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06/10/23

## LAPG Member Update

Issue 27 of 2023

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# 2023 Conference

9TH NOVEMBER AT UCL (BENTHAM HOUSE) LONDON

The LAPG Annual Conference will be held in person on 9<sup>th</sup> November at University College London – details on [LAPG's website](#).

[Get your tickets here](#)

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## Civil Legal Aid News

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### [Civil legal aid contract 2024 tender \(including HLPAS\) - Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) and amendment notices published](#)

The LAA has now published the FAQs document on their website [which you can access here](#). It is a lengthy document and runs to 27 pages, but certainly worth careful consideration before submitting your tender.

Please note that there have now been three amendment notices published on the MoJ website to the procurement documentation which you can also access in the above link. Please carefully check the information in all three notices in case it relates to your bid. In particular, the first amendment notice dated 21 September relates to public law and requires re-submission of your bid as follows:

#### **Republishing of the Public Law ITT in the eTendering system**

The Public Law ITT is known as 'ITT 895' in the eTendering system. Amending the Public Law ITT has caused it to have been republished in the eTendering portal.

Applicants will not be affected if they have not



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submitted a response to the Public Law ITT.

However, those Applicants that have already submitted a response to the Public Law ITT must respond again to Question A.2.i and re-submit their Public Law ITT Response prior to the deadline of 17:00 on 17 October 2023.

### **Consequence of Applicant that has already submitted failing to re-submit Public Law ITT Response by the Tender Deadline**

Any Response to the Public Law ITT which has been made before the publication of this notice will not constitute a Public Law ITT Response for the purposes of this procurement process.

This means that if an Applicant that has already submitted a Response to the Public Law ITT and does not re-submit that response the LAA will not have received a valid Response to the Public Law ITT.

Should these circumstances arise, the Applicant will, therefore, be unsuccessful in their tender to deliver contract work in the Public Law Category of Law in this procurement process.

Tenders must be submitted using the LAA's eTendering system and must be submitted by 17:00 on 17 October 2023.

**Please ensure that you keep checking the website for any further amendment notices in case you need to take further action before the deadline.**

**Please note** that the deadline for submitting verification information for all individual bids is **23:59 on 15 March 2024**. However there is a different verification deadline for **HLPAS services** and bids that include **IRC work** of **23:59 on 3 June 2024**. Please contact the LAA as soon as possible if you plan to bid but anticipate problems with obtaining all the information you will need for verification purposes.

All of the relevant information including guidance documents about tendering, contract documentation and the link to the LAA's eTendering system can be found in [the LAA's news story here](#).

***Please note, if your organisation wants to carry out civil legal aid work when the current contract ends on 31 August 2024, you must submit a tender even if you hold an existing 2018 contract. Accepting a***

*recent offer from the LAA to extend your 2018 contract to 31 August 2024 does not constitute a bid for the 2024 contract and you must submit a new tender through the current tender process.*

### Review of Civil Legal Aid (RoCLA) – provider survey

PA Consulting (an independent third-party contracted by the MoJ) is undertaking research to assist the MOJ to generate an evidence base for the [MoJ's Review of Civil Legal Aid](#). All legal aid providers are invited to take part in an online survey, which explores civil legal aid providers' experiences of the sector. The responses will help shape civil legal aid policy development.

All survey responses will be anonymous and confidential. On average, the survey takes 20-30 minutes to complete but may take longer depending on the level of detail you provide.

[Please click here](#) to access the survey and more information. It closes on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023. Please note that this is an entirely separate exercise to the civil contract tender. LAPG and other groups were given only a limited opportunity to feed into the structure and purpose of the survey. We are concerned that the MOJ did not take on board much of the feedback we provided and have doubts therefore about whether it will capture the information required to properly analyse, understand and support the legal aid provider base. If you undertake the survey and have concerns (for example about whether the questions enable you to provide useful information, or that important issues are not covered by the survey) [please contact us](#) so that we can raise this with the MOJ's RoCLA team.

### Government response to the consultation on legal aid fees in relation to the Illegal Migration Act

The Government has now published its response to the consultation on legal aid fees in relation to work under the Illegal Migration Act. [You can read their detailed response here](#). In summary, the following measures will be taken forward:

- for IMA Work (as defined in paragraph 14 of the response), hourly rates will be 15% higher than existing hourly rates;
- IMA fees will be reviewed within two years of implementation;

- the Government will pursue the development of proposals to help address the financial burden of accrediting caseworkers at senior caseworker level to conduct immigration and asylum legal aid work. The Government will communicate further with immigration legal aid providers on specific steps taken later this year;
- the Government will pay travel time for providers when they travel to Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs) for Detention Duty Advice Scheme (DDAS) surgeries (which will be used for detained persons subject to the IMA); and
- the Government will allow advice to be provided remotely in DDAS surgeries, at the discretion of providers and subject to their professional judgment and their obligations towards vulnerable persons.

Following the announcement, the LAA has commenced a consultation on amending the 2018 Standard Civil Contract to implement IMA changes. This consultation process also seeks to introduce remote supervision in line with the requirements of the 2022 Standard Crime Contract and the 2024 Standard Civil Contract.

### **High Costs cases in family law**

The LAA has published information on the Care Case Fee Scheme (CCFS), KC/2 Counsel Events, and detailed case plans to use when a legal-aid-funded family case becomes high cost - [more information here](#).

### **Upcoming LAA training webinars**

#### **Two counsel case planning tutorial for high cost family work**

Book an online group tutorial with the LAA for Wednesday 18 October and take an in-depth walk-through of the two counsel case planning process.

Each tutorial lasts for one hour and you will be able to discuss the processes with case managers in real time. However, tutorials cannot offer advice on specific cases. After registering you will receive a Microsoft Teams invite.

[Register for training here >>](#)

#### **Advice on faster payments for mental health work submissions**

Hints and tips for successfully submitting claims for mental health work are available through this LAA webinar on Thursday 19 October, 4pm to 5.15pm. Both certificated and controlled work will be covered.

A LAA panel will answer questions on the topics covered although they will not be able to deal with case specific enquiries.

[Register for webinar here>>](#)

### **Remember to use the LAA online portal for regular system updates**

The LAA want to remind providers to keep an eye on their online portal to stay updated about the systems you use to work with them. There is a 'service status' feature for you to see how well the different applications are working.

They also provide a message box with the latest news about issues or outages. This is regularly checked and updated.

[LAA online portal >>](#)

### **LAA Online training now available for civil work submissions**

Online LAA training modules are now available for providers working in the Client and Cost Management System (CCMS). Dates are available through to the end of October.

Training is wide-ranging and covers areas such as emergency applications, means and merits assessments, high cost cases, amending applications and billing.

[Sign up for a module here>>](#)

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## **Criminal Legal Aid News**

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### **Claim the Evidence Provision Fee (EPF)**

Updated guidance is available on claiming 'evidence provision fees' through the 'Claim for Crown Court Defence' system. Payments can be claimed when:



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- providers help clients respond to income and capital evidence requests from the National Criminal Applications Team
- all evidence has been received by the LAA

[News story is here](#)

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## LAPG News & Events

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### LAPG Annual Conference 9 November 2023 at University College London.



The LAPG Conference details are now online and early bird booking is available. We shall be regularly updating the details over the next few weeks. The conference will be a great opportunity to catch up with what is going on in the legal aid world. Hear about the Review of Civil Legal Aid, pick up tips in workshops (family, immigration, housing, crime, billing, costs, civil contracts, remote and hybrid working, the means test and more) and meet other practitioners.

The venue is not far from King's Cross/St Pancras and Euston and within a few stops of Paddington so we hope that it is manageable for members to attend for the day.

LAPG members pay just £70 + VAT to attend the conference, with significant discounts also in place for members of YLAL, Justice First Fellows and the SWSQF scheme. The workshops count as relevant training to be included on training records and considered annually when certifying competence (i.e. formerly counting as CPD).

[To find out more and to get your tickets click here](#)

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### PLP Annual Conference 13 October 2023 at Herbert Smith Freehills London



Public  
Law  
Project

PLP's annual conference is back for a day of cutting-edge analysis, insight and opinion from leading lawyers and legal thinkers, presented in partnership with **Blackstone Chambers** and **Herbert Smith Freehills**. 2023 is the **20th anniversary of the event**, and their

theme is **Power and the Law**.

[To find out more and get your tickets click here](#)

Please get in touch if you have any queries about the 2024 Standard Civil Contract tender process or anything that has arisen as a result of the LAA publishing the FAQ document.

And we look forward to seeing many of you at this year's Legal Aid Conference in London. It promises to be a fun and informative day (a combination you don't hear very often when discussing legal aid) and a long-overdue catch-up with friends and colleagues from across the sector. Many thanks to our sponsors Accesspoint Technologies and John M Hayes Partnership, and to UCL for being such brilliant hosts.

Take care one and all,

Chris Minnoch, CEO [@ChrisLAPG](#)

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Would you like to contribute to our Member Updates and share news and information with other members? If so, just email us and we can discuss how you can best contribute.

Thank you for being brave enough to be part of the LAPG community!

**LEGAL AID  
LAWYER  
OF THE YEAR AWARDS**





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