

## Covid 19 Risk Assessment



<b>Activity</b>	Attendance at full effective inquest hearings held by HM Coroner for Dorset located at the Town Hall, Bournemouth. For staff, family, other interested persons and members of the public.		
<b>Service Directorate or School</b>	E&C		
<b>Department</b>	Coroners Service – public attendance at Court		
<b>Assessed By</b>	Liz Hall		
<b>Assessment Date</b>	07/09/2020	<b>Date Review Due</b>	05/10/2020

Likelihood x Severity = Risk Rating		SEVERITY			
		1 Negligible injury No lost time	2 Minor injury Lost time <7 days	3 Major injury Lost time >7 days and <3 months	4 Severe or fatal injury >3 months lost time
LIKELIHOOD	1 Rare	1	2	3	4
	2 Unlikely	2	4	6	8
	3 Likely	3	6	9	12
	4 Certain	4	8	12	16

**Reference**  
HMC 001/LH  
V2.0  
Issued  
17/09/2020

RISK RATING (Likelihood x Severity = Risk Rating)		
1 – 2	Low	No further action necessary. Controls to be monitored to ensure that they remain suitable.
3 – 4	Medium	If likelihood is likely or certain, identify and implement further controls as soon as is practicable. In all cases controls to be monitored to ensure that they remain suitable.
6 – 9	High	If likelihood is likely or certain, identify and implement further controls without delay. In all cases controls to be monitored to ensure that they remain suitable.
12 - 16	Extreme	Activity must not proceed until further controls have been identified and implemented, to reduce risk rating to an acceptable level.

Under the Coroners Justice Act 2009 a Coroner is duty bound to investigate reportable deaths that are unnatural, unexpected, or resulted following a violent act, or occurred whilst in state detention or custody. Under most circumstances all inquests need to be held within a public court with the Coroner physically present. Attendance at inquests may include families of the bereaved, witnesses, legal representatives, other interested persons, the press and the public.

Following the restrictions placed upon the public by the Government in March 2020, the Senior Coroner for Dorset made the decision that all inquest hearings listed between Monday 30th March 2020 up to the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 were to be adjourned but the evidence would remain under review to ascertain if the hearing could be completed by way of admitting evidence entirely under Rule 23 of the Coroner (Inquest) Rules 2013. This was due to the high risk associated with attendance at court and to tie in with the formal lockdown procedures in place at the Bournemouth Town Hall where the Coroner Courts are operated.

During the formal lockdown of the Town Hall the Coroner has continued to hear inquests and pre-inquest reviews that have been of a lesser complex nature enabling socially distancing measures to be complied with.

Hazard/Task	Who might be harmed?	Existing control measures	Risk rating L x S = R			What other controls are needed?	By when?	Person responsible
			L	S	R			
<p><b>1. Face to face contact with participants and interested persons</b></p> <p>Spread of Covid 19 Coronavirus causing mild to severe illness and possibly fatalities</p>	<p>HM Coroner, Coroner Court staff, other BCP staff and service users, professional witnesses, interested persons and counsel</p>	<p>Under the Chief Coroner's Guidance No. 38 (Remote participation in coronial proceedings via video and audio broadcast) and Guidance No. 39 (Recovery from COVID-19 pandemic) it has now been agreed that partial remote inquest hearings will now be scheduled and listed. This will allow for evidence and submissions to be heard by live video link when authorised by the Coroner. Interested Persons such as family/friends and associated counsel, where appropriate, will be offered the option to attend proceedings remotely via live video link or in person.</p> <p>A Letter was sent by the Senior Coroner for Dorset on 18th August to all professional agencies/blue light services advising recovery arrangements for Coroner inquests and arrangements for participating in Coroner inquests when providing evidence. In this a request was made for suitable arrangements to be made for video conferencing participation wherever practical to do so.</p> <p>Social distancing when in the building to be adhered to with appropriate signage and seating in place in all courts; face coverings to be worn by staff and attendees when using communal egress routes in the building when inquests are being heard. Attendees who have an age, health or disability reason for not wearing a face covering are exempt and should not be asked for a formal exemption notice prior to being invited to enter the building. It will not be mandatory for face coverings to be worn</p>	3	3	9	<p>All 3 courts to be VC enabled to permit inquest participation remotely where it is appropriate &amp; judicial to do so.</p>	05.10.2020	Liz Hall/Matt Robbins

		in court but participants can wear them if they so wish unless called to provide evidence or address the Coroner when they will be asked to remove them to ensure they are audible to all present in the Court; hand sanitisers and appropriate signage installed at the entrance to each of the courts; social distancing signage in place in all courts.						
<p>2. <b>Visitor access – single access/exit point and shared egress route with other users inside building; inquest waiting area</b></p> <p>Spread of Covid 19 Coronavirus causing mild to severe illness and possibly fatalities</p>	<p>HM Coroner, Coroner Court staff, other BCP staff, professional witnesses, interested persons and counsel together with other members of the public and visitors within communal access/exit points and waiting areas prior to being ushered into HM Coroners court at the start of an inquest hearing</p>	<p>Clear written instruction to be provided to all participating attendees in advance of the inquest with clear instruction on measures to be complied with if wishing to attend in person. Written instruction to include reminder of Coronavirus symptoms and when it is not appropriate to attend court. Attendees will be asked to use public car parking facilities with appropriate safety measures in place when travelling to court. Attendees will also be invited to bring their own bottled water and other suitable refreshment, and provide their own face covering. A supply of face masks can be made available to anyone who arrives without one but attendees are strongly encouraged to bring their own face mask or covering. Attendees will be asked to take home and dispose of any face mask issued to them on entrance by Coroner staff.</p> <p>Special assistance requests to be made in advance and coordinated with Facilities Management.</p> <p>The number of press representatives and general public members will not be known prior to the inquest date. Where numbers allow, these will be accommodated within the court room.</p> <p>In support of the NHS Test and Trace programme, all attendees arriving in person will</p>	3	3	9	<p>Provide access to Facilities Management, Registrars and Civic Mayoralty on inquest listed dates via new Teams Channel to ensure secure access to data.</p> <p>Liaise with Registrars on access to booked wedding dates/venues/times.</p>	<p>05/10/2020</p> <p>05/10/2020</p>	<p>Liz Hall</p> <p>Liz Hall</p>

	<p>be asked for their full name and contact number by the court usher who will collate all personal information on one sheet for each inquest. Arrival and departure times of each individual will also be recorded. This will be stored according to GDPR legislation and securely disposed of 21 days following the date of the inquest.</p> <p>Attendees to be asked to wait outside the side entrance to the Town Hall safely within their own household or support groups. The court usher will be called upon to meet and greet attendees 15 minutes prior to the start of the inquest hearing before ushering them safely inside the building to the appropriate waiting area. Each person will be asked if they have any Coronavirus symptoms such as a high temperature, fever, a continuous cough or loss of sense of smell or taste. If persons are presenting symptoms they will not be invited into the building. Any special arrangements for access will need to be made in advance. This will be made clear in the instructions issued to attendees in advance.</p> <p>Due to shared egress route with wedding parties and other Town Hall staff members, a coordinated response has been discussed with Facilities Management and Registration Services to ensure a consistent approach to measures in place within the shared communal areas.</p> <p>Single point of access and exit to the building provided by the side entrance.</p> <p>Signage in place to direct all people transiting through shared egress to walk on the left hand side with safe distancing in place between</p>						
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		<p>others transiting through the shared egress route.</p> <p>Waiting Area 1 immediately to the left-hand side upon entrance. Maximum of 6 chairs to be used for same household or support bubble attendees; other attendees ushered directly into court where appropriate.</p> <p>Waiting Area 2 on the upper level immediately before secured access to Room 30. Maximum of 9 chairs to be used for same household or support bubble attendees; other attendees ushered directly into court where appropriate.</p> <p>Hand sanitiser dispenser pumps mounted at entrance and exit point to the building and at entrance and exit point to all courts and within waiting areas. Appropriate signage in place.</p> <p>All touch points (within the courtrooms and ante court rooms used) to be wiped down before the start of each inquest to include arms on chairs, door handles, door panels and hand rails, and wiped down again following the end of the hearing.</p> <p>Required building safety inspections have been reviewed with Facilities Management and necessary actions taken.</p> <p>Staff made aware to escalate any concerns to Facility Managers/Responsible Person.</p>						
<p><b>3. Attendance in court</b></p> <p>Spread of Covid 19 Coronavirus causing mild to</p>	<p>HM Coroner, Coroner Court staff, other BCP staff, professional witnesses,</p>	<p>Government guidance <a href="#">Meeting with others Safely</a> states that there are exceptions where groups can be larger than 6 people or 30 people. These include a service fulfilling a legal obligation such as attending court or a jury service. There is no stated limit of '30' on the legal criteria. Weddings, funerals, religious</p>	3	3	9	<p>Remove water dispenser in Court 1 &amp; 2 with attendees advised in advance to bring their own bottled water; install fixed</p>		

severe illness and possibly fatalities	interested persons and counsel together with other members of the public	<p>ceremonies have an overarching restriction of 30 people but this does not apply to court attendance. Therefore, in view of the guidance each of the court rooms have been assessed on the basis of maximum numbers that can be safely accommodated with 2m social distancing where possible. If this is not possible then a 1m plus precautions can be adopted, additional precautions being the wearing of face coverings in all public areas including the court room. Where a 2m distance can be maintained, face coverings will be required in all communal areas but not mandatory within the court room.</p> <p>Tregonwell Room provides seating for up to 20 attendees in addition to the Coroner and court usher. Coroners' bench located more than 2 metres from seated attendees. Seating configuration set up to ensure appropriate 2m distancing between household groups and support bubbles, and individuals.</p> <p>Due to location of the wedding ceremony room (The Willows), opposite Tregonwell Room – coordinated response required in order to ensure attendees at inquests and restricted numbers permitted to attend weddings are kept at a safe distance from each separate group.</p> <p>Room 30 to be used for smaller attendee numbers at Coroner inquests. Seating provided for up to 8 persons with perspex protection screens installed at the front of each front-facing desked area. 2 additional seats provided at the rear of the court for members of the press or public. A total of 10 seated plus Coroner and court usher. Seating configuration set up to ensure appropriate 2m distancing between household groups and support bubbles, and individuals.</p>				<p>hand dispenser pumps at the entrance to Court 1, 2 &amp; 3; remove all waste disposal containers with exception to one located close to or near the Coroner's bench for staff use only; appropriate hand cleansing signage and social distancing signage to be in place in all courts; washable face visors to be provided for Coroner and court usher; sanitiser wipes to be provided for HM Coroner and court usher; provide standard script for HM Coroner to refer to when outlining safety measures to be adhered to during attendance at court.</p>	30/09/2020	Miles White
		<p>hand dispenser pumps at the entrance to Court 1, 2 &amp; 3; remove all waste disposal containers with exception to one located close to or near the Coroner's bench for staff use only; appropriate hand cleansing signage and social distancing signage to be in place in all courts; washable face visors to be provided for Coroner and court usher; sanitiser wipes to be provided for HM Coroner and court usher; provide standard script for HM Coroner to refer to when outlining safety measures to be adhered to during attendance at court.</p>				30/09/2020	Liz Hall	

	<p>Council Chamber provides socially safe permitted numbers of 50 as per the government guidelines regarding court attendance. This will allow 35 to be seated in the tiered section with 2m social distancing maintained and 15 in the upper public gallery area with 2m social distancing maintained where possible. Public gallery area to be used for non-participating attendees. Attendees in this location will be required to wear face coverings (if not exempt) throughout proceedings. Notices will be placed on fixed chairs that are not to be used, allowing for sufficient safe distancing between household groups, support bubbles and individuals.</p> <p>Two court ushers to be in attendance during proceedings held within the Council Chamber, one usher located on the lower level, the second usher located on the upper level.</p> <p>Attendees choosing to wear a face covering during proceedings who are called to give evidence will be asked to remove or lower their face covering. The witness stand in all courts is located a safe distance from the Coroners' bench and other seated attendees.</p> <p>Installation of IT requirements for video conferencing capability with connectivity to Microsoft Teams platform to be installed in all 3 courts thus limiting the number of attendees physically present within court.</p> <p>Coroner Court staff to outline safety measures to be complied with in court prior to the inquest commencing.</p> <p>In support of the NHS Test and Trace system, all attendees at the hearing will be asked to</p>						
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		<p>provide their contact details to the court usher upon permitted entry to the building.</p> <p>Swearing of the Oath on the 'holy book' will not be provided. All holy books have been removed with witnesses being provided with a laminated wipeable sheet of paper with the written affirmation. This will then be sanitised after each use by the court usher and stored away from the witness stand.</p> <p>Jury Inquests are currently on hold pending further review from the Chief Coroner.</p>						
<p><b>4. Access to toilet facilities</b></p> <p>Spread of Covid 19 Coronavirus causing mild to severe illness and possibly fatalities</p>	<p>HM Coroner, Coroner Court staff, other BCP staff, professional witnesses, interested persons and counsel together with other members of the public</p>	<p>Toilet facilities on the lower level are available for unisex use to avoid gathering of visitors. Comfort breaks will be scheduled during inquest adjournments with the court usher managing controlled exit from the court and egress.</p> <p>Social distancing must also be adhered to in communal toilets. Inner door will be propped open (if not a fire door or compromising privacy) to enable this. Appropriate signage in toilet area displayed.</p> <p>Wherever feasible and practical to do so, adjournments to be coordinated with booked wedding ceremonies to limit the volume of traffic in the communal areas. This may not always be possible due to unexpected adjournments during hearings.</p> <p>Coroner staff instructed to use specific staff toilet areas and not to use the public facilities.</p>	3	3	9			
<p><b>5. Use of break out / family waiting rooms following</b></p>	<p>Interested persons and represented counsel</p>	<p>If there is a need for a private room for family or consultation, Room 26 and The Laurels will be considered for use. It will not always be possible to provide private meeting rooms for</p>	3	3	9	<p>Fixed dispenser pumps to be installed at the entrance to each</p>	05/10/2020	Liz Hall



<p><b>adjournment or rest breaks</b></p> <p>Spread of Covid 19 Coronavirus causing mild to severe illness and possibly fatalities</p>		<p>all interested persons. Up to 4 seats could be available in Room 26 and up to 10 seats in The Laurels. Those requiring a private room will be asked to notify the office in advance of the inquest date.</p>				<p>break out room with appropriate signage on display. FM to confirm cleaning schedule for courts and break out rooms.</p>	<p>30/09/2020</p>	<p>Miles White</p>
<p><b>6. Cleaning and waste disposal</b></p> <p>Spread of Covid 19 Coronavirus causing mild to severe illness and possibly fatalities</p>	<p>HM Coroner, Coroner Court staff, other BCP staff, professional witnesses, interested persons and counsel together with other members of the public</p>	<p>Suitable cleaning products in use, stored safely and not accessible to members of the public.</p> <p>Premises cleaning reviewed (with contractor) and increased where necessary, including frequent cleaning of hand washing facilities.</p> <p>Frequent cleaning and disinfecting of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly</p> <p>There are to be no waste bins provided in each of the courts for attendees to use. Any items brought into the building and court that need to be disposed of must be taken by the attendee on departure from the building.</p> <p>Waste bins will be provided for the Coroner and Court Usher to use only and will be placed discreetly out of sight of other attendees at court. This bin is for use of disposal of sanitising wipes used for cleaning the court area in between inquests and other disposable materials.</p> <p>Regular waste collection and disposal have been arranged to take place throughout the day and at the end of every day.</p> <p>Regular reminders provided to maintain personal hygiene standards</p> <p>Hand sanitiser gel in multiple locations available in addition to handwashing facilities.</p> <p>Staff aware to escalate any cleaning concerns for action.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>6</p>			

		Staff and management aware to contact Facilities Management to arrange for cleaning of the affected area If a member of public, visitor or staff member develops Covid-19 symptoms whilst using premises or equipment.				
<p><b>7. Movement around the building in the vicinity of all courts on entrance and exit</b></p> <p>Spread of Covid 19 Coronavirus causing mild to severe illness and possibly fatalities</p>	<p>HM Coroner, Coroner Court staff, other BCP staff, professional witnesses, interested persons and counsel together with other members of the public</p>	<p>Approved Public Health and BCP Council Corporate signage used to support clear and consistent messaging across the Town Hall.</p> <p>Directional markings and signage displayed for customer flow at entry and exit points and at relevant points within the building.</p> <p>Any notices or posters are displayed in a cleanable surface.</p> <p>Additional security measures implemented to manage customer entry, exit and behaviours if required by the court usher.</p> <p>Guidance on social distancing arrangements and hygiene provided in advance to attendees with a verbal reinforcement of measures outlined by the court usher on arrival and prior to permitted entry to the building.</p> <p>Movement of visitors controlled around the building through advice from staff and signage e.g. in high traffic areas including corridors, lifts and walkways</p> <p>Use of stairs is encouraged wherever possible, taking into account the needs of people who may need to use lifts due to a disability or special need.</p>	2	3	6	

		Staff trained to report and enforce concerns regarding ineffective signage with duty/service managers/Responsible Person					
<p><b>8. Preparing staff/meeting hosts for public access to inquests</b></p> <p>Spread of Covid 19 Coronavirus causing mild to severe illness and possibly fatalities</p>	<p>HM Coroner, Coroner Court staff, other BCP staff - Facilities Management, Registrars and Reception</p>	<p>All Coroners' Court staff instructed on processes to be undertaken for in person attendance at inquest. Staff are fully aware of how the service will be provided to comply with the Covid secure guidance.</p> <p>Meeting held between Coroners Management Team, Facilities Management and Customer Services to ensure co-ordinated and consistent approach to managing multiple service usage of the building in a safe and coordinated manner to ensure any risk of transmission is greatly reduced. Maintain regular dialogue to reinforce and update where needed.</p> <p>All staff required to undertake <b>"Working Safer Together COVID-19 Compliance"</b> e-learning module using the HR Corporate e-learning system 'iLearn'.</p> <p>Non-essential movement within the building discouraged and the use of telephone, virtual or email communication encouraged rather than face to face conversations.</p> <p>Coroner staff together with Reception staff responsible for co-ordinating arrival and departure times of attendees.</p>	2	3	6		
<p><b>9. Personal protective equipment (PPE) and face coverings</b></p> <p>Spread of Covid 19 Coronavirus causing</p>	<p>HM Coroner, Coroner Court staff, other BCP staff, professional</p>	<p>Any PPE requirements for use within the building will be supplied through Facilities Management.</p> <p>Attendees will be asked to use their own provided face covering but masks will be</p>	2	3	6	<p>Monitor and maintain levels of PPE and ensure regular timely top-up supplies are ordered.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Liz Hall Miles White</p>

mild to severe illness and possibly fatalities	witnesses, interested persons and counsel together with other members of the public	<p>provided by Coroner Court staff if and when needed.</p> <p>Staff have been provided with information, instruction and training on how to correctly use and remove the PPE, as well as how to maintain and store PPE.</p> <p>If a member of public or staff member becomes unwell with coronavirus symptoms while in the setting and requires direct personal care (within 2m) until such time as they can return home a fluid-resistant surgical face mask (FRSM Type IIR) should be worn by the supervising person.</p> <p>The individual will be isolated to a vacant office area to minimise spread of the virus and the area ventilated if possible.</p> <p>Facilities Management to be advised immediately to ensure restricted access and the cleaning of the office area following the departure of the individual.</p> <p>If direct contact is necessary, then disposable gloves and apron and a FRSM should be worn by the person supervising. If there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, spitting, or vomiting, then eye protection should also be worn.</p>						
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<p><b>10. Handling of post and paperwork</b></p> <p>Spread of Covid 19 Coronavirus causing mild to severe illness and possibly fatalities</p>	HM Coroner, Coroner Court staff, other BCP staff, professional witnesses, interested	<p>All staff should avoid sending items via post where possible. Electronic formats are preferable, including internal documents.</p> <p>Where appropriate, documents or any other materials to be returned by post to reduce contact time where appropriate.</p>	3	3	9			
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	persons and counsel together with other members of the public	<p>Paperwork is kept to a minimum or laminated if required to be re-used and no items such as pens are shared, unless cleaned between each use.</p> <p>Picking up and dropping off collection points are in place rather than passing goods and documents hand to hand</p> <p>Staff must follow social distancing rules when handling post or paperwork and should particularly avoid touching their face or mouth.</p> <p>When dealing with high volumes of paperwork ensure that frequent effective handwashing or hand sanitisation is undertaken.</p>						
<p><b>11. Communications to staff, customers and building users</b></p> <p>Spread of Covid 19 Coronavirus causing mild to severe illness and possibly fatalities</p>	All building occupants	<p>Regular communication/training to be undertaken to reinforce processes, new procedures and arrangements to staff and users of the building. Ensure any changes to guidance is communicated clearly and measures are implemented.</p> <p>Review and updating of risk assessment to be carried out as necessary and communicated to all involved.</p>	2	3	6			
<p><b>12. Provision and administration of first aid</b></p> <p>Spread of Covid 19 Coronavirus causing mild to severe illness and possibly fatalities</p>	HM Coroner, Coroner Court staff, other BCP staff, professional witnesses, interested persons and counsel together with other members of the public	<p>Every effort will be made to allow for adequate numbers of appropriately trained personnel are on site whenever the premises are occupied.</p> <p>Registered first aiders are aware of procedures to be used and PPE necessary when carrying out first aid during the Covid 19 pandemic.</p> <p>Staff instructed on how to call upon first aid assistance if needed and action to take if onsite first aid is not immediately available.</p>	3	3	9			

