

### 1. What ACAT is doing in response to COVID-19?

The Tribunal is following Territory and Commonwealth government advice about the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

This notice sets out the arrangements we have in place:

- to minimise the spread of COVID-19
- as far as possible, to keep the Tribunal operational.

This notice replaces the previous notice issued on 16 March 2020.

### 2. Closed ACAT counter and premises

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, we have closed our ACAT counter. The level 4 entry to our premises is also not accessible by the public.

If there is a [conference](#), [mediation](#) or [hearing](#) scheduled in your case, see the information at point 4 about [telephone attendance](#) or attendance by video link.

If you need to [inspect documents](#), or you want to attend a public hearing, please make a written request by email to [tribunal@act.gov.au](mailto:tribunal@act.gov.au).

If you have an order to access documents produced in response to a [subpoena](#), contact us to organise a time to do this.

You can contact us by email at [tribunal@act.gov.au](mailto:tribunal@act.gov.au) or by phone on (02) 6207 1740.

### 3. What services will continue?

#### (a) Current listings

Unless you are advised otherwise, current listings for conferences, mediations and hearings will continue. See the information below at point 4 about telephone attendance or attendance by video link.

Some cases that are currently listed for hearing will be listed for a directions hearing to determine whether the hearing can proceed, and if so, what arrangements will be put in place.

### (b) New listings

There will be no new listings before October 2020, except for:

- mental health applications
- guardianship and management of property applications
- energy and water hardship applications
- residential tenancy termination and possession order applications
- urgent or essential directions hearings
- some applications in the Registrar's list (for example, return of subpoenas for hearings that are currently listed)
- urgent applications, across the whole tribunal (for example, stays or injunctions)
- some other matters, only with the approval of a Case Managing Member or the Registrar. A decision will consider factors such as urgency, importance and the tribunal's resources. Where appropriate, consideration will be given to whether or not the matter can be 'heard on the papers' (see point 7 below).

### 4. Telephone attendance or attendance by video link

ACAT is not scheduling any face-to-face hearings. Parties, their representatives and witnesses **must** attend upcoming conferences, mediations and hearings by telephone or by video link.

To organise this, **contact us at least three days** before you are scheduled to attend the Tribunal on telephone (02) 6207 1740 or send an email to [tribunal@act.gov.au](mailto:tribunal@act.gov.au).

Find out more about [telephone attendance](#) on the Tribunal's website.

### 5. When to stay home

Stay at home if:

- you are feeling unwell
- you have been overseas in the last 14 days
- you have COVID-19 or have been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19.

If this applies to you, do **not** attend the Tribunal's premises.

If you need to stay at home and there is a [conference](#), [mediation](#) or [hearing](#) scheduled in your case, you **must**:

- [request to attend by telephone](#) (if you are well), or
- [request an adjournment](#) (if you are unwell).

An **adjournment request** is when you ask that the conference, mediation or hearing happens later than the scheduled date. Make sure your adjournment request is in writing (an email is the preferred method).

**Important information** - If you do *not* attend the Tribunal for a conference, mediation or hearing (whether in person or by telephone) and you do *not* ask for an adjournment, the case may:

- be dismissed, or
- proceed in your absence.

If you have symptoms, such as fever, cough, sore throat, tiredness or shortness of breath, please see your doctor. Information about self-isolation can be found at:

<https://www.health.act.gov.au>.

### 6. Lodging documents

You can still [lodge documents](#) by post.

We will also accept lodgements by email, sent to [tribunal@act.gov.au](mailto:tribunal@act.gov.au).

Note:

- if you email us a document that is more than 40 pages, we may ask you to mail hard copies to us.
- if a fee applies to the document you are lodging, our registry staff will tell you the fee payment options.

For [civil dispute applications](#), you may be able to use our [online form](#).

We expect that some applications may take longer to process than usual.

### 7. Hearing 'on the papers'

It may be appropriate for some Tribunal cases to be decided on the papers, which means they are decided without a hearing. This involves the Tribunal Member considering the documents that are lodged by all the parties and then making a decision about the case.

If you would like your case to be heard 'on the papers', please send us a request (this can be done by email).

Note, the Tribunal will ask all parties in the case for their views before deciding whether to allow a hearing on the papers.

### **8. Please be patient**

The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to affect how quickly we can deal with cases. We appreciate your understanding and patience during this time.

### **9. Updates**

If the need arises, we will continue to adjust the way we operate to ensure compliance with the advice of Territory and Commonwealth government.

We will provide updates if circumstances at the Tribunal change.

### **10. Contact us**

If you have any questions, please contact us by email at [tribunal@act.gov.au](mailto:tribunal@act.gov.au) or by phone on (02) 6207 1740.

Kristy Soper  
ACAT Registrar  
23 March 2020