Information on the access to the offices and on the participation in hearings and oral proceedings during the coronavirus pandemic

Protecting the health of its staff and the visitors to its offices is very important to the DPMA. Accordingly, the framework conditions for the participation in hearings and oral proceedings during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic have been adjusted to the requirements of infection prevention and control. Consequently, it may be necessary to postpone the date of the hearing or oral proceedings, even at short notice, if the pandemic situation, brought about by COVID-19, changes.

To ensure the effective implementation of infection prevention and control measures, we ask all parties to proceedings and visitors to hearings and oral proceedings for their cooperation.

Access to the offices and to hearings

1. All parties to proceedings and visitors are required to complete a form and disclose personal information for risk assessment. The information disclosed will be checked before you are granted access (the form can be downloaded from the DPMA’s website at www.dpma.de/english/services/forms/other_forms). Before your visit, please refer to the DPMA’s website (www.dpma.de/english/services/forms/other_forms) for information on the current prevention measures (e.g. requirement to wear a face covering over nose and mouth, general hygiene measures). It should be noted that the rules may change at short term depending on how the pandemic evolves.

2. Please notify the competent panel or the chairperson or the competent examination section of the number of persons who will participate in the proceedings or hearing at least three days before the scheduled date. The number of participants must be kept to the absolutely necessary minimum, since the capacity of the hearing rooms is substantially reduced for reasons of infection prevention and control. Hearings and oral proceedings can be held only if the number of participants does not exceed the respective room capacity.

3. Please understand that, because of the substantially reduced capacity, hearings start as early as possible, so it is not possible to arrange dates as flexibly as usual. Your cooperation, in particular a fast submission of legal briefs and a very good preparation, helps ensure the smooth running of the hearing or oral proceedings.

4. The hearing rooms of the DPMA will be prepared to suit the pandemic-related requirements. The parties to proceedings and the panel or the chairperson are each at individual tables. If seats for the audience are provided, their number has been reduced. We frequently let fresh air into all hearing rooms.
5. For lack of a publicly accessible cafeteria, canteen or similar services, you can spend short breaks in the foyer (or other rooms, if any, provided for this purpose) in the relevant offices. For lack of appropriate areas, you must not spend longer breaks, in particular lunch breaks, in the offices of the DPMA.

The COVID-19 pandemic poses special challenges to all of us and demands caution and flexibility in all areas of life, including proceedings before the DPMA.

Thank you for helping us curb the pandemic and protect your and our health.