



Courts Act 2003

2003 CHAPTER 39

PART 1

MAINTAINING THE COURT SYSTEM

The general duty

1 The general duty

- (1) The Lord Chancellor is under a duty to ensure that there is an efficient and effective system to support the carrying on of the business of—
- (a) the [^{F1}Senior Courts]
 - [^{F2}(aa) the Court of Protection,]
 - (b) [^{F3} the county court],
 - [^{F4}(ba) the family court, and]
 - (c) magistrates' courts,
- and that appropriate services are provided for those courts.
- (2) In this Part—
- (a) “the [^{F1}Senior Courts]” includes the district probate registries, and
 - (b) “magistrates' court” includes a committee of justices.
- (3) In this Part references to the Lord Chancellor’s general duty in relation to the courts are to his duty under this section.
- (4) The Lord Chancellor must, within 18 months of the coming into force of this section, and afterwards annually, prepare and lay before both Houses of Parliament a report as to the way in which he has discharged his general duty in relation to the courts.

Textual Amendments

- F1** Words in s. 1 substituted (1.10.2009) by [Constitutional Reform Act 2005](#) (c. 4), ss. 59, 148, [Sch. 11 para. 4](#); {S.I. 2009/1604, art. 2(d)}

Changes to legislation: Courts Act 2003, Section 1 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 10 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

- F2** S. 1(1)(aa) inserted (1.10.2007) by Mental Capacity Act 2005 (c. 9), ss. 67(1), 68(1)-(3), **Sch. 6 para. 47(2)** (with ss. 27, 28, 29, 62); S.I. 2007/1897, **art. 2(d)**
- F3** Words in s. 1(1)(b) substituted (22.4.2014) by Crime and Courts Act 2013 (c. 22), s. 61(3), **Sch. 9 para. 40(a)**; S.I. 2014/954, art. 2(c) (with art. 3) (with transitional provisions and savings in S.I. 2014/956, arts. 3-11)
- F4** S. 1(1)(ba) substituted for word in s. 1(1)(b) (22.4.2014) by Crime and Courts Act 2013 (c. 22), s. 61(3), **Sch. 10 para. 84**; S.I. 2014/954, art. 2(d) (with art. 3) (with transitional provisions and savings in S.I. 2014/956, arts. 3-11)

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 75(6) inserted by [2022 c. 35 Sch. 4 para. 3\(2\)](#)
- s. 76(2B) inserted by [2010 c. 26 Sch. 3 para. 14](#) (This amendment not applied to [legislation.gov.uk](#). Sch. 3 Pt. 2 repealed (4.9.2013) without ever being in force by [2013 c. 22](#), s. 17(4) ; S.I. 2013/2200 art. 2(a))
- s. 81(6) inserted by [2022 c. 35 Sch. 4 para. 3\(3\)](#)
- s. 85EA(5) words substituted by [2022 c. 32 Sch. 11 para. 29](#)
- Sch. 5 para. 13(1)(ca) inserted by [2013 c. 22 s. 26\(3\)](#)

Commencement Orders yet to be applied to the Courts Act 2003

Commencement Orders bringing provisions within this Act into force:

- [S.I. 2005/547 art. 2](#) commences ([2003 c. 39](#))