

To: Family Court Section Members - 23rd March 2020

Dear Napo Member,

We have had a Skype meeting today with Senior Management and HR to discuss the current arrangements and situation regarding the Covid 19 virus. It has been acknowledged that this is a challenging and changing situation.

This was a positive meeting, and our view is that Cafcass management are doing their best in very critical times.

We will have these weekly from now on so that we can keep up with the changing issues.

With regard to the situation with people who have child care responsibilities at home, Alastair Thirsk (HR) has collated and shared statistics of staff who will be affected to differing levels. More to follow re this.

If you have difficulties in managing your workload because you are disrupted by child care needs, you should discuss this with your Service Manager in the first instance. This will be considered on a case by case basis. Most of the feedback from members regarding this so far is that their Managers have been sympathetic and helpful.

However, if it is not possible to work out a satisfactory solution with your SM, please let us know, and we have an arrangement to take this to our HR Managers for further resolution.

Members have been worried about making home visits to see children. Cafcass have told us today that there is no expectation that people will take risks, but this issue is still being worked on. Again, this will be on a case by case basis, and concerns should initially be brought to SMs.

Cafcass is looking to try to do all its work, but it is possible that there may be some delays if recommendations cannot be made in reports due to not being able to spend time with children or undertake home visits.

Cafcass are testing an app to help communication with staff to track absences etc., because of social distancing or self-isolating.

We will continue to keep you up to date where we can. Please contact us if you find you need extra support or advice and cannot work this out with your local SM.

Take Care and Keep Safe

Jay Barlow and Nicola Taylor-Ebong (Napo National Co-Vice Chairs, Cafcass) and Steve Hornby and Nikki Kenney (Nikki is on leave this week) Co-chairs of Napo Cafcass Section Executive Committee.