

COVID-19 GUIDANCE FOR COURTS

CORONERS' COURTS

20 MARCH 2020

Hearings concerning Coroners' business will address urgent matters only. Inquests, including legacy inquests, and preliminary hearings will be adjourned until further notice to reduce the numbers attending court buildings. Preliminary issues will be dealt with on the papers unless the Coroner determines a hearing is required. In the unlikely event that a party requires a hearing they should contact the Coroners Service or the Legacy Inquest Unit, as appropriate, providing a written explanation for the request. The Coroner will consider the application and determine if the case should be listed and, if so, who should, if anyone, be present in court. Where possible all hearings should be undertaken remotely. Coroners will continue to deal with reported deaths as usual and extra coronial resources will be allocated from other court tiers if necessary.

Coroners and the Legacy Inquest Unit will continue to case manage the legacy inquests listed for Year 1. Exchanges will be by way of email or telephone conferencing. The Presiding Coroner will issue an updating statement regarding legacy inquests before the end of April and will hold a review of legacy inquests on a date in the future to be announced.