would also ask all staff and visitors showing symptoms of illness such as a cough or heavy cold while attending the hearing centre to either take appropriate precautions, for example wearing a mask and hand washing, or to return home, and, only if possible, to take part in the hearings online.

8. If staff or visitors test positive for COVID having recently attended the hearing centre then please alert the Inquiry by emailing operations@coronavirus19.public-inquiry.uk
9. Please see the [NHS guidance on COVID-19 symptoms and what to do](#) for more information on identifying COVID-19 symptoms, what to do if you have symptoms of COVID-19, who can get a free COVID-19 test, and what to do if you've tested positive.

Face masks

10. Whilst face masks are no longer compulsory, if any visitors attending hearings wish to wear face masks, and are more comfortable wearing face masks, they can do so. We will not mandate what type of mask visitors should wear.
11. Staff at the Inquiry who want to, or are more comfortable, wearing face masks may also do so.
12. For all visitors attending hearings there will be free face masks (Type IIR Fluid Resistant masks and FFP2 respirators) available on the day, if required.

Ventilation

13. A ventilation system operates throughout the ground floor and first floor of the hearing centre and has been designed and commissioned to the BSRIA Standards for Air and Water Systems.
14. In the hearing room there are:
 - 6 fan coil units - where temperatures can be controlled and turned up and down.
 - 16 ventilation units - that draw in air and then push clean air out.

15. The ventilation is evenly spread out across the room to ensure that air changes are effective throughout.
16. The hearing room is 875m³. The air change rate has been calculated as 8 air changes per hour supply, and 8 air changes per hour extract (6 ACH recommended by the Lancet COVID-19 Commission's Task Force on Safe Work, Safe School, and Safe Travel)¹.

Air purification units

17. We have ten CAMFIL air purification units situated in the hearing centre - www.camfil.com/en-gb/products/air-cleaners--air-purifiers/city-range including around the Hearing Room close to the public gallery, in the Viewing Room and the Media Room. Each will provide 127m³/hr at speed setting 4 (page 3)
18. The units have HEPA filters which are used to clean indoor air by mechanically filtering through highly efficient filters. Clean air is dispersed in all directions to supplement the effect of the ventilation system.

CO₂ monitors

19. CO₂ monitors will be placed in the hearing room, the viewing room and the media room.
20. If the CO₂ count increases to over 1000 parts per million, the doors to the hearing room will be opened during breaks to let ventilation in. We will also be able to increase ventilation from both the central unit and from the airflow through the air purification units.

Hand sanitiser

21. There will be hand sanitising stations and antiviral wipes available for people to use throughout the venues, including on arrival, and for when they take their seats.

Cleaning regime

22. The cleaning team will be frequently cleaning and disinfecting objects that are touched regularly, such as door handles and light switches. They will also thoroughly clean surfaces, including floors, throughout the Inquiry's hearing spaces and common areas such as the viewing room, support rooms, staircase, toilets and reception area each evening.
23. In addition, a disinfectant fogging treatment will be used on the surfaces in the hearing room, viewing room, and other rooms each evening.

Reference:

1. Lancet Commission on COVID-19 (2022) *Proposed Non-infectious Air Delivery Rates (NADR) for Reducing Exposure to Airborne Respiratory Infectious Diseases*. Available at:
<https://covid19commission.org/commpub/lancet-covid-commission-tf-report-nov-2022>
(Accessed: 5 June 2023).