

## The Family Court at Bristol

### Public Law Proceedings

*HHJ Wildblood's guidance dated 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 has been superseded by national guidance, but the following still applies. This document was prepared by Mark Cooper (Secretary, West Midlands FLBA) based on information provided by Sarah Pope (Albion Chambers) on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020.*

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In a bid to ease some of the pressure on the staff at court, judges, lawyers and local authorities, the following rules will apply to the provision of bundles in public law family hearings where there is not to be oral evidence:

1. The documents referred to below must be sent by email to all of the parties, the court and also directly to the judge. 'Send' is used to mean file and serve. Paper documents must not be sent.
2. The Local Authority may send an up to date digital bundle where it exists. However, it must not be assumed that the judge will have read it prior to the hearing (e.g. CMH or IRH) and the sending of full bundles prior to such hearings is discouraged save where to do so is necessary for the just disposal of the hearing. Any such bundle must be sent at least 48 working hours prior to the hearing.
3. In addition to/or in place of a digital bundle, the Local Authority must send a good and full case summary. It must include an essential reading list if a digital bundle has been provided. The reading list must only refer to documents that, exceptionally, cannot be adequately summarised in the case summary. This must also be sent at least 48 working hours prior to the listed hearing.
4. The other parties, including the Children's Guardian, must send position statements. These must be sent at least 24 working hours prior to the hearing.
5. In the absence of a digital bundle, the parties may send any genuinely essential documents that, exceptionally, cannot be adequately summarised in the case summary or position statements. These must be sent with the case summary or position statements.

The above provisions will apply until further guidance is issued.