

## Virtual Hearings update

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Since January, a Virtual Hearings Group, led by SCRA and supported by Children's Hearings Scotland, has been working to make improvements to Virtual Hearings.

SCRA's Virtual Hearings Team are piloting a system called RAVHI (Remote Attendance Virtual Hearings Interface) which will manage everything related to a Virtual Hearing from identifying participants, to issuing joining instructions, providing Panel Members with access to papers and supporting the Hearing on the day.

One of the main aims of the pilot is to improve line and device testing and connection arrangements prior to Virtual Hearings for all participants. It also hopes to improve advice and support to participants in the Hearing to prevent and/or respond to drop out issues.

Testing has now been concluded and the implementation schedule, including the local authorities which have been identified to take part in the pilot, are noted in the implementation schedule below.

## Pilot implementation schedule

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Local authority area	MS Teams Hearings commence w/c
Falkirk	08.03.21
Clackmannanshire	15.03.21
Edinburgh City	15.03.21
Stirling	22.03.21
Borders	22.03.21
East Lothian	22.03.21
Mid Lothian	22.03.21
Fife	22.03.21
West Lothian	29.03.21
Glasgow	29.03.21

## Panel Members and Hearing papers

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In the pilot, Panel Members will get access to the Hearing papers **7 days** before the Hearing. Late papers or reports will not be sent any later than **5 days** before the Hearing.

We acknowledge that there has been a mix of technical and user issues since we introduced Virtual Hearings which have caused disruption and frustration to many users. The changes

we are making now offer an alternative platform in the pilot and dedicated end to end administrators who will be on hand to offer support to all pilot Virtual Hearing participants.

## Our ask of you

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There are a couple of things we ask of you and your teams to give the RAVHI pilot the best chance of success:

- Please ensure that all reports are submitted to us in plenty of time for inclusion with the Hearing papers which are published 7 days before the Hearing. This means that reports need to be with us no later than 8 days before a Hearing, more if they are lengthy, non-disclosure reports. Reports submitted late increase the chances that the Hearing will be unable to reach a decision.
- Please continue to submit reports that are clear and understandable, focus on current issues and include the views of children and young people. We are all committed to making information more accessible to children, young people and relevant persons.
- Please can you ask your teams to carefully read the joining instructions and take part in all testing before the Hearing so that we know in advance if there are likely to be issues with incompatible devices or poor broadband connections. If you would like to arrange a drop-in session for testing please let us know.

We really appreciate all your support with this and would welcome any feedback you have. An evaluation of the pilot will be carried out via an online survey. More information will be available shortly

## More information

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As part of our commitment to improve our communications, we have created RAVHI the Virtual Hearings Robot. RAVHI will guide everyone through their Virtual Hearings journey. Wherever you see RAVHI this means that help and support is available from SCRA's Virtual Hearings Team.

If you would like more information, including access to a self-test, please visit our Virtual Hearings website - [Virtual Hearings - SCRA](#)

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