

Family Care Centres

Informal guidance regarding remote attendance

This informal guidance applies only to reviews and first direction hearings and is to avoid the proliferation of applications by legal representatives, parties and social workers regarding remote attendance.

- (1) This guidance relates to all Family Care Centres;
- (2) Subject to paragraph (4) below, at least one legal representative for each party must be in physical attendance and that representative must be adequately briefed or capable of receiving at short notice adequate instructions;
- (3) Social workers and Guardians are not required to attend physically unless specifically directed by the court or by those representing them given the anticipated nature of the review;
- (4) Parents and other non- professional parties are required to attend physically at first directions hearings. This requirement applies to reviews unless their attendance was excused by the court when the case was last reviewed by the court. For the avoidance of doubt, where parents and other professionals are required to attend physically at first directions hearings or at a review, solicitor and counsel are required to attend in person;
- (5) Any non – professional remote attendees should attend from their solicitor’s offices;

- (6) Any requests for remote attendance not falling into any of the categories above should continue to be made to the court office.