

## HIGH COURT

### QUEEN'S BENCH DIVISION ACTIONS - HEARINGS AND REVIEWS

16 June 2020

The Lord Chief Justice is introducing an additional arrangement to make provision for listing Queen's Bench Division (QBD) actions for hearing on specified dates during the period 20 July to 1 September 2020 inclusive.

#### QBD Actions listed for Hearing between 23 March and 30 June 2020

Where a case is currently listed for hearing between 8 June and 30 June 2020, the legal representatives should collaboratively complete and lodge form [QBDH1](#) by secure email with the Central Office ([centraloffice@courtsni.gov.uk](mailto:centraloffice@courtsni.gov.uk)) **no later than 4.00 pm on 30 June 2020**. **The subject line of your email should state "QBD Actions - Hearing"**. Lists of the cases listed in this period will be issued through the Law Society and Bar Council. Where a party is not represented or is a litigant in person, they will be contacted directly by the Court Office and asked to complete and return form [LIPQBD1](#) to the Central Office.

While case lists will not be provided, the arrangements above also apply to any case that was listed for hearing during the period **23 March - 5 June 2020** (and taken out of the list as a result of Covid -19 ) if it is ready to proceed during the period 20 July - 1 September 2020.

#### QBD Actions currently listed for Review between 8 June and 30 June 2020

Where a case is listed for review between 8 June and 30 June 2020, legal representatives should collaboratively complete and lodge form [QBCI1](#) by email with the Central Office ([centraloffice@courtsni.gov.uk](mailto:centraloffice@courtsni.gov.uk)) **no later than 4.00pm on 30 June 2020**. **The subject line of your email should state "QBD Actions - Admin Review"**.

Where a party is not represented or is a litigant in person, they will be contacted directly by the Court Office and asked to complete and return form [LIPCI1](#) to the Central Office.

#### New arrangement for completion and return of forms

Until now, the default position has been that where no form was received from either party in a case it would be adjourned for four weeks. **The new arrangement requires the completion and return of the appropriate form in all cases listed between 8 June and 30 June 2020 and referred to in the categories above**. The court may require legal representatives to attend a remote hearing to provide an explanation for non-compliance with this instruction.

The information provided by legal representatives and Litigants in Person will inform judicial decision on, for example, whether a matter should be listed for hearing or review, whether directions may be appropriate, whether a settlement can be recorded or whether it is appropriate to adjourn the case.

Forms [QBDH1](#) and [LIPQBD1](#) require the parties to indicate whether a trial date is being sought for a hearing within the period 20 July to 1 September 2020 and if so whether it should proceed remotely, in person in a courtroom or by a combination of remote and in person. Representatives are also asked to identify dates that are not suitable to participants in the case. The names of witnesses to be called, including experts, should also be provided along with information as to whether their evidence is to be given remotely or whether they are required to attend the court.

#### Hearing dates during the period 20 July to 1 September 2020

The listing of QBD actions will commence on **20 July 2020**. **The court will sit every Monday and Tuesday during the period 20 July to 1 September 2020 inclusive to deal with QBD actions that are ready to proceed with the potential to list up to six actions each day.**

The Central Office will notify parties of the date, time and type of hearing and the details for a remote callover which will be arranged in advance of the hearing. No-one should be present in the RCJ for a callover. Legal representatives should consult with their clients and dial into the callover from an alternative location which is in close proximity to the RCJ.

If the hearing is to proceed the parties will then be asked to attend close to the RCJ for their allocated time slot. Legal representatives should ensure that they have a waiting area for themselves, their clients and witnesses in close proximity to the RCJ on the day of the hearing. No waiting facility will be available in the RCJ prior to the hearing and parties will not be admitted until the action is ready to proceed. If a matter is unable to proceed on its allocated date the Central Office must be advised as soon as possible.

If a request for a hearing is not submitted within the prescribed timeline, the case will not be listed before the start of the Michaelmas Term unless the matter is agreed or urgent. Any subsequent request for an urgent hearing will require the legal representative's certification in accordance with the normal practice.