

*North and West Cumbria Courts*

*Magistrates Welcome Booklet*

*Family Courts*

*November 2025*

# Welcome to North and West Cumbria Courthouses Family Court Magistrates

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## **North West and Cumbria Bench Chair Welcome**

Welcome to our North and West Cumbria Bench. Congratulations on becoming a Justice of the Peace and being willing to take on this important responsibility.

This guide has been designed to help you navigate your way through some of the practical challenges that new magistrates face when joining us. Much of your training will have focussed on your role and the responsibilities you now have as a judicial office holder but may not have included details about our specific court sites and local sitting arrangements.

This guide will provide answers to questions you may have and will be a handy reference over the coming months as you settle into your new role. It has been prepared by local magistrates and is an evolving document so if you have a question or concern that the booklet doesn't cover, please do not hesitate to raise it with your mentor or other bench colleague so we can include it in future versions.

Your service as a Justice of the Peace is invaluable to our community. We want you to feel comfortable as a member of our bench as soon as possible and hope this guide will help you reach that position.

Congratulations once again on joining us. Lynne, Nick, Rosie, Sarah and I wish you all the very best in your new role.

Heather

### **NW and Cumbria Bench**

- Bench Chair – Heather Jackson-Stuttard – [heather.jackson-stuttard.jp@ejudiciary.net](mailto:heather.jackson-stuttard.jp@ejudiciary.net)
- Deputy Bench Chair – Sarah Bradbury – [sarah.bradbury.jp@ejudiciary.net](mailto:sarah.bradbury.jp@ejudiciary.net)
- Deputy Bench Chair – Nick Kentwell Holt – [nick.kentwell-holt.jp@ejudiciary.net](mailto:nick.kentwell-holt.jp@ejudiciary.net)
- Family Panel Chair – Lynne Gauntlet – [lynne.gauntlet.jp@ejudiciary.net](mailto:lynne.gauntlet.jp@ejudiciary.net)
- Youth Panel Chair – Rosie Moffat – [rosie.moffat.jp@ejudiciary.net](mailto:rosie.moffat.jp@ejudiciary.net)



## **Court Contact Details**

### **Carlisle Magistrates Court**

The Courthouse, Rickergate, Carlisle CA3 8QH.  
Telephone - 03308 084 407 / 01228 518 800.

### **Workington Magistrates Court**

Hall Park, Ramsey Brow. Workington. Cumbria. CA14 4AS  
Telephone - 01900 62244.

### **Cumbria and Lancashire Rota Teams**

- Office hours - 8.30am - 4:30pm - Monday to Friday –
- Telephone - 01772 208991 or 01772 208992.
- email - [CL-Rota@justice.gov.uk](mailto:CL-Rota@justice.gov.uk) for non-urgent queries
- Closed Bank Holidays

## **IT Support**

eJudiciary Support – 0300 303 0680 between 08.00 – 18.00 Mon – Fri or email [support@ejudiciary.net](mailto:support@ejudiciary.net)

Operational Laptop Support – [DSOenquiries@justice.gov.uk](mailto:DSOenquiries@justice.gov.uk)

Common Platform (CP) Support – CP Helpdesk on 0300 303 0688 or [CJSCP-ServiceDesk@HMCTS.net](mailto:CJSCP-ServiceDesk@HMCTS.net)

Judicial WiFi Support – 0800 085 8660 or [judiciary.wifi@ejudiciary.net](mailto:judiciary.wifi@ejudiciary.net)

Magistrates Expenses Portal – [bpa.support@liberata.com](mailto:bpa.support@liberata.com)

Magistrates Expenses Policy – [MDMT@justice.gov.uk](mailto:MDMT@justice.gov.uk)

NW and Cumbria local Digital Liaison Magistrates – [simon.vasey.jp@ejudiciary.net](mailto:simon.vasey.jp@ejudiciary.net) or [mark.smith.jp@ejudiciary.net](mailto:mark.smith.jp@ejudiciary.net)

## **Judicial Helpline – Telephone Number – 0800 019 8988**

There are times when disturbing things are heard in court which may affect magistrates. Being able to talk to someone confidentially about this can be extremely helpful. The Judicial Helpline is a confidential telephone line providing access to both practical and emotional support 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

## **Carlisle and Workington Court Facilities**

### **For Carlisle and Workington Courts**

#### **Parking**

The entrances to all the court car parking is through a security barrier. To gain access, press the intercom button situated before the barrier. Security will respond – say your name and you are a magistrate for today and they will lift the barrier.

#### **Note:**

- The parking areas are closed when the court is closed which would mean there is no exit available
- Security have asked that we do not tailgate other cars and that we wait at the barrier to identify ourselves before entering the car park
- No ID badges are required unless entering through the main front entrances of court

#### **Kitchen Facilities / Refreshments**

All courts have kitchens with tea and coffee facilities, mugs, cutlery, fridge and microwave. Tea, coffee and biscuits are available for Magistrates to help themselves to. Water jugs are provided in the courts.

#### **Note:**

- If you have allergies or dietary requirements, please let you colleagues and Legal advisor know.
- Please wash, dry and return all cutlery and dishes used.

#### **Lunch Breaks**

This should be taken between 13.00 -14.00 – this may vary slightly depending the case load during the morning.

Lunch breaks are 60 minutes with the option of leaving the court building. The Legal Advisor and the Bench will agree the exact times on the day. Be minded that other court users will need a break as well

**Notice Boards** - contain information relating to a wide range of Magistrate information

#### **Court Paperwork**

**ALL** court lists, used court paperwork and notes must be disposed of in the confidential waste bin before leaving the court at the end of the day. Nothing is to be taken home

## Carlisle Magistrates Court

Carlisle Magistrate Court car park



White door to stairs to retiring room (with door code)

### Carlisle Court Access

The entrance to the parking area is behind the court in Peters Street. Magistrate car parking is against the wall on the left of the barrier

**Note** - If the main gate to the parking is shut, wait for it to be opened. The reason for the gate closure is the drop off of prisoners. The gate will not be closed for long. You can park temporarily on the road while you wait.

Access to the court from the car park is the nearest white door to the car park and leads to stairs - the door to the right is prisoner access.

Use the Carlisle court access code to enter the building - ask your Mentor for an up to date access code, as they do change.

Take the stairs, through the door at the top, along the balcony and the door to the magistrate retiring rooms is on the left - this door is opened by the same code that opens the first access door

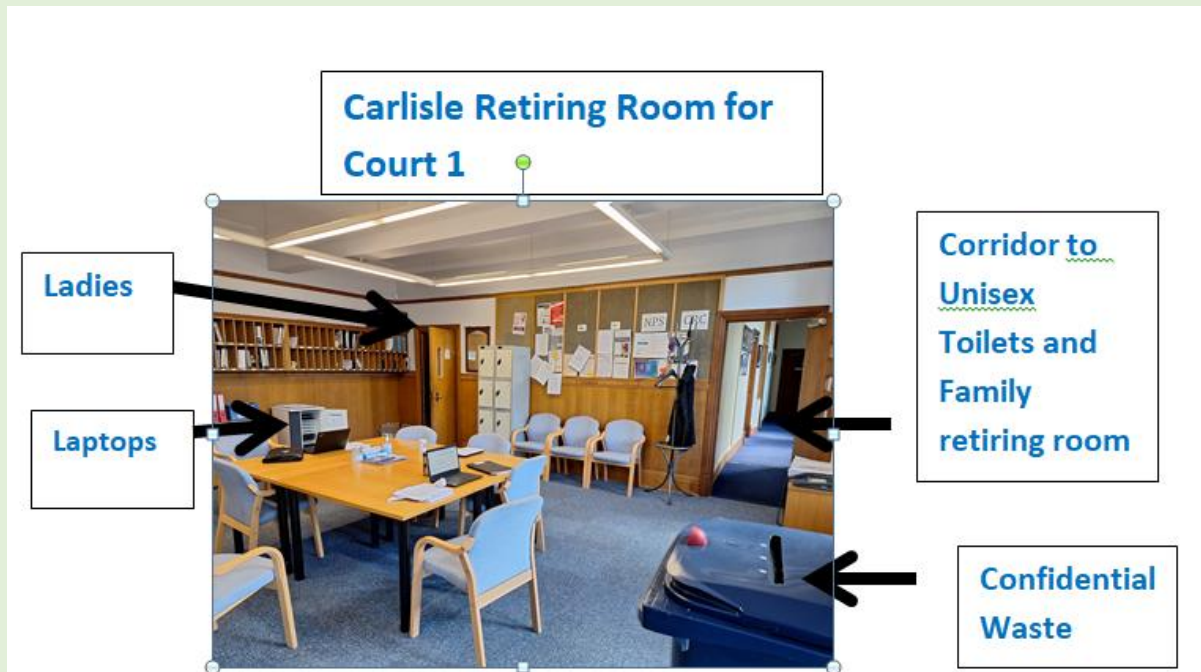
Corridor to Carlisle Retiring Rooms



Door to Magistrate retiring rooms

Access for magistrates with mobility issues is via a doorway to the left of the entrance above – follow “disable access” signs

## Carlisle Family Retiring Room



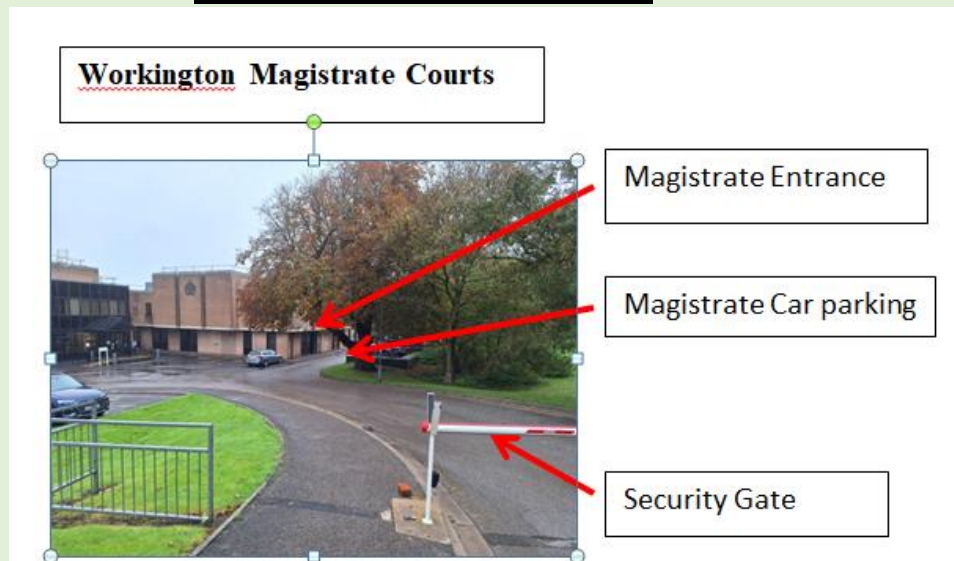
All magistrates are required to sign in by ticking the white board in the main Assembly Room (Retiring Room 1) and are requested to remove the tick when they leave

**Family Retiring Room (for Court 4)** – enter the main Assembly room (also the retiring room for Court 1), follow the corridor to the right and the Family Retiring Room is on the left.

### Facilities

- **Kitchen Facilities** – on the left in the main Assembly room. The fridge is under the pigeon holes
- **Toilets** – along the corridor to the right of the secure entrance door (this is a disable toilet) and another is through the door on the right at the back of the main reception room (Ladies only).
- **Recycling / Non-recyclable Bins** - for non-confidential waste are by the kitchen
- **Confidential Waste Bin** – sited by the main secure door
- **Additional Note Paper** – will be available in the retiring rooms and in the courts

## Workington Magistrates Court



### Workington Court Access

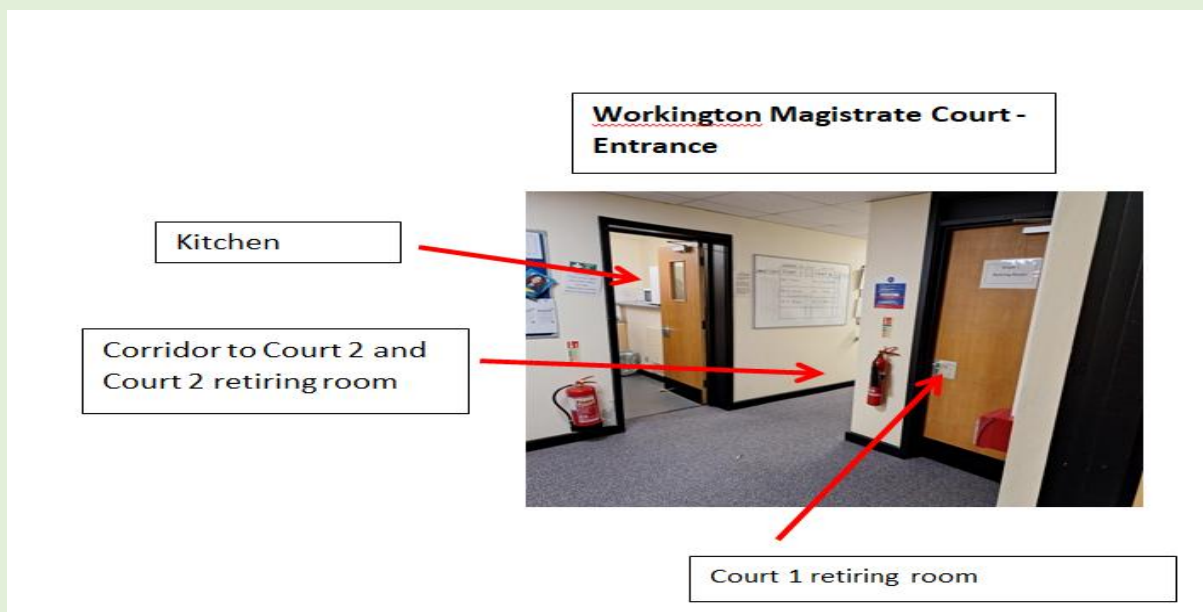
Parking is to the right of the court from the barrier

There are 2 Family Courts in Workington - most Family Courts are in Court 2 – go to Court 2 in the first instance - you will see if the court venue has been changed when you tick yourself in – a note will have been made by the Ushers on the white board, at the top of the stairs

**Access for Court 2** is via the side door opposite to the parking area. Take the stairs on the left to the first floor.

The door is opened by a code – ask your Mentor for an up to date access code as they do change

The Retiring Room for Court 2 is along the corridor to the right and on the right



**Access for Court 3** is via the main court entrance. You will need your Magistrate ID badge – if you don't have it, the Security Team will need to search your bags and your person

### **Workington Facilities /Refreshments**

- **Toilets** – to the left of the secure entrance door on the first floor for Court 2 and at the top of stairs before the Retiring Room for Court 3
- **Kitchen Facilities** – for Court 2 opposite the secure entrance door, for Court 3 tea, coffee and biscuits are in the Retiring Room, for kitchen facilities they are near Court 2
- **Notice Boards** – are situated in the retiring rooms
- **Additional Note Paper** – will be available in the retiring rooms and in the courts
- **Confidential Waste Bin** – sited near the toilets for court 2 and for Court 3 by the exit door of the Retiring Room

## **Family Court Preparation – Carlisle and Workington**

### **Pre-Court Reading**

A Family Court hearing list, called “Notification of Family Documents for Hearing Date xx/xx/xxxx’ - will be sent to you via your ejudiciary email 48 hours before your sitting date.

This email will include

- an Internal Hearing List document – detailing Hearing Type, Case Details, start time and time assigned to that case
- a link to the documents prepared for the hearings - click on the date (in the email) to access details

**Note** - this link will only contain private law hearings. Public law hearings are accessed through “external websites” – see below.

**Allow plenty of time to read the documents** - ideally at least half a day, and make notes of the key facts prior to the hearing.

To help structure the reading and note making , identify -

- the parents’ and children’s names and ages
- where they live – one parent might live out of the area
- who made the application and what order they seek,
- whether they are represented
- understand at what stage in the court process the application is
- read any Cafcass reports (and Section 7 reports – check for any addendums)
- read the latest statements from the parents, doctors/medical reports etc if any

- review previous orders for agreed points – note - there could be a recent Final Order
- identify items not agreed

**Note** - it is important that you check all the names/addresses to ensure you do not know the parents and the children. If you do, inform the legal adviser and the presiding justice. In this situation, you will normally remove yourself from the bench and play no role in those individual proceedings.

### **Private Case Hearings**

All the documents for those cases can be found through that link on the “Notification of Family Document for Hearing Date email

Using the Internal Hearing List, click on the case number to gain access to the relevant documents for that case. In most instances there will be

A - Applications and Supporting Documents

B - Orders and Judgments

C - Evidence and Statements

**Note** - not all cases will have all documents – it will depend how long the case has been open and where the case is in the Family Court Process.

### **Public Law Hearings.**

These hearings can be identified by the name of the county in the title – Cumberland.

To access the necessary documents.

- Go to your eJudiciary homepage (Judiciary.sharepoint.com) and then sign in using your eJudiciary account
- Click on the ‘external websites’ tab along the top
- Find the JCM (Judicial Case manager) tile – maroon colour
- Click on this to take you to Judicial Case Management (JCM)
- Scroll down the fields on the left, enter the case number in the “Family Management Case “number

**Note** - there are many and some lengthy documents submitted for Public Law case

## Please note all Family Court proceedings are recorded

### Court Hearing Days

Magistrates are expected to arrive in court by 9.30am in both courts

### **Laptops**

Laptops will be either on the tables ready for use or in the computer cupboard in the retiring room. You will need to log in to your ejudiciary email account to gain access to the case documents



- Connect to Gov Wifi - click on the settings icon on the bottom right of the screen, then click on Gov Wifi for connection
- On the security screen, where it says 'User', input your ejudiciary email address
- Input your ejudiciary email account password
- In the home screen, use the Chrome icon to access your Outlook account and re- enter your email details. Alternatively, in the search engine at the bottom of the screen, input 'ejudiciary.net' to access your account directly.
- You should then be able to access the documents uploaded for the hearing

The Legal Adviser will come to brief the bench by 9.45 and review the understanding and format of the day's proceedings.

On the day of the hearing, you will be expected to bring a pen and be able to access your ejudiciary account in court. Therefore you must ensure you are able to receive the eJudiciary authentication either by Text or Authentication APP on your mobile phone.

### Going into Court

The Presiding Justice and Magistrate wingers would be expected to

- Agree before court starts how questions/issues are dealt with in court – the Presiding Justice will represent the Bench. Wingers may be invited to ask questions during the court proceeds otherwise write down comments/questions for the Presiding Justice
- Decide who would like to go into court first and who last. The first winger in court checks everybody is ready, knocks on the door and walks in. They wait until all magistrates are in court, make a slight bow and sit.
- Take into court - laptop, your notes and pens. Additional paper should on the bench.
- Introduce themselves when invited to do so by the legal advisor. They need only say their name.

**Note:** - Please don't take your phone to the bench. If you get logged out, please ask the PJ to retire at a suitable moment.

### **Leaving Court**

- Before leaving the bench, the PJ will normally explain to the court that we are leaving to reach a decision, and that the bench will retire.
- Push chairs backwards – this will allow the PJ and other winger to exit the court easily
- Magistrates should stand up together, bow to court, and leave the room. The winger nearest the door holds the door open for the other magistrates, though this is not universal and will depend on the courthouse

### **Post Sitting Review**

At the end of the day, there is a daily court review in which any issues that may have arisen during the day can be discussed openly with the Legal Adviser present.

### **Remember -**

- Please charge up your laptops during lunch breaks when possible
- In Carlisle, laptops need to be replaced in their cupboard and plugged in for charging

- In Workington, laptops are left in the retiring room – the Usher will lock them away
- All paperwork to be placed in confidential waste

## **Court Standards**

### **Court Dress Code**

You should dress to reflect the dignity of the court. A good rule of thumb is that a magistrate's clothing should not cause them to stand out in the courtroom and thereby distract from the business of the court. You should not wear emblems that denote membership of any organisation. Examples of appropriate court dress:

#### **Women**

- Business suit
- Smart Dress Blouse and skirt
- Tailored trousers with jacket
- Shoes

#### **Men**

- Business suit
- Smart trousers with jacket
- Buttoned up shirt
- Tie done up
- Shoes

### **Confidentiality**

There are rules of confidentiality imposed on the reporting of names and events in the Family Court. Magistrates must abide by these rules – nothing should be posted on social media information about your sittings in court.

#### **Note -**

- Discussions in the retiring room and the way in which decisions are made are confidential and must not be disclosed outside the retiring room
- All papers generated by the court hearings, both personal notes and court papers must be placed in confidential waste paper bins:

#### **Social Media**

You need to be mindful in your use of social media now that you hold a judicial role. Inappropriate use of social media can be sanctioned

**There is guidance on the use of social media by the judiciary which you can access from the ejudicial intranet –**

[Update from the LCJ on security issues and Social Media Guidance – Judicial Intranet](#)

## **Personal Responsibility**

You have an obligation to report certain incidents /circumstances to your Bench Chair and Senior Legal Manager without delay.

If at any time you, members of your family or others closely connected with you -

- Become involved in a police investigation, whether as a suspect, a witness or in some other way
- Are charged with any offence
- Are the victim of a criminal offence
- Receive a fixed penalty notice for a road traffic offence which results in 6 or more penalty points on a driving licence
- Receive a fixed penalty notice or caution for any other offence
- Are summoned to appear in court for any offence, even if this results in less than 6 penalty points on a driving licence
- Are sued, or you sue, in your personal or business capacity
- Become a party to any civil legal proceedings

The Bench Chair and Senior Legal Manager will advise what to do and what not to do in the circumstances. They will tell you what action they may take. In some cases, you may be asked to refrain from sitting entirely, or in certain cases, until the matter is resolved. **If you are in any doubt, please seek advice.**

If the matter subsequently comes to light, and has not been not reported, it may bring your suitability as a magistrate into question, which in turn may lead to your removal.

You should report any issues immediately via email, direct to the Bench Chair – if in any doubt, report it. The matter will be dealt with sensitively and confidentially, shared only with those required

## **Emails**

Please check your emails regularly, we advise you do this at least 3 times a week.

## **Attendance**

As you know, you will need to do your minimum sittings (currently 26 sessions a year) as well as attend necessary training and Bench meetings. If you need to be absent from the bench for any reason, do contact the Bench chair to discuss the possibility of a leave of absence.

## **Reasonable Adjustments and Access Needs**

The Magistracy strives to be an inclusive and diverse body, and the North & West Cumbria Bench aims to support all magistrates who have access needs.

There is a Reasonable Adjustments Policy for Judicial Office Holders 2025, which can be located by clicking on this link – <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reasonable-adjustments-policy-for-judicial-office-holders-2025/reasonable-adjustments-policy-for-judicial-office-holders-2025>

The policy outlines the process to enable newly appointed Disabled magistrates to request reasonable adjustments. The process is managed by the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee, the Bench Chair, and HMCTS officials.

## **Court Rotas / Expenses/Training / Appraisals**

General communications will be made through your ejudiciary email account - you should check emails regularly

## **Your Court Rota / Rota Team Contact Details**

Court Rota dates are assigned for a six months period and are published in March and September for the following 6 months

- April 1 to September 30,
- October 1 to March 31.

You can access your rota via the ejudiciary Home page, the Rota and Common Platform tile. In the Rota pages, you will be able to do the following:

- Update your non-availability to sit on certain days – please keep your non availability up to date - this will avoid unnecessary phone calls from the rota team
- Change your sitting preferences (for example, to record how often you would like to sit as a magistrate, and whether you can sit as a magistrate on Saturdays or bank holidays)
- Identify when and where you are expected to sit as a magistrate

**Note** - If your diary changes and are unable to sit on an assigned court day,

- you can vacate the sitting online – if more than 2 weeks away

- If you have to vacate a sitting within 5 working days of the sitting, **email** the rota team using the “URGENT -UNABLE TO ATTEND” in the title.
- If you have to vacate a sitting within 48 hours or urgent queries call 01772 208991 or 01772 208992.

### **Cumbria and Lancashire Rota Teams**

- Office hours - 8.30am - 4:30pm - Monday to Friday.
- Closed Bank Holidays
- Use email - [CL-Rota@justice.gov.uk](mailto:CL-Rota@justice.gov.uk) for non-urgent queries

### **Expenses**

You can claim expenses for your judicial work. You will find the expenses tile on the ejudiciary home page - <https://judiciary.sharepoint.com/Pages/eJudiciary%20Home.aspx>

Opening the Expenses Tile there are 4 options

- Magistrates Claims Portals
- HMCTS Magistrates Expenses Policy
- Expenses Documents
- Guidance Video

To claim expenses

- Use the Magistrates Claims Portal
- Enter the (Liberata) System
- Use ejudiciary email address and password – this will generate a verification code sent to your ejudiciary email
- Enter the code and continue
- Use create a “New Expense Claim”

To complete an expense form you will need – date, duty type (Family Sitting), Venue (Court), depart and return to home times, miles driven (the value is calculated and currently 45p/mile), copies of other expenses eg. parking tickets

If you attend other magistrate events, for example MA meetings or school visits, you can claim expenses for these as long as you give details of the event, and reference the MA, if appropriate, in the comments tab. You will also need to select *Other Judicial duties* in the duty type.

When completing the claims remember to

- Tick “yes” to “Day Subsistence”– this will be calculated automatically. Currently £7.45 for under 8 hours and £10.38 for over 8 hours
- Add Passenger Miles if you car share – currently 5p/mile
- check the from/to post codes
- check engine capacity is correct

Using the “Additional Sitting Card” option on the claim form will allow multiple sitting to be consolidated your monthly claim. Using “Save Claim” will save that sitting expenses and will allow more sitting claims to be added at a later date. When expenses are completed use– “Submit Claim”.

Submitted Claims will be available to view in “Claims Submitted Awaiting Approval” until approved. You will receive an email via your ejudiciary email confirming expenses or whether there is a query – double check the details before submitting as the claim is cross referenced to the Legal Advisor’s submissions.

**Note:**

- To exit the Liberata System you must use the “Log Out” option. Failure to do so will lock you out of the Liberata System the next time
- Ideally, claims should be submitted on a monthly basis.

**Mentor System**

All new magistrates will be assigned a mentor as soon as they have finished their initial training and before their first sitting. Mentors are magistrates who have undertaken additional training to enable them to take on this role. They will make the initial contact to introduce themselves and offer to meet up in a relaxed environment prior to the first court sitting

Their role is

- to guide and support new magistrates in their first year of sitting until their Threshold Appraisal
- sit with new magistrates for 6 mentored sittings. Mentored sittings 1,3, and 6 will be with your assigned Mentor at least three of the first six sittings
- to answer any questions about sittings and procedures and signpost to relevant people if needed
- provide the HMTS training committees - JTAAC with an Interim Mentor Report (after 3 mentored sittings) and Final Mentor Report (after 6 mentored sittings) – these reports are to check the progress of the Mentee and whether the new magistrate has completed all the required training and is ready for their first appraisal. These reports are sent to TAAAC (Training, Advisory Authorisations, and Appraisals Committee) for sign off

On rare occasions it might be necessary for a new magistrate to request a different mentor. If this situation occurs, please reach out to the Bench Chair or one of the deputies to discuss the matter confidentially.

## **Training**

The Judicial College is responsible for designing and directing the training programs.

Following completion of the initial induction training for new magistrates, there are various other training courses which must be satisfactorily completed. This training can be either face to face at a court house in the North West region, digitally via Microsoft Teams or as online “eLearning” modules.

For some courses, pre-course training material is made available. This is usually sent via email a few weeks before the training course.

**Note** - travel expenses can be claimed for all training courses.

## **Appraisals**

Magistrates undergo regular appraisals to assess their performance and identify any further training needs.

The first appraisal for new Magistrates will be scheduled into their rota once the Final Mentor report has been signed off by TAAAC. This will be scheduled as soon as a date for an Appraiser and new magistrate can be arranged.

After that, new Magistrates will be appraised every 4 years.

## **Local and National Support and Communication**

### **North West and Cumbria Bench Chair and Deputies**

Each regional Bench elects one magistrate as their Bench Chair and Bench Chair Deputies. This usually takes place every three years. The voting procedure is administered by HMCTS staff and is done via email.

The Chair and Deputies undertake a variety of duties including,

- representing the Bench at regional and national meetings with other Benches
- collating the views of the Bench on wider issues affecting the magistrates
- resolving practical issues with HMCTS staff eg: court laptops.
- dealing with pastoral matters for individual magistrates

The names and contact details for the current Bench Chair and Deputies can be found in the Bench Bulletin – the e-newsletter for local Bench which is distributed monthly (see section below)

### **North and West Cumbria Bench Bulletin**

- The Bench Bulletin is a monthly e-newsletter which is distributed on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month to all magistrates on the North & West Cumbria Bench.
- The newsletter contains updates and information on current issues in addition to specific articles by individual magistrates, useful contact numbers, dates of future Bench and MA meetings, and often a short puzzle or recipe.
- Articles and contributions to the Bulletin are welcomed from all magistrates and should be sent to Chris Drouet ( [Christopher.drouet.jp@ejudiciary.net](mailto:Christopher.drouet.jp@ejudiciary.net) ) who currently compiles the content.

### **Magistrates' Association (MA)**

The MA is a national organisation that is run by and for magistrates with branches across the country including one in north and west Cumbria.

Becoming a member of the MA is optional - benefits include webinars and events, online learning resources, quarterly member magazine, the opportunity to volunteer with your local branch and network with other magistrates.

Membership cost £72 per year, or £45 per year for full-time students and those on a low income. There is also the option to pay monthly. For more information and to join the MA click on this link - <https://www.magistrates-association.org.uk/about-us/>

### **Judicial Helpline – Telephone Number – 0800 019 8988**

There are times when disturbing things are heard in court which may affect magistrates. Being able to talk to someone confidentially about this can be extremely helpful. The Judicial Helpline is a confidential telephone line providing access to both practical and emotional support 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

### **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank Nichola Mcdougall from *Owl Blue* for her advice in writing this booklet ([www.owlblue.org](http://www.owlblue.org)).