**The Ecclesiastical Court of the Bailiwick of Guernsey**

**Coronavirus / Covid-19 Policy (as at 23 March 2020)**

The Court has revised its procedures in the light of developments in respect of Covid-19 and as such has determined to follow best practice as advised by the States of Guernsey Director of Public Health for the protection of its staff and users.

In view of this and whilst the Court very much remains open for business:-

* Applicants are required to telephone or email the Court with any queries as opposed to attending in person;
* Applicants can drop off documents to the Court by leaving them in the post box outside the door or sliding under the door. If Applicants have to submit proof of Identity and Address, they are asked to telephone in advance of dropping off papers to make arrangements for their ID/Address documents to be seen and photographed for certification rather than leaving it at the Court;
* Face to face meetings will only be held where absolutely necessary and by prior arrangement;
* Callers are asked not to use the lift as the door into the office will be kept locked at all times. Those unable to use the stairs should telephone and special arrangements will be made to enable documents to be dropped off etc.
* The Court will minimise attendances at the Friday Court sittings so as to minimise risk. With immediate effect, all Advocates seeking to be sworn must and all local Applicants may swear the oath with a Notary Public or Advocate of more than 5 years’ call rather than attending in person (the Court fee for the preparation of the Oath is waived). Notaries and Advocates may charge at their discretion but it is hoped that the fees will be waived where possible;
* Applicants to be sworn in person should not attend the Court if they are or have recently been unwell or are or should be self-isolating in accordance with guidance/requirements of the Director of Public Health;
* Applicants to be sworn in person will be given a specific time and are asked to attend at that time and no earlier. They will be asked to wait outside the glass door, observing social distancing in the unlikely event of other Applicants being present, and the Oath will be administered through the glass. Those Applicants who cannot use the stairs should call in advance and special arrangements will be made for them to be sworn elsewhere;
* Users should take note that, in order to protect staff and ensure, as far as possible, continuity of service, the Court has split its personnel into 3 small teams. This may result in a slight delay in processing applications.

The health and safety of our staff and users is paramount. As this is a developing situation, the Court will continue to monitor developments on a regular basis.

Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Tim Barker

Dean of Guernsey