

Alterations to our services – tribunals and hearings

Tribunals

When contacting us for Tribunals services, please use the forms@ipo.gov.uk email address to file all forms for which there is no online process. Please use the tribunalsection@ipo.gov.uk email address to file all evidence.

Oppositions

The filing of a TM7A only extends the period for filing an opposition to 3 months from the publication date of the mark you are considering opposing.

This means that in some cases, despite filing the TM7A, the TM7 will also be due on the first day that is not interrupted. For applications published on or before 24 April 2020 the TM7A will have no effect and the Form TM7 must be filed.

For more specific guidance please see check your publication date against the effect of the TM7A as follows (these take into account weekends and a bank holiday):

Publication date	Opposition deadline	Extendible by filing TM7A?
24 April 2020 or before	24 June 2020	No. TM7 needs to be filed on or before 30 July. Yes. NB: TM7A must be filed no later than 30 July. Extends opposition deadline (TM7) to 1 August.
1 May 2020	1 July 2020	Yes. NB: Must be filed no later than 30 July. Extends opposition deadline (TM7) to 8 August.
8 May 2020	8 July 2020	Yes. NB: Must be filed no later than 30 July. Extends opposition deadline (TM7) to 15 August.
15 May 2020	15 July 2020	Yes. NB: Must be filed no later than 30 July. Extends opposition deadline (TM7) to 22 August.
22 May 2020	22 July 2020	Yes. NB: Must be filed no later than 30 July. Extends opposition deadline (TM7) to 22 August.

Publication date	Opposition deadline	Extendible by filing TM7A?
29 May 2020	29 July 2020	Yes. NB: Must be filed no later than 30 July. Extends opposition deadline (TM7) to 29 August 2020.

Defences (Form TM8)

The TM8 deadline cannot be extended (unless parties mutually agree to enter a cooling-off period and file Form TM9c, which must be filed by 30 July). We strongly recommend that parties meet the existing deadline.

Deadlines and Extensions of time

We are now working to our usual deadlines. For parties who are currently involved in proceedings with the tribunal, they should adhere to the timetable advised. Further correspondence will be issued when they get to the next evidential round.

Extensions of time should be filed in the normal manner (Form TM9 and accompanying reasons). We can consider appeals to the Appointed Person and appeals to the Court must be made directly to the Court.

Hearings service

Whilst we have limited access to our sites, we are not able to hold hearings in person. This will be kept under review. In the meantime, we will continue to operate hearings via telephone, Skype or other virtual methods.

We have contacted parties if their current hearing arrangements need to change. Some hearings, such as cross-examination, may not be suitable for telephone, Skype or other virtual methods and may need to be postponed.

Company Names Tribunal

When contacting us for the Company Names Tribunal's services, please use the forms@ipo.gov.uk email address to file all forms. There is no online process. Please use the cna@ipo.gov.uk email address to file all correspondence and all evidence. This will ensure that we have an electronic record of your filing and that it will be processed as soon as possible.

Please note that the tribunal is located at the Intellectual Property Office and its sites are currently closed. The tribunal is now operational, though parties should expect some delays. Forms will be processed when tribunal staff are able to access normal office processes.

We are able to accept electronic signatures on forms and other documents. Any new deadlines set will be extended; for example, to file a defence, to file evidence, to change a company name and to appeal the decision of the adjudicators. The setting of deadlines will be kept under review during the

coming weeks.

We will continue to update this page with any changes to services, as well as providing more details as they develop.

Alterations to services – trade marks and designs



Applications for new trade marks and designs

For new applications you should use our online systems. Since the outbreak of Covid-19 we have received an unprecedented increase in the number of trade mark filings. It is currently taking us longer to examine new applications than normal, with examination reports now being issued between 20-30 working days after filing. This has led to a large increase in calls to our Information Centre. To help us manage waiting times please do not call to chase examination reports unless 30 working days have passed since the application was submitted.

Time periods for reply

We have now reverted to 2 month time periods to respond to examination reports. This will apply to reports issued from 31 July 2020 onwards. We will be flexible when it comes to allowing extensions if Covid-19 has caused you difficulties. There is no [fee](#) for requesting more time.

Replying to us

Customers responding to trade mark and design examination and hearing reports, and filing evidence, should use the reply button in the examination report or email address provided.

Publishing in the trade marks journal

All accepted trade marks are now being published for opposition purposes. Even those for which we need to notify owners of any UK earlier marks (and international marks with UK designation) by post. We will continue to send notifications by email if we have an email address recorded on our database. Please check junk folders for emails which may end up there.

International designations and applications

We continue to receive and process International registrations designating the UK. We will continue to communicate by email if we are able to locate an email address for the holder. If we cannot, we will post correspondence.

Applications for professional representation

Currently we can only receive electronic applications for professional representation before the EUIPO. We are also processing applications on a monthly 'block' basis, rather than individually.

Please email applications for professional representation to paperformcontingency@ipo.gov.uk. Please use the subject line 'Professional Representation before EUIPO'.

Further guidance is available on our dedicated pages for protecting your [trade mark](#) or [design abroad](#).

We will continue to update this page with any changes to services, as well as providing more details as they develop.

Published 27 March 2020

Last updated 7 September 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 7 September 2020

Deleted information on registration of the backlog by end of August as this is now complete.

2. 17 August 2020

Extra information added about the length of time taking to examine TM applications currently

3. 30 July 2020

Updated because of the end of interrupted days

4. 15 July 2020

Update on the situation with posting and adding in information on process for registering trade marks at the end of interrupted days

5. 26 June 2020

Additional paragraph included – Applications for professional representation.

6. 4 June 2020

Edited sections on registration, International designations and publishing in the trade mark journal to reflect the latest position – specifically on the limited ability to print and post.

7. 26 May 2020

We have updated our information on filing relating to interrupted days.

8. 4 May 2020

Updated information on time periods for reply, replying to us, publishing in the trade marks journal, registration and certificates, and international designs and applications.

9. 9 April 2020

Information on alterations to services – trade marks and designs updated.

10. 27 March 2020

First published.

Inaccurate tax returns lands takeaway boss with ban

Zhipeng Cao (49), from Leigh-On-Sea, Essex, was appointed as the sole registered director at the same time Good Food Station Gate Limited was incorporated in January 2014.

The company traded as Good Food – a Chinese takeaway on Station Gate in Laindon, Basildon – but began to experience difficulties and in April 2019, entered into insolvency proceedings.

This brought the company to the attention of the Insolvency Service, who investigated the conduct of Zhipeng Cao and how his actions contributed to the collapse of the company.

Investigators uncovered that between January 2014 and April 2018, Zhipeng Cao caused Good Food Station Gate to submit inaccurate tax returns. The company

failed to declare a true reflection of sales and under-declared corporation tax.

On 6 March 2020, the Secretary of State accepted a disqualification undertaking from Zhipeng Cao after he did not dispute that he failed to ensure Good Food Station Gate Limited submitted accurate tax returns, resulting in under declared tax liabilities totalling just over £650,000.

Effective from 27 March 2020, Zhipeng Cao is banned for 6 years from acting as a director or directly or indirectly becoming involved, without the permission of the court, in the promotion, formation or management of a company.

Lawrence Zussman, Deputy Head of Insolvent Investigations for the Insolvency Service, said:

As the registered director, Zhipeng Cao had total responsibility for ensuring Good Food Station Gate paid the right tax but he failed to do so throughout the life of the company.

Zhipeng Cao failed to take his responsibilities as a director seriously and his six-year ban will remove him from the business environment, helping protect his creditors from further losses.

Zhipeng Cao is from Leigh-On-Sea, Essex and his date of birth is December 1970.

Good Food Station Gate Limited (Company Reg no. 08838443).

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings. Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

[Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is available.](#)

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions](#)

**British High Commission, Ottawa: COVID-19
Frequently Asked Questions**

Updated: 26 March 2020

In this document you will find answers to the most frequently asked questions from British Nationals who are travelling, working, studying or temporarily living in Canada and abroad.

Frequently Asked Questions – British Nationals Abroad

I'm a British National currently based in Canada, should I return to the UK?

We strongly recommend if you live in the UK and are travelling abroad, whether working or on holiday, you should return where and while there are still commercial routes available as you may experience greater difficulties getting back in the coming weeks.

I'm in Canada on a work or study visa. Does this apply to me?

We strongly recommend that all British tourists and short-stay travellers currently abroad should return to the UK now, where and while there are still commercial routes available. International travel is becoming more difficult with the closure of land borders and further restrictions, such as on freedom of movement, are being introduced daily. If you decide to stay, there may not be options in the future to return, given the unprecedented conditions that we face.

If airlines cancel flights home, will I be repatriated?

We are working with airlines to ensure as many people as possible can get commercial flights home and welcome the efforts they are making. We only organise government repatriations in exceptional circumstances.

I require financial assistance to get back to the UK, can you help?

The FCO provides information on what to do and who to contact if you require [financial assistance abroad](#).

I'm looking to head back to the UK. Can you confirm if my flight will go ahead?

Be prepared that your plans may need to change at short notice. We encourage you to work directly with your travel operator to find the best flight options back to the UK. Please refer to our [Travel Advice](#) for the latest updates.

I'm presenting symptoms of COVID-19, will I be allowed to

return to the UK?

If you develop coronavirus symptoms overseas, you should seek medical assistance and follow the advice of the local authorities.

Can I transit to the UK via Canada?

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to unprecedented international border closures and other restrictions. All countries may restrict travel without notice. For this reason, travellers who are seeking to transit through Canada should check [Transport Canada advice](#) for the most up-to-date information. While it is currently possible to transit through Canada, restrictions do apply. We are urgently seeking clarity from the Canadian authorities on these restrictions and will update our [Travel Advice](#) when we receive this information.

Frequently Asked Questions – British Nationals in Canada

What airlines are available for my return to the UK?

If you are travelling in Canada you should contact your travel operator now.

Currently, Air Canada, British Airways and Air Transat are offering limited services to the UK, though they have suspended some routes. WestJet are no longer flying to the UK. Porter Airlines have suspended all flights.

To note, only the following airports are operating international flights: Toronto Pearson (YYZ); Montreal Pierre Elliott Trudeau (YUL); Calgary International Airport (YYC); and Vancouver International Airport (YVR).

You can find contact details for these airlines on our [Website](#) and [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) pages.

For information on transiting through Canada, please see [Transport Canada advice](#).

I can't get in touch with my airline, please help.

Due to the high volume of calls, airlines are experiencing longer than normal wait times. For complaints in general to any airline, please contact the [Canadian Transportation Agency \(CTA\)](#).

I'm a British National in Canada, should I follow the health advice of the NHS or the Canadian government?

If you are abroad, you must follow the advice of local authorities. You must be ready to comply with local isolation, testing or quarantine requirements, and will need to rely on the local health system. If you're in Canada, please refer to:

Follow guidance of local authorities – this may differ in cities and provinces, but see federal guidance for overview.

Frequently Asked Questions – Visas & Immigration

I'm currently a British National studying in Canada on a student visa. If I return to the UK, will I be able to come back to Canada?

For questions related to Canadian visas and immigration, please contact [Transport Canada](#) and [Immigration Canada](#). Please note that practical options for return to Canada will be limited.

I'm the spouse of a Canadian and need to know if I'll be able to enter Canada's borders?

For questions related to Canadian immigration, please contact [Transport Canada](#) and/or [Immigration Canada](#) and your nearest Canadian High Commission, Embassy or Consulate.

As Canada has closed their borders, am I on the exemption list to enter Canada?

The Canadian authorities are now barring entry to Canada to most foreign nationals, including UK Nationals. This exclusion will not apply to Canadian citizens and permanent residents or their immediate families, temporary foreign workers, some international students and approved permanent residents who haven't yet landed in Canada. To see if you meet the criteria for travel exemptions for entry into Canada, or to find out about visa extensions, please see [Immigration Canada](#).

Is it still possible to apply for a UK visa during COVID-19?

Visa customers outside of the UK who are affected by travel restrictions associated with coronavirus should visit the [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): advice for UK visa applicants and temporary UK residents GOV.UK page for the latest information and guidance](#).

[Letter from the Environment Secretary to the food and drink industry](#)

To those working hard to feed the nation,

In the face of what is perhaps the greatest health challenge this country has faced in our lifetime, I want to pay tribute to all those who are working

around the clock to keep the nation fed – in our fields, processing plants, factories, wholesalers, stores and takeaways and all of those moving goods around the country and to our homes.

The last three weeks have been stressful and difficult for everyone working to feed the country and provide them with other essential items. Food retailers have faced an unprecedented increase in demand and those working in food production and distribution have had to work harder than ever to ensure that food and drink are kept on the shelves.

The Government has recently taken some unprecedented steps to close cinemas, leisure centres and other public venues and to instruct people to stay at home, protect our NHS and save lives.

However, there are many key workers that are crucial to the resilience of our country. Our NHS staff will be working harder than ever in the weeks ahead. Those of you working to provide the nation with food and other essentials are also delivering an absolutely vital service.

I am in regular dialogue with the food and drink industry and the Government has offered guidance to employers to ensure that when you do your job, you can do so safely. The advice of Public Health England is that there is very little risk of the virus being spread on food or packaging.

Everyone working in the food and drink industry has rallied in an extraordinary way to respond to this unprecedented challenge. Having worked in the food industry myself, I am personally enormously proud and thankful for all the work that you have done in recent weeks, and will be asked to do in the weeks ahead. In many cases you are the hidden heroes, and the country is grateful for all that you have done.

Yours sincerely,

George Eustice