# IMPORTANT UPDATE COVID-19 (18/03/20)

Decisions about the education of children and young people are vitally important and the Tribunal is making every effort to conclude as many appeals and claims as possible.

The Tribunal are already aware of parents, young people, local authority representatives and witnesses who are self-isolating and social distancing, putting pressure on all services at this unprecedented time.

Following today’s announcement from the Senior President of Tribunals, all hearings in the First-tier Tribunal Special Educational Needs and Disability will move away from face to face hearings and make use of the technology available.

From Monday 23 March 2020, the Tribunal will use technology to enable hearings to proceed for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hearings will be on paper or by telephone and where possible video, where the technology permits. The arrangements for your hearing will be confirmed at least 2 days before the date on which your hearing is listed, and it would assist if you could check whether you are able to access telephone and internet services either in your home or locally. You will not be required to travel to the hearing venue if you have either telephone or internet video facilities.

If parties do not have a reliable telephone or internet service available in their homes, it may be possible to arrange to use the IT equipment or telephones at your nearest Courts and Tribunals hearing venue.

There is no need to contact the Tribunal to obtain the details as the administrative team are working to issue those details to you in time for your hearing.

Please do not contact the Tribunal helpline because at present, the Tribunal’s own resources are reduced due to self-isolation and social distancing and it is at the point two days before your hearing, if you haven’t received correspondence from the Tribunal that you should contact the office.

Thank you for your patience. If we can be of any further assistance please email the Tribunal at [send@justice.gov.uk](mailto:send@justice.gov.uk)