

Court Venue Safety during COVID-19

A guide for the legal profession and other users of NICTS buildings



NICTS arrangements for making our venues Covid Secure

As part of our response to coronavirus (COVID-19), we are taking additional precautions to make sure we keep our court and tribunal buildings safe, secure and clean.

For our regular court and tribunal users, you'll notice some changes. We've developed this guidance so you know what to expect. We'll keep updating this over time, as Government guidelines change.

NICTS has a corporate responsibility to take all reasonably practicable measures to implement a safe working environment during the current emergency, but equally, all NICTS staff and visitors have a collective responsibility to follow instructions regarding safe working practices.

As an Agency, NICTS understands how important it is to ensure that our venues are safe whenever they are open during the coronavirus outbreak. In this document, we will set out the measures that we have implemented, and describe the steps that you need to follow to be safe when visiting our venues.

NICTS Covid Secure Checklist

	To ensure your safety, NICTS will:	To ensure your safety, you should:
1	<p>Minimise the risk of exposure to coronavirus, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking <i>Covid Secure</i> Risk Assessments for all NICTS venues, and , where appropriate, individual courtrooms • Facilitating home working for all NICTS staff who can work from home • Ensuring that NICTS staff who have symptoms of coronavirus will not come to work • Providing all NICTS staff with working safely guidance 	<p>Not attend any NICTS venue if you are displaying any of the symptoms of COVID-19</p> <p>Only visit an NICTS venue when you have an essential reason, and remain there for no longer than necessary</p> <p>Read the <i>Covid Secure</i> Risk Assessments for the building, and be aware of the measures that have been introduced</p> <p>Follow the direction of NICTS staff and G4S security officers</p>
2	<p>Minimise the risk of surface transmission of coronavirus, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amending our cleaning regime to focus on touch points • Upgrading our cleaning products to meet PHA guidance • Ensuring adequate supplies of warm water and soap in our washroom facilities • Providing additional hand sanitizing facilities at key locations throughout our buildings 	<p>Wash your hands with soap and water when you can. This is the most effective way of cleaning your hands. You will also be allowed to bring your own hand sanitiser in to the court.</p> <p>Use the additional hand sanitizing facilities that have been provided</p> <p>Let a member of NICTS staff know if you notice that sanitary supplies are low.</p> <p>Avoid touching anything you do not need to.</p>

	To ensure your safety, NICTS will:	To ensure your safety, you should:
3	<p>Minimise the risk of airborne transmission of coronavirus, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing social distancing measures throughout our buildings to ensure 2 metre separation between individuals • Displaying signage to indicate how you can maintain social distancing • Displaying signage to indicate the maximum capacities of rooms • Adjusting our mechanical ventilation systems to maximise the supply of fresh air 	<p>Observe the social distancing measures that have been implemented, and follow the directions on the signage that is displayed</p> <p>Not remove any signage or hazard tape</p> <p>Maintain a safe 2 metre distance from other people in the building</p> <p>Follow the direction of NICTS staff and G4S security officers</p>
4	<p>Ensure social distancing on arrival by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing hand sanitizing facilities at entry points • Providing facilities to queue, while maintain social distance • Changing our search procedures to allow repeated passes through the Archway Metal Detector • Undertaking manual searches from the side or rear 	<p>Arrive with plenty of time to spare to pass through security, and allow extra time for queuing.</p> <p>Ensure that you place all belongings through the baggage scanner where available</p> <p>Show respect to the Court Security Officers and recognise that their work keeps us all safe</p>

	<p>To ensure your safety, NICTS will:</p>	<p>To ensure your safety, you should:</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Ensure social distancing within courtrooms by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicating the maximum occupancy of courtrooms • Providing signage to indicate which seats are available • Providing screening at the Bench and Clerk • Limiting movement within the courtrooms • Designating separate doors for entry and exit • Issuing protocols for specific court hearings where necessary <p>We might need to use more than one courtroom where the capacity of the room does not meet the needs of the hearing. Where this is the case, we will link the courtrooms using digital technology.</p>	<p>Understand that the typical familiar courtroom seating layouts may have changed</p> <p>Follow the direction of NICTS staff and G4S security officers when entering and leaving the courtrooms</p> <p>Observe any hearing specific courtroom protocols</p> <p>Not remove any signage or hazard tape</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Ensure social distancing within other rooms, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicating the maximum occupancy of rooms • Providing signage to indicate which seats are available • Removing seats where necessary <p>We might need to use more than one room where the capacity of the room does not meet the needs of the court user. Where this is the case, we will link the rooms using digital technology.</p>	<p>Understand that familiar practice and procedures may have to change to comply with social distancing</p> <p>Not remove any signage or hazard tape</p> <p>Follow the direction of NICTS staff and G4S security officers</p> <p>Observe any one way walking systems or queues</p>

	To ensure your safety, NICTS will:	To ensure your safety, you should:
7	Display clear floor markings and directional signage around the building to tell you where you should wait, sit, allow others to pass.	Follow the instructions on the signage – it is there to keep you safe.
8	Give clear directions around the building to limit the number of times you'll need to pass people. This might include a one-way system in corridors or asking you to enter lifts and toilets one at a time.	Follow directions and signage to minimise the amount of people you will pass by. We know this might mean it takes longer to move around the building, so please be patient.