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18/09/24

LAPG Member Update

Issue 28 of 2024

Welcome to the latest edition of the LAPG Member Update. September has started with a bang, as reflected by this bumper addition of our Update. As always, please get in touch with any thoughts on the issues raised below, and let us know if you have any news, events or reflections that you want to share with other Members.

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- Apply for legal aid for anti-social behaviour injunction breaches
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Civil Legal Aid News

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Sector News and Events

- Book launch: Desistance and Children: Critical Reflections from Theory, Research and Practice

Criminal Legal Aid News

2025 Standard Crime Contract tender launch

On 17 September 2024 the LAA launched the procurement process for delivery of criminal legal aid services from 1 October 2025.

Full details of the procurement process and contract documentation can be found at:

[Crime Contract 2025 Tender - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/crime-contract-2025-tender)

The new 2025 Crime Contract is intended to run for a maximum term of 10 years. The LAA say that this approach is intended to give certainty for those delivering the services and allow long-term decisions to be taken. As with all existing contracts the 2025 Crime Contract will contain a six-month termination provision. Providers will continue to be required to give three months' notice of withdrawal.

The 2025 Contract will also allow new providers to apply for a contract at any point between the contract start date and the final year of the contract. Similarly, existing providers may expand their office and duty scheme network at any time during the life of the contract.

Organisations can apply at any point in the first 9 years of the contract but they must submit their tender by **22 October 2024** if they want their contract to start on 1 October 2025 and to join duty schemes from that day. Providers who submit their tender after this date but before 30 April 2025 will be able to commence the contract on 1



October 2025 but will be unable to join a duty rota until January 2026. Tenders received from 1 May 2025 will be opened from the month after receipt from July 2025 and, where successful, provider contracts will commence no later than three months after processing began.

The LAA announcement notes that:

“The 2025 Crime Contract also contains a series of key changes that seek to reduce administration and increase flexibility for organisations seeking to contract with the LAA, including:

- introducing more flexibility on office opening hours alongside relaxed requirements in Prison Law allowing providers to operate in line with local factors, including demand.*
- changing our supervisory requirements to offer providers greater flexibility in how they demonstrate the effectiveness of their supervisory measures. For instance, the current supervisor ratios will be replaced by guidance outlining key principles of good supervision. Supervisors will also be permitted to work for up to two providers.*
- adding simplicity by aligning the case involvement requirements for Duty Solicitors to mirror the requirements for Supervisors.*
- creating a shorter, simpler contract document which reduces duplication with professional obligations.”*

This announcement follows the recent 2025 Standard Crime Contract consultation process involving the statutory consultee bodies, LAPG, The Law Society and The Bar Council. We prepared our consultation response with assistance from crime and prison law specialists on our Advisory Committee, contributions from our wider membership and in collaboration with CLSA and LCCSA. Along with responding to the LAA's proposals, we pushed the LAA on other important issues for practitioners and clients. We are still going through the LAA's formal response to the representative bodies, and have asked them if we can share that with our members which we hope to do in due course. In the meantime, please take time to carefully consider the details in the new contract.

Members have already expressed to us that they are disgruntled that the LAA has commenced a tender process for new contracts without any

clarity from the Ministry of Justice on the outcome of the consultation on crime lower work or resolution of The Law Society's judicial review. If you have any thoughts on the new contract, or these wider policy issues, [please contact us](#).

Criminal legal aid: replacing eforms

The new service to receive legal aid applications, Apply for Criminal Legal Aid, has now replaced eForms CRM14 and CRM15 [and can be accessed here](#).

Apply for legal aid for anti-social behaviour injunction breaches

[Access guidance here](#) on the funding of breaches of civil anti-social behaviour injunctions, how to apply and how to get paid.

Crime processing dates

[Check timescales](#) for the LAA to process your work (e.g. prior authority application, graduated fee claims).

Civil Legal Aid News

Legal Aid Agency: #Help Us Say Yes Webinar: Immigration billing: Introduction & basics

The LAA recently published the details of an information session for providers who want to improve their understanding of how to report matters in the immigration category.

They say that this informative session will be of particular interest to providers who are new to the contract and/or reporting:

'The session will take place on Thu 10 October at 16:30.

Places are limited and allocated on a 'first come' basis. Bookings close 5pm, 9 October 2024.

The session will focus on the basics of a provider's monthly reporting of Immigration Controlled Work claims including:



Legal Aid
Agency

- Understanding the types of codes available
- How to report under different fee schemes
- How to reduce the risk of rejections or errors in their submission.

Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions on the topics covered.

Please note: LAA staff will be unable to answer case specific questions during the event.

All attendees receive a comprehensive slide pack prior to the webinar and a Q&A document after the webinar.

As spaces are limited; if an individual becomes unable to attend, please cancel your booking.

[#Help Us Say Yes Webinar: Immigration billing: Introduction & basics Tickets, Thu 10 Oct 2024 at 16:30 | Eventbrite](#)

Apply for legal aid for civil contempt cases

[Access guidance](#) on the funding of civil contempt cases, how to apply and how to get paid.

Immigration Providers South West Support Directory updated

[The LAA has published an updated list of providers](#) able to carry out legal aid immigration work in the South West of England.

Civil processing dates

[Check timescales](#) for LAA to process your work (for example, civil applications and bills).

Cross-Cutting News & Events

Simon Mullings – we'll miss you old friend

We were devastated by the news of the untimely passing of our great friend and colleague Simon 'Spike' Mullings. A tireless campaigner for access to justice, Simon was a fearless advocate for his clients and for both the justice system and all those practitioners seeking to improve lives and communities. Spike is simply irreplaceable and we owe him an enormous debt of gratitude for being



such a collaborative, insightful and supportive colleague over so many years.

Simon's family has set up a quite wonderful tribute to honour his life and his work and share the details of his funeral next week:

<https://simonmullings.muchloved.com/>

Please visit the tribute site and share your thoughts and memories of Simon and, if you can, donate to support [The Magpie Project in his honour](#), a charity dedicated to supporting vulnerable mothers and children under five who are facing difficult circumstances, such as temporary accommodation or homelessness

APPG on Access to Justice reconstitutes and hits the Party Conferences

September is looking jam-packed for LAPG's influencing team. The APPG on Access to Justice was reconstituted at the start of September with 26 members across the Lord and Commons and we are hosting justice events at each of the three main party conferences. We also held a very constructive and encouraging meeting on 18 September 2024 with recently appointed Minister with responsibility for both criminal and civil legal aid, Heidi Alexander MP.

We are delighted to be working with Lord Willy Bach, former Parliamentary under-Secretary in the Ministry of Justice and author of the Bach Commission, and with MP for Derby North and Chair of the Society of Labour Lawyers, Catherine Atkinson, who are the APPG's new co-chairs. Joining as vice-chairs of the Group are new Liberal Democrat MP Paul Kohler and Conservative MP Dr Neil Shastri-Hurst.

Other members of the Group are:

Lord Sandhurst
Lord Christopher Bellamy
Baroness Natalie Bennett
Lord Charlie Falconer
Baroness Helena Kennedy
Lord Colin Low
Lord Tom McNally
Lord Gerald Shamash
Kevin Bonavia MP
Bambos Charalambous MP
Linsey Farnsworth MP
Rupa Huq MP
Warinder Juss MP
Jake Richards MP

Lucy Rigby MP
Sarah Russell MP
Andy Slaughter MP
Rachel Taylor MP
Henry Tufnell MP
Karl Turner MP
Alberto Costa MP
Tony Vaughan MP



The team attended the Liberal Democrat conference in Brighton, and will be in Liverpool and Birmingham for the Labour and

Conservative conferences respectively. Events are:

Liberal Democrats – 15 September: hosted by the Society of Liberal Democrat Lawyers. Speakers included The Law Society, The Bar Council and LAPG and looked at what might be next for the justice system in the new Government.

Labour – 23 September (16.00-17.30) "The Justice Gap": newly appointed Minister for legal aid, Heidi Alexander MP will be chairing the event which will focus on Crime, Prisons, Violence against Women, Immigration and Housing policy. Speakers will be:

- Daniel Bonich, solicitor and chair of the CLSA
- Dr Laura Janes, solicitor and academic, London councillor, founder of Young Legal Aid Lawyers and committee member or various bodies including LAPG
- Deidre Cartwright, Public Affairs and Policy Manager, Surviving Economic Abuse
- Christian Weaver, Barrister, Garden Court North
- Madeline Kelleher, Immigration Solicitor, Southwark Law Centre, Migrants Organise

The event is being held within the secure zone, so you will need a Conference pass to attend. If you are planning on attending Labour conference this year, please do get in touch with Ro and her team on rohini.jana@lapg.co.uk.

Conservative – 30 September (13.00-14.30): Chaired by Lord Sandhurst and co-hosted with

Society of Conservative Lawyers, The Law Society and the Bar Council, the event has the broad title of 'Access to Justice.'

The APPG will also be hosting meetings over the coming months in Westminster around Prisons, Housing, MP casework and Immigration. [Do get in touch with Ro or sign up to the APPG's bulletin](#) if you would like further details about these events or any of our work. Visit the [APPG's website for updates](#) on membership of the Group and their ongoing work.

Research invitation for legal aid study - University of Sussex

University of Sussex is seeking participants for legal aid research study and have asked us to share the invitation below with our practitioner members. Can you help the university identify potential participants from your client group? The researchers want to talk to clients who have received legal aid, but also to those who have had to access alternative sources of advice because of the limited scope of legal aid. They have translation services available. This is the information that the university has developed for potential participants:

Are you receiving legal advice to challenge a housing eviction notice?

Is a legal service helping you to navigate a complex immigration issue?

Or have you had support to contest community care services for yourself or a loved one?

If you've had free legal advice funded by legal aid we want to hear from you!

Researchers at the University of Sussex are conducting a study on accessing and using legal advice funded by legal aid for issues such as housing, immigration, welfare benefits, and community care. Your perspectives are crucial in helping us understand the challenges people face and how to improve legal support services.

Participants will get a £10 shopping voucher for their time.

If you're interested in sharing your experiences and making a difference, please contact Hannah Selby

email: h.selby@sussex.ac.uk

Call or message: 07899 543 528

Your voice matters!

LAPG News & Events



LAPG Annual Dinner and Conference

We're getting very excited about welcoming friends and colleagues from across the country to our forthcoming Annual Dinner and Conference on Thursday the 7th and Friday the 8th of November. Many thanks to those of you who have already booked.

Full details about the conference can be found on our website here: <https://lapg.co.uk/conference/>

We have an excellent range of workshops to suit practitioners from across the scheme and our plenaries and speeches will inform, challenge and inspire. We're in active discussions with the Ministry of Justice about future legal aid policy and will use the conference as a way of both updating delegates about future government plans and enabling the Ministry to interact with you to gather your views.

Heidi Alexander MP, Minister with responsibility for both criminal and civil legal aid, has confirmed that she will provide a video address at the start of the conference and we are also



looking forward to hearing from Lord Bach, co-chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Access to Justice. Our second keynote will be delivered by Conor Gearty, founder member of Matrix Chambers and Professor of Human Rights Law at LSE Law School.

As always, we've kept ticket prices for the conference as low as possible to ensure that the event is accessible to the widest possible audience or practitioners, policy specialists and future practitioners. Many thanks to Herbert Smith Freehills for helping us to make that possible, and to our conference and dinner sponsors, John M Hayes.

We'll be releasing more details about our Annual Dinner shortly. Even if you can't make the conference join us for dinner and drinks and a chance to catch-up with friends and colleagues on Thursday, 7th of November at The Folly in central London. If you would like to make an advance booking for the Dinner, [please get in touch](#).

LAPG training courses

New Toolkit - Introduction to Managing Family and Civil Legal Aid Contracts

New to managing a legal aid contract? Legal aid contracts are complex and cumbersome. Managing your contract well can be the difference between success and failure.

We have developed a Toolkit that draws together key information to enable practices to understand their legal aid contract. Particularly useful for those new to delivering legal aid, it links to more detailed sources from the LAA, LAPG and others. Designed as a comprehensive resource for the people in your organisation responsible for day to day management of your legal aid contract.

The Toolkit has seven main headings:

- Some Key Changes Between the 2018 Civil Contract and the 2024 Civil Contract
- Contracts Overview
- Key Issues Under the Standard Civil Contract 2024
- Managing Casework
- Managing Billing
- Managing Quality & Compliance
- Sources of Support

The Community Board notifies subscribers of all official amendments/additions to the contract and supporting documents. Updates will be incorporated into the Toolkit, which will be kept under constant review. The Community Board is a peer network which enables subscribers to interact with others managing contracts.

Produced with contributions from well-regarded sector specialists Vicky Ling and Matthew Howgate and Hosted on our learning platform, Thinkifc, the Toolkit is an intuitive and easily navigable resource.

Subscriptions to this valuable resources are just £100 per annum for LAPG members.

[Subscribe here](#) or, if you have any questions, contact our Head of Learning and Development, [Andrea Shumaker here](#).

Supervision Courses

We have confirmed the dates for the remainder of our 2024 Supervision Courses. You can book your place on any of the training dates below:

3RD OCTOBER 2024

12TH NOVEMBER 2024

Designed for new LAA Supervisors or those wishing to refresh their supervisory skills, our course helps you meet a key component in securing and then effectively operating your legal aid contract and meeting the LAA's supervisor standards. We again welcome Matt Howgate and Vicky Ling as our tutors for this course. You will receive practical help filling out supervisor forms, learn how to conduct file reviews and how to keep up to date with LAA changes.

LAPG members receive a £40 discount on the course fee, bringing it down from £250 to £210 for the day. Book multiple delegates from your organisation and receive an additional 10% discount.

We have reformatted the course so that we are covering all of the same content across one day rather than two days. The content in this course is relevant for both crime and civil practitioners.

If you would like to know more about this course, or to reserve your place, contact [Andrea Shumaker](#).

Online Introduction to Civil Legal Aid Course

The Civil Legal Aid scheme is incredibly complex and the consequences of getting something wrong can be damaging to a client's case or financially damaging to the organisation doing the work – sometimes both. We have therefore developed the first module in a series which provides a general introduction to the civil legal aid scheme aimed at trainees, paralegals, junior lawyers and those that wish to refresh their knowledge having worked in the sector for some time.

We have moved this online module onto a new training platform, Thinkific! This new platform allows for growth and development of the course and a better overall experience for the user. The same information is covered and it is still entirely self-paced, you will still receive access to the course for 12 months.

We now offer this course in written and video versions! Once you are enrolled on the course you will have the option to read through the material yourself or watch a video! You can mix and match how you learn to complete the course in a way that best suits your learning style and time constraints. All the video and written content are available on the Thinkific platform and you will have full access to both versions.

If you would like to subscribe for just £99 please click [here](#). If you have any issues or require an invoice please email [Andrea Shumaker](#). We offer three discount codes, JFF, for Justice First Fellows, JFFO, for Just First Fellowship Host Organisation employees, and multiple-tickets, to be used when subscribing more than one participant on the course.

Lots to digest in our latest Update offering, so please do get in touch with your thoughts and reflections. As our eyes and ears on the ground we're always interested in hearing your views. And with a new government in place we'd love to know what you think should be the priorities for Labour to ensure we have a properly functioning legal aid scheme.

Take care one and all,

Chris Minnoch, CEO [@ChrisLAPG](#)

Follow LAPG on Twitter [@WeAreLAPG](#)
[#WeAreLegalAid](#)
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Subscribe to our courses

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!



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