

Scottish Courts
and Tribunals Service 

SCTS COVID 19 Assessment Tool

Location - Forfar Sheriff Court

Last Updated - 17 May 2022

Introduction

Background

Whilst the risks posed by COVID-19 are now more controlled than in earlier phases of the pandemic, we continue to put the health and safety of all those using Scotland's courts and tribunals first. Our arrangements remain under review to ensure they reflect changing guidance and circumstances.

On 25 April, the remaining public access restrictions in Scotland's courts and tribunals will be eased. We will maintain the effective and well-established baseline safety measures we have had in place throughout the pandemic – including enhanced cleaning and ventilation. This document supports each Senior Person on Site to implement the required COVID safety measures, monitor compliance with them and escalate any issues which fall outside of their control, so that actions can be addressed and controls put in place, where appropriate.

Who conducts the assessment?

- The assessment should be conducted by the Senior Person on Site (SPoS), or nominated competent person. This review and any subsequent action plan should, wherever possible, be completed in conjunction and consultation with the following people:
 - a PSU Area Co-ordinator and/or
 - a member of the Health and Safety Team.
- Other staff members can be involved in the assessment by raising questions or concerns with the Senior Person on Site, if they wish.
- All areas of the site must be included in the review including, for example, accommodation used by other agencies and organisations on our site e.g. GeoAmey, COPFS and Police colleagues.
- Each section is marked to show whether the assessment applies to public or staffed areas.
- The SPoS will retain the responsibility for the assessment completion and, where necessary, resulting action plan. Area Coordinators should have oversight of all action plans created.
- Staff and court users who have any concerns about local measures should notify an onsite member of staff or alternatively e-mail sctsresilience@scotcourts.gov.uk

Reporting issues

- This Assessment Tool must be completed including, where necessary, an Action Plan. Any issues identified must be managed to ensure ongoing safety, and reported to the relevant Area Co-ordinator where significant additional work is required.
- Most issues can be resolved quickly, such as the replacement of hand soap from local stocks or immediate adjustments to local procedures. Staff and court users who have any concerns about local measures should notify an onsite member of staff or alternatively e-mail sctsresilience@scotcourts.gov.uk. Further guidance or support to the SPoS is available from the Head of Service Delivery or the Health and Safety Team.

RAG Definitions

In determining the overall RAG status, the SPoS must consider actions across all of the sections in the assessment. RAG definitions are explained below.

- **Green:** measures are in place and there are no issues for action.
- **Amber:** the issue(s) identified have an action plan and timescales for resolution in place. Any interim workarounds in use e.g. closing specific rooms or sections of the building, can be sustained without needing to close a significant part of/the whole building.
- **Red:** issue(s) affecting safety, requires closure of a significant part or the whole of the building.
- For any **Red** issues that require the temporary closure of a significant part or all of the site the SPoS must immediately:
 - escalate the issue to the Head of Service Delivery and the Director Operations (Supreme Court or Sheriff and JP courts as appropriate).
 - put in place, with support from PSU and Health and Safety, an action plan for reopening the site.

1. Physical distancing

	Required control	Complete? (Y/N)	Commentary (including any action required)	Action due by
1.	<p>Promoting responsibility to respect each other's space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Effective use of signage to underscore importance of respecting space generally. ○ Particular use of signage to underscore the importance of respecting space in smaller areas (e.g. toilets, staff rooms, print rooms, lifts etc.). ○ Particular use of signage to reduce gatherings and encourage care when using or passing through busier or congested spaces (e.g. entrance and exit areas and areas where larger numbers congregate). ○ Non-essential journeys within the building are discouraged. ○ Staff will ensure that people are directed to take the correct seat, and are encouraged to respect personal space. 	Y	All signage refreshed April 2022 to raise awareness of new arrangements and discourage complacency.	
2.	<p>Coming to work – Allowing flexibility in working hours/days where possible, if it supports individuals in travelling at earlier or later times to reduce crowding/contact.</p>	Y	Reminders will be issues each week at the Team Briefings.	
3.	<p>Workplace Practice and Layout</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Court and office layouts make best use of space to minimise the potential for crowding/pinch points. ○ Perspex screens at public counters, where appropriate. ○ Meetings and events are carefully considered in order to minimise larger gatherings to those which are essential – with consideration given to virtual events where appropriate. ○ Use of shared items (e.g. stationery) discouraged and good hand hygiene enforced if necessary. ○ Lunches and breaks are staggered to avoid congestion. 	Y	<p>There is a glass screen at the public counter and there is also a Perspex screen at the reception area which will remain in place.</p> <p>Weekly Team Briefings will remain virtual.</p> <p>Lunches and breaks will be staggered, this is discussed with staff on a regular basis at team briefings.</p>	

			As will tearoom facilities, hand sanitizers and anti bac wipes in place. Signs have been put in place to remind staff to sanitize and communal item before and after use eg fridge, microwave, kettle, milk etc	
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2. Hygiene, Cleaning and Ventilation

This section should be populated by the SPoS.

	Required control	Complete? (Y/N)	Commentary (including any action required)	Action due by
4.	Handwashing and hygiene advice is prominently displayed throughout the building. All building users are advised to sanitise their hands before entering or leaving the building/hearing room and to avoid touching hard surfaces wherever practicable. Anti-bacterial wipes will be available.	Y	Full scale pop-up information displays reinforce the range of measures in place.	
5.	Enhanced cleans and additional day and night time cleaners have been deployed where deemed appropriate, carrying out additional touchpoint cleans throughout the day with extra attention on hand-washing basins and toilet facilities.	Y	Our regular cleaning standard has been enhanced to ensure it complies with both the British Institute of Cleaning Science standard and the Public Health Scotland requirements for combatting the risk of transmission of COVID-19. All cleaning agents used on SCTS premises contain both active detergent and disinfectant properties – to ensure that our daily cleaning regime meets the levels required for “environmental decontamination” set out in public health guidance. By cleaning to this standard, facilities are kept COVID-	

			19 safe on a daily basis.	
6.	Soap, hand drying and sanitising facilities are available and easily accessible for all building users. Toilets are routinely checked for cleanliness including restocking of soap, hand drying and sanitising facilities.	Y	Supplies are replenished daily by cleaning staff, there is sanitizing facilities throughout the building ie at each entrance, each court room, toilets and in all public areas and offices. A staff member carries out regular toilet checks as does the touch point cleaners when here.	

	Required control	Complete? (Y/N)	Commentary (including any action required)	Action due by
7.	Rubbish is promptly cleared. There are sufficient bins which are emptied regularly. Disposable face coverings may be safely disposed of in normal bins.	Y		
8.	Shared items such as magazines, children's toys, TV remotes have been removed from shared areas. If any items of non-monetary value are left by visitors, these will be removed and discarded.	Y	This has been done.	
9.	Antiseptic wipes provided for use at all regular touchpoints e.g. vending machines, fridges, printers etc. with sufficient stocks maintained.	Y	This has been done and Court Officers carry out regular walk arounds and replenish stocks as and when required.	
10.	<p>Ventilation</p> <p>Public Health Scotland guidance encourages that where natural ventilation is available windows and vents should be opened as freely as possible. It is acknowledged that in severe weather this may be difficult to achieve but staff should open these windows and vents regularly to gain as much fresh air as practicable.</p> <p>Facilities with ventilation and air conditioning continue to provide good air quality with no recirculation. Monitoring of CO2 shows that we have good air quality, so rooms with these systems can utilise in-room fans. Rooms with good natural ventilation from windows and doors being opened also provide good airflow. In these areas fans, portable air cooling units and internal air cooling solutions can be used where required. Fans or air cooling units should not be used in any location with limited natural ventilation and no air conditioning. If there is any doubt, building managers should obtain advice from the Facilities Management team.</p>	Y	The office areas are well ventilated, there is limited ventilation in the Court Rooms, windows are opened where possible.	

3. Access to drinking water and refreshments

	Required control	Complete? (Y/N)	Commentary (including any action required)	Action due by
11.	Water carafes and glasses are removed from public and non-public areas.	Y	This has been done.	
12.	Users are encouraged to bring their own water bottles, but where they do not, bottled water is provided in courtrooms and hearing rooms.	Y	There is always a regular supply of bottled water for those who require it.	
13.	Antiseptic wipes are available beside any water fountains/dispensers.	Y	There are regular checks carried out and stocks are replenished when required.	

4. Custody suites

	Required control	Complete? (Y/N)	Commentary (including any action required)	Action due by
14.	Arrangements are in place to ensure that safe operations can be maintained in all areas of the custody suite, including rest areas and ancillary offices/facilities (where applicable).	Y	All staff adhere to GeoAmey policy and procedures laid out to ensure a safe working environment is maintained.	
15.	Clear signage to reassure that safety measures are in place, including signage to respect personal space. Cell occupancy must comply with the SCTS maximum threshold.	Y	Signage is in place and all prisoners arriving at the unit are given a cell sharing risk assessment group of questions which they are required to answer to minimise any risks when in GeoAmey care.	
16.	GeoAmey have processes in place to ensure that visits to those in custody are conducted safely and practically.	Y	All visitors are checked before entry into the custody suite before allowing any consultations and are required to sign in, all staff are trained in restrain techniques.	
17.	Where practical, facilities will enable defence agents to communicate remotely (by phone or screened) with prisoners from within the custody suite.	Y	There is an interview room available for agents and social work to use. Masks are available and a sign which indicates that there is no cleaning of that room between occupancies and that a stock of wipes and sand	

			sanitiser was on hand and is requested that each user should sanitise before and after use.	
18.	Antiseptic wipes and sanitiser are available in the custody suite.	Y	Wipes and sanitiser are available for use.	
19.	GeoAmey to provide their own PPE and face coverings for custodies, if required.	Y	PPE is available for staff and prisoners.	

6. Face coverings and PPE



	Required control	Complete? (Y/N)	Commentary (including any action required)	Action due by
20.	Face coverings must be used by all parties in the courtroom unless they are presenting to the court, are unable to wear one due to an exemption, or for reasons determined by the bench – and area available upon request where an individual does not have their own.	Y	A supply of disposable face coverings will be available for court users who requires one.	
21.	Signage in place that continues to encourage all building users to wear face coverings in all areas of our buildings.	Y		
22.	If a face covering is not reusable, it should be disposed of safely in the general waste bin. The contents of the bin should be disposed of safely by cleaning staff each day.	Y		
23.	Nitrile gloves are available to staff and judiciary if required, and in first aid kits in each building for use in any first aid incident including suspected coronavirus infection.	Y	There is a supply of nitrate gloves readily available for anyone who requires them	

7. Health and Safety

This section should be populated by the SPoS.

	Required control	Complete? (Y/N)	Commentary (including any action required)	Action due by
24.	Staff are aware of the Senior Person on Site.	Y		
25.	The SPOS for each site will ensure appropriate levels of coverage for H&S roles in their buildings.	Y		
26.	There are the required minimum number of First Aiders on site.	Y	There are three trained First Aiders on site.	

Action Plan

Date of review: : 17/05/22	Previous RAG	Current RAG	
Date for next review: 24/5/22		Green	
Actions identified		Timescale for completion	Action owner
<p>Statement of assurance: I confirm that the assessment has been completed and I am assured that appropriate measures are in place. Where an action plan is in place there is an action owner, a target date for the resolution of all the issues and a date for review.</p> <p>Signed (SPoS): </p>			
<p>Countersignature: I confirm that the assessment has been completed and the action plan is appropriate.</p> <p>Signed (Director Operations) </p>			

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