

Record courts backlog 'will take time' to resolve

Published on 24 November 2021

The mounting backlog in the courts is being addressed, says Dominic Raab

Brief 3 mins read

It could be another year before the court backlog returns to pre-pandemic levels, Justice Secretary Dominic Raab has warned.

New rules and limitations were introduced to the courts during the pandemic, such as the suspension of jury trials due to social distancing rules. This has led to an increased backlog in the criminal justice system.

September statistics show a record 60,692 outstanding cases in crown courts, while there were 364,122 outstanding cases in the magistrates' courts at the end of June.

Delayed cases are costly and have negative implications.

Some trials are being delayed until 2023, leaving victims, witnesses and defendants disillusioned as they wait to access justice.

We have been highlighting the problems plaguing the justice system since long before the pandemic and now is the time for action before it's too late.

Stephanie Boyce, President, Law Society of England and Wales

Raab addressed the mounting backlog at a fringe event at the Conservative Party Conference in October, saying: 'it will take some time. It will take a good six months to a year to get back to the pre-pandemic stage.'

Raab also listed measures that the government is considering to tackle the backlog. These include creating super courts in Manchester and Loughborough and using technology to 'drive cases forward'.

[Read more on the backlog from the Law Society](#)

Download our latest edition of Brief

This article was published in the November 2021 edition of Brief, which brings you updates in police law, operational policing practice and criminal justice, produced by the College of Policing's legal services department.

- Share your ideas and feedback with the Brief team: brief@college.pnn.police.uk

• [College of Policing Brief: November 2021 \(pdf\) 711.13 KB](#)

COVID-19

Download our previous editions covering the latest updates in the policing and criminal justice field.

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

[College of Policing Brief: January/February 2020 \(pdf\) 380.5 KB](#)

[College of Policing Brief: June/July 2020 \(pdf\) 604.13 KB](#)

[College of Policing Brief: March/April 2020 \(pdf\) 466.16 KB](#)

[College of Policing Brief: November/December 2020 \(pdf\) 617.67 KB](#)

[College of Policing Brief: August/October 2020 \(pdf\) 447.49 KB](#)

[College of Policing Brief: November/December 2019 \(pdf\) 951.13 KB](#)

[College of Policing Brief: October/November 2019 \(pdf\) 490.73 KB](#)