



25 March 2019

To members of the Local Family Justice Board
and other interested parties regarding changes to
Devon Public Law work.

Dear Colleague

As you are aware, Public Law cases for Devon County Council are currently issued out of Exeter and Plymouth Family Courts depending on where the parents reside.

With effect from 1 April 2019 **all Public Law cases** issued by Devon Local Authority will be issued out of Plymouth Family Court. This is a result of resourcing changes within HMCTS in Devon and should have little impact on the way you work. Exeter and Plymouth operate the same electronic file system, which will allow us to work between locations. Plymouth City Council and Torbay Council will continue to issue out of Plymouth.

There will be no change to hearing venues, judicial resources or the allocation of cases.

Cases which would have previously been issued in Exeter will continue to have an EX prefix.

Please take note of the new email address to file all work regarding Public Law proceedings with effect from 1 April 2019 – DevonPublicLaw@justice.gov.uk Please be assured that emails sent to the existing emails boxes in error will continue to be processed for the time being to allow for the changeover.

In order for work to be actioned promptly it will be necessary for you to observe the correct naming convention when emailing correspondence to the new email box – case number/name/hearing date if applicable. For example, PL19Cxxxxx SMITH 22/03/19.

The subject line for efiled orders needs to contain the following information – judge/date of hearing/case number – Example LEECH 22/03/19 PL19Cxxxxx

No further information is to be entered on the subject line. Any emails sent in the incorrect format could cause a delay in actioning, so please ensure this message is cascaded to everyone who needs to know to prevent any urgent correspondence not being worked appropriately.

[SECURITY CLASSIFICATION]

Please make every effort to avoid filing documents the day before a hearing, as there is a risk these will not be made available to the Judge in time.

VERY URGENT APPLICATIONS - If your application requires immediate attention (e.g. EPO, or TIPSTAFF matter), please liaise with Plymouth Family Court in the first instance. Admin teams in Plymouth and Exeter will work together to ensure cases are allocated to appropriate Judge in appropriate venue, orders drawn etc.

All Placement applications will be issued through Plymouth Court only. Please use mailbox DevonPublicLaw@justice.gov.uk

Adoption applications will continue to be issued from Exeter and Plymouth Courts (no change to current process).

Should you have any questions regarding the new process please email caroline.dean1@justice.gov.uk

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Dean
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South and West Devon