



HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Pre-Recorded Evidence (PRE) Portal – Counsel & Advocates FAQs

- **How do I register for the PRE Portal?**

Advocates should contact the Courts and Tribunals Service Centre (CTSC) by email at contactcrime@justice.gov.uk to get access to the portal. You will need to provide the following information:

- first name
- last name
- professional email address
- company or chambers name

Once added, you will receive an email to complete registration. This will be sent to the email you have provided.

You must complete this part of the registration in order to gain access to the portal.

- **When should I sign up?**

You should sign up as soon as possible to ensure you are able to request edits and view recordings.

- **How do I log on to the PRE Portal?**

The PRE Portal can be accessed via the following link: <https://portal.pre-recorded-evidence.justice.gov.uk/>.

- **Who do I contact for assistance with the PRE Portal?**

Advocates should contact the CTSC for support. The number is 0300 323 0194 and the email address is contactcrime@justice.gov.uk.

Local court staff are unable to assist with portal queries.

- **I have registered for this service but the log in site will not recognise my email or password, what should I do?**

If it your first attempting to log in on the new look portal, please go to 'sign up now' and follow the steps.

Otherwise, please attempt to change your password via the 'Forgotten Password' function.

If this doesn't work, you should contact the CTSC for support.

- **Is out of hours support provided?**

Yes, support is provided by the CTSC. The hours of support are:

- Monday to Friday – 8:30am to 6pm
- Saturday – 8am to 2pm

The number is 0300 323 0194 and the email address is contactcrime@justice.gov.uk.

- **How will I receive updates?**

Updates about PRE will be sent to you via the Bar Council and Criminal Bar Association. You may also be contacted by your local court.

- **How are exhibits, such as CCTV, shown to the witness to ensure I can see their reaction?**

These will be shown in the same way via the Evidence Presentation System (EPS) in the court room to the witness via the Cloud Video Platform (CVP) link.

- **How will I know if the trial I am working on is using PRE?**

Staff at the court will let you know which system is being used for the trial.

- **Can the recording be shared between advocates?**

No, the recording is shared by court staff directly to an advocate. It cannot be shared by an advocate directly to another advocate.

- **How do I suggest edits to recorded evidence?**

An edit request form will need to be completed and sent to the court for processing in the usual way.

- **How long does the editing take?**

Once approved, editing can take up to 10 working days.

- **How is this editing done?**

Editing of recordings is done by HMCTS upon receipt of an approved edit request from the court. Once an edit is complete, you will receive an email notification. The edited and original version remain on the portal.

- **How can I request a transcript of the recording, in the event of the audio being of a poor quality?**

Transcripts can be requested in the usual way from the court via Digital Audio Recording Transcript and Storage (DARTS). The video and audio on the PRE system is usually of a good quality.

- **Should I take verbatim notes of the evidence?**

This is personal preference. However, please note any loud typing can impact the quality of recordings and should be kept to a minimum.

- **What are the timescales for booking requests on PRE?**

Bookings for recordings can be made on the same day. There is no longer a need to give 24 hours' notice.

- **Will the playback be via the court system or via the advocate's laptop?**

It is best practice for the court clerk to play back the evidence using the court equipment. This is subject to local judicial discretion.

- **What are the timescales for playbacks?**

Playbacks can be accessed instantly. Bookings and codes are no longer required for playbacks.

- **Is it possible to 'screen the screen' whilst recording?**

Yes, it is possible to screen the screen during the recording session and to screen the screen for the duration of the playback of the evidence as long as the court already has this facility.

- **Is it possible to record from remote locations, such as courts local to the witness or referral centres?**

Yes, it is possible for a witness to attend a local court or referral centre for the recording. Judicial approval will be required in the usual way.

- **How are interpreters included?**

The interpreter would sit next to the witness in the witness suite for the duration of the recording.

- **How are British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters included?**

The BSL interpreter would sit next to the witness in the witness suite for the duration of the recording.

- **What benefits does the new technology provide?**

- The court is not limited to book 24 hours in advance. If a booking requires amending or changing at short notice, this could be done.

- You will receive an email notification that a recording has been shared with you, and when a case has been or is scheduled to be closed.
 - You can view the original and edited versions of recordings.
 - You have dedicated support from the CTSC.
 - No codes are required for viewing recordings.
 - Streamlined editing process.
- **Will the recording always be done the court side as the police will not have access to PRE?**

The recording will always be done by HMCTS staff.

- **Will the editing form and the email address for every court available to us all?**

Yes, the editing form will be made available alongside the courts inbox for editing forms. The court editing form inbox will typically use the following naming convention: PRE.Edits.[CourtnamCC]@justice.gov.uk. For example, Durham Crown Court uses PRE.Edits.DurhamCC@justice.gov.uk.

- **Why is an email code used instead of Microsoft authenticator code?**

This is due to the way the portal has been developed and is typically the best way of using two factor authentication.

- **Are recording facilities going to be improved in the future, as people typing on keyboards has affected the quality of the audio recordings in the past?**

All users within the courtroom are asking to keep loud typing and other noises to a minimum whilst the recording is taking place. This is to ensure the best quality evidence is captured.

- **Does the system permit a test recording to check for audio issues to be recorded and accessed immediately in court?**

Yes, a test recording can be made before cross examination begins. Best practice is that this is done before each recording.

- **Can I download the recording to a PC or laptop, for example, to show a client currently in custody?**

No, recordings made will not be able to be downloaded locally to a device. This is to ensure the security of a recording and to comply with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). You will need to be connected to a network to access a recording.

- **Can a tablet be used to view recorded evidence?**

It is preferred to use a desktop or a laptop to view the recorded evidence.

- **Does the new system impact the directions I seek?**

No, the system does not impact how a section 28 recording is conducted or how a case is managed. It is a more user-friendly system for all users.

We do ask that extra listing time be allocated where possible to allow the clerk to complete a test recording immediately before a witness arrives. It is recommended that a section 28 recording is given half a day to enable to clerks to do their checks and accommodate vulnerable witnesses needing extra breaks etc., however listing remains a judicial function.