

Subject: President's Weekly Local Law Societies Update 23.03.2020

President's Update



Dear colleague
Your weekly Law Society update

Covid-19

In these fast moving times and in a hectic week, our staff and elected and appointed members have been working full tilt to represent the interests of the profession and get advice and support to our members as they deal with this unprecedented situation.

Influencing

We are making representations to UK government departments, regulators and agencies. This includes calls with the lord chancellor, the lord chief justice and the secretary of state for business, enterprise and industrial strategy which have taken place this week. We have done all we can to keep the wheels of justice turning, while at the same time addressing concerns on member safety, business continuity and the rule of law.

Some of our latest results include:

- HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) has relaxed rules on bringing hand sanitiser in to court. Police guidance has been updated to reflect our concerns
- Welsh government has now included small-to-medium law firms within the criteria for its recently announced £100 million grant scheme for businesses
- Supported by HMCTS we have asked that our practitioners be “key workers” because it is we who are keeping the system of justice running. Guidance from the Lord Chancellor is expected imminently.
- A letter from the Attorney-General acknowledging the contribution of the profession and complimenting the Law Society on our leadership.

You can see our latest influencing work [here](#). These pages will be regularly updated.

Supporting members

Our work to support members includes answering a wide range of their practical questions, from “How should firms operate if the MLRO or COLP has coronavirus?” to “Our firm is likely to be in financial distress in the next few weeks due to cash flow. What support is available?”

These have been updated on a daily basis as the flow of information from our members has been brought together, prioritised and responded to.

We also have a risk and compliance [podcast](#) as the start of a series for members.

You can see our latest advice and support [here](#).

We will continue to work on our four priority areas:

- member safety
- business continuity
- regulatory compliance
- rule of law

Weeks to come

This is just the beginning of our response. We are reaching out to specific groups of members to understand the issues they are facing and identify the short and long term advice and support we can give. I will keep you updated through my regular President's Update and other available routes. Also please see Twitter, the Gazette Daily Update and weekly Professional Update for the latest information we are sharing with our members

On to more practical arrangements: Subscriptions

Redirecting your weekly Gazette Magazine

Many Gazette readers are working remotely as a result of the coronavirus. If you would like your weeklyprint issue delivered to your home rather than your firm, please contact our subscriptions team (with your SRA number here):

gazette-subscriptions@lawsociety.org.uk

Face to face events for members

The Law Society takes the health and safety of our staff, members, clients and other visitors to our offices and events very seriously. In light of the increasing number of people affected by the virus and acknowledging the role we all have to play in limiting its impact, we have taken the decision to cancel all face to face events until the end of July 2020.

We are extremely grateful for the amount of work and incredible investment staff and members put into organising Law Society events. To ensure this is not wasted we are currently reviewing online alternatives including podcasts, webinars and live events. Your event organiser will be in contact with you soon to discuss the options available.

Anyone who has already registered and paid to attend an event will be contacted and provided with a full refund. Speakers and sponsors will also be contacted about alternative formats and ways to remain involved.

We do not know if events will be impacted beyond July 2020 nor how long the current situation will last. We will continue to monitor the situation daily and will keep staff and members informed as more information comes to light.

The Law Society's Hall at 113 Chancery Lane and the Bar and Restaurant

This will be closed until further notice.

See you next week

If ideas about support for our members during these difficult times occur to you, please e-mail

Robert.print@lawsociety.org.uk

Warm wishes and stay safe.

Simon Davis
President

The Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane,
London WC2A 1PL

www.lawsociety.org.uk

