



24/02/23

LAPG Member Update

Issue 5 of 2023

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Civil and Criminal Legal Aid News

Tender processes

Housing and Debt Contract Work – Oldham, Rochdale, Warrington & Halton

On 15 February 2023 the LAA opened a tender to deliver Housing and Debt Contract Work in 3 procurement areas, listed below:

- Oldham
- Rochdale
- Warrington & Halton

The Housing and Debt Contracts will be offered from 1 April 2023. The LAA is offering an unlimited number of contracts for housing and debt services in these three procurement areas.

[Further information is available here.](#)

The Information for Applicants (IFA) [can be found here.](#)

The deadline for tenders is **5pm on 13 March 2023.**

HLPAS re-tender (Reminder).

This was flagged up in LAPG Update 3.

The LAA is re-tendering for HLPAS (12 areas): The deadline for submitting tenders for this procurement process is **12pm on 1 March 2023.** The tender pages have been [updated on GOV.UK here](#) and the LAA has also [published a news story here.](#)

The twelve areas are Bedford, Birkenhead, Crewe, Darlington, Dartford, Durham, High Wycombe, Hull, Liverpool, Teesside, Telford, Wigan.

[Housing Loss Prevention Advice Services \(HLPAS\) and Housing and Debt services from August 2023](#)



An amendment notice has been published. This deals with the verification process. [See here](#).

Family Legal Aid SI

The LASPO Act 2012 (Legal Aid: Family and Domestic Abuse) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Order 2023 [has been published here](#).

What does it do?

“This Order amends Schedule 1 to the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act [2012 \(c. 10\)](#) (“the Act”) and secondary legislation under the Act.

Article 4(2) adds a new paragraph 1A to Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Act to provide civil legal aid for proceedings for special guardianship orders. Article 4(3) amends paragraph 11 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Act to provide civil legal aid for matters relating to domestic abuse protection orders introduced under Part 3 of the Domestic Abuse Act [2021 \(c. 17\)](#). Article 5 makes consequential amendments to the Civil Legal Aid (Merits Criteria) Regulations 2013 ([S.I. 2013/104](#)). It also amends the current merits test for parents who are at risk of their child being removed in proceedings for a placement or adoption order to align the test with the merits test which applies to applications for civil legal aid by those parties where such an order is sought within care proceedings.

Article 6 makes consequential amendments to the Civil Legal Aid (Financial Resources and Payment for Services) Regulations 2013 ([S.I. 2013/480](#)). In addition, the article removes the means test eligibility requirements for parents or those with parental responsibility opposing an application for either a placement or adoption order. This aligns the approach with that taken within care proceedings.

Article 7 amends Schedule 1 to the Civil Legal Aid (Procedure) Regulations 2012 ([S.I. 2012/3098](#)) to include domestic abuse protection notices, introduced by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, as an acceptable form of supporting evidence for applications for civil legal aid falling within paragraph 12 of Part 1 of Schedule 1. The article also amends Schedule 1 to the regulations to



enable an examination by a health professional to take place over the telephone or by video conference as an alternative to examination in person for the purposes of providing a report or letter as supporting evidence of domestic abuse. In addition, this article omits the definition of “Immigration Rules” because that term is not used in Schedule 1.

Article 8 amends the Criminal Legal Aid (General) Regulations 2013 ([S.I. 2013/422](#)) to prescribe certain proceedings under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 as “criminal proceedings” for the purposes of Part 1 of the Act.”

Housing Legal Aid SI

The Civil Legal Aid (Housing and Asylum Accommodation) Order 2023 [is now published here](#).

From the explanatory note:

“This Order amends Schedule 1 to the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (“LASPO”) in relation to advice and assistance related to accommodation for asylum-seekers and failed asylum-seekers to reflect prospective changes to the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

This Order also amends Schedule 1 to LASPO to provide for advice and assistance in relation to certain housing, debt, and welfare benefits issues where someone has already been determined to be eligible for legal aid in relation to a loss of home.

The Order also amends the Civil Legal Aid (Remuneration) Regulations 2013, which provide for the payment of remuneration to the providers of civil legal services, to specify the fees for the provision of these legal services.

The Order also amends the Civil Legal Aid (Procedure) Regulations 2012, which provide for the procedure for the making and withdrawal of determinations that an individual qualifies for civil legal aid.”



Exceptional Case Funding Form and Guidance

We referred to this in Update 3 – [see here](#).

Generally we are receiving very little feedback from members about ECF cases and we would be interested to know if that is because you have given up making applications, you only make them where there is a good prospect of success [or any other feedback](#).



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IRC/DDAS Letter

We have been told that the following letter has been sent out to relevant providers.

2018 Standard Civil Contract Specification Category Specific Rules: Immigration and Asylum (“the Contract”).

“Dear Provider

I am writing to you to inform you that commencing **Monday 3 April 2023**, all Detained Duty Advice Scheme (DDAS) surgery appointments are to be conducted face to face and in person at the Immigration Removal Centre, as set out in the Contract. Exceptions to this may be considered by the Service Development team and where approved you will be provided written confirmation of this.

All Providers should confirm their receipt and acknowledgement of this information by responding to this letter by email to Nikki.Daniels@justice.gov.uk by **5pm Monday 27 February 2023**.”



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Derwentside IRC

Change made: Removal of the Supervisor Self Declaration form titled: “Derwentside IRC Immigration and Asylum Supervisor Standard_2021 Form” because it is no longer



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relevant to the 2018 SCC Immigration and Asylum category specific rules. [Further details here.](#)

Contract Exclusions

The lists of individuals excluded from legal aid work has been updated. [See here.](#)



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Legal Aid Agency Strategy and Business Plan

We have not scoured these yet. The Strategy was published a few days ago [and can be found here.](#) The Business Plan [can be found here.](#)



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If anyone fancies reading this (in other sectors this is would be handed out as a punishment) and providing us with a summary blog we'd be happy to share this with members via our new Members' Area. [Please email us if you're interested.](#)

LAA lunch and learn with a twist – 28 March

A day in the life of an LAA high-cost family hourly rates case plan: Tuesday 28 March 2023; 1245 – 1330hrs.

Find out how the civil high-cost family (HCF) team assess hourly rates case plans. They will run through a 'mock' case plan and talk through what level of detail and information is required to assist an agreement on costs first time.

[Register here](#)



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Sector News & Events

Civil Justice Council Recruitment



The Civil Justice Council (CJC) is currently seeking to recruit six members:

- A legal executive member
- An advice sector member
- A lay member
- An alternative dispute resolution (ADR) member
- A digital technologies and information technology member
- A solicitor member (preferably with a practice or relevant experience not currently represented on the Council e.g. a 'claimant' solicitor, a public law specialist, or a practice focused on digital technology)

Full details of the role and application instructions can be found on the [Public Appointments website](#).

The application deadline is 8 March 2023 at 11am.

The Legal Education Foundation launches the Justice Lab



TLEF formally launched Justice Lab at a parliamentary event this week. This important initiative, headed up by Dr Natalie Byrom, has been established to secure an evidence-based justice system that's fair, open and efficient for everyone that needs it.

Justice Lab has four primary areas of interest – data, research, influence and community – all of which are set out in detail [on their website here](#).

Read Joshua Rozenberg's take on the new Lab [at his substack here](#).

PLP Introduces the Tracking Automated Government Register



Public
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From the Network for Justice newsletter:

The Public Law Project (PLP) has launched [a database revealing details of 41 secretive algorithms](#) used by the Government to make or inform decisions on a range of sensitive policy areas, including how people are policed, what benefits they receive, and their immigration status.

Researchers at PLP created the **Tracking Automated Government (TAG) register** to help increase transparency and accountability of automated decision-making systems (ADMs) used by the Government, including departments such as the Home Office, Department of Work and Pensions, Ministry of Justice, and the Ministry of Defence, and regulators including Ofqual, Police constabularies, the Metropolitan Police, and several local authorities.

The register is designed to be useful for lawyers, researchers, and journalists wanting to investigate or document the impact of ADMs, and for individuals affected by their decisions.

London Legal Support Trust events

Members will be aware that LLST raises money through legal walks but there are a host of fundraising activities taking place. Here are a few:

[LLST's Abseil Challenge](#), Saturday 22 April - down the ArcelorMittal Orbit in Stratford

[LLST's Skydive Challenge](#), Saturday 8 July

[Spartan Obstacle Course](#), Sunday 30 April (anything that says not for the faint-hearted will rule out some of us...)

[London - Brighton Cycle](#), Sunday 10 September



ACL Legal Aid Seminar – 6 March 2023



Our good friends over at the Association of Costs Lawyers are running a legal aid seminar at The Oval in London on Monday, 6 March.

Bookings are now open with places available for all.

Confirmed speakers for the day are:

- Stephen Averill - ACL Vice-Chairman
- Stephen Barker - Finance Technical Lead LAA
- David Crawford - Senior Caseworker Finance Team LAA – Reg 5a Judicial Review discretion applications
- Chris Needham - Senior Caseworker Finance Team LAA – topic tbc
- Louise Cowell - Operational Lead LAA High Cost Family Team accompanied by John Chapman, Tom Colquitt and Daniel Good
- Jamie Butt - Contract Manager & Civil Bill Reject Lead LAA

Additional speakers will be added as confirmed and all speakers may be subject to change.

[Further details and booking process here](#)

Please note that LAPG members pay the same rate for this event as ACL members, which comes in at a very reasonable £185 for the day. Trainee solicitors and pupil barristers also pay the same rate as students of £140.

Public Law Project events



Public
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Project

Our mates over at PLP are running some interesting and informative training courses and events over the coming months. [See their full programme here](#), which includes:

[Fairness in Welfare Benefits](#): 27 Feb - 2 March

[Judicial Review for NGOs the basics](#): 3 - 6 March

[Opening the black box: Ensuring transparency in Government:](#) 7-9 March

[How to do Judicial Review:](#) 20 March

[Legal Research for social impact:](#) 17 May (Hybrid)

LAPG News and Events

We're about to press GO on the 2023 Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year awards



It's almost here! On Monday we launch the nomination process for the 2023 LALY awards. The 2022 awards – the 20th anniversary of the LALYs and our first in-person event since 2019 – was a wonderful occasion which showcased the incredible work of legal aid lawyers and the support staff that make it all happen. 2023 promises to be another stellar event and the perfect antidote to the challenges you face on a day to day basis.

Now it's over to you: the LALYs relies on you and your colleagues to submit nominations for your legal aid hero. We're simplifying the process this year, asking for a maximum of just 10 pages (rather than 20) of supporting information as we know how busy you all are. We have retained the Support Staffer category this year to acknowledge and celebrate the contribution of non-fee earners to the delivery of legal aid. We'll release details on Monday of all this year's categories and the nomination process, which will be open for 8 weeks. So get your thinking caps on about which of your colleagues (or opponents) encapsulates the true spirit of legal aid – dedication, commitment and expertise – and get the ball rolling on your nomination.

For all the latest news on the LALYs follow @LALYawards and @WeAreLegalAid



Renewing your 2023 LAPG Membership – renew now for a 10% discount

The 2023 membership renewal process is well underway and are delighted that so many organisations have already chosen to renew their subscription for this year. Your support ensures that we can maintain a strong and independent voice to advocate for legal aid practitioners and access to justice at the highest levels of political influencing and push for operational improvements to the legal aid scheme with the LAA.

LAPG Membership runs from January to December and the renewal process this year once again see fees frozen as we recognise just how difficult it is to run your organisations. The usual 10% Early Bird reduction is also in place if you renew prior to 31 March 2023.

Number of fee earners	Early Bird Fee	Standard Fee
1 – 5 fee earners	£157.50	£175.00
6 – 10 fee earners	£238.50	£265.00
11 – 20 fee earners	£342.00	£380.00
21 – 30 fee earners	£468.00	£520.00
31 – 50 fee earners	£544.50	£605.00
51+ fee earners	£630.00	£700.00
Non-contract holding rate	£283.50	£315.00

This year we have introduced to online forms to complete to renew your membership – one for paying by BACS and one to pay direct via our website. [Visit the Membership page of our website for more information.](#)

If you have any queries about LAPG membership or the renewal process, please contact our ever-helpful Operations Officer, [Anna Neira Quesada](#).

Thank you once again for being members of LAPG. Your support is very much appreciated.

LAPG Training Courses

Supervision Courses

We have confirmed the dates for our 2023 training programme, with Supervision Courses scheduled for 18th January, 6th March, 17th May, 12th July, 26th September and 22nd November. Our January Course is now fully booked but you can book your place on any of the remaining 2023 training dates



below:

[6TH MARCH 2023](#)

[17TH MAY 2023](#)

[12TH JULY 2023](#)

[26TH SEPTEMBER 2023](#)

[22ND NOVEMBER 2023](#)

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.

Online Introduction to Management Course

We are currently working on a new and exciting training course, an online module similar to our Introduction to Civil Legal Aid Course, all about management. This course will offer an introductory look into management and will be entirely self-paced!

We are soft launching this course shortly and it will be made widely available in the coming months! If you are interested in partaking or getting more information please contact [Thomas Rigard-Asquith](#).

Another packed Update for you this week, legal aid heroes.

We'd love to hear your thoughts about our Updates and about the recently launched Members' Area of our website. As the Updates go out to thousands of fellow practitioners and support staff you're also welcome to contact us if you want to promote your own research, events or news. [Please get in touch](#), about just about anything at all.

Take care one and all,

Chris Minnoch, CEO [@ChrisLAPG](#)

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

LEGAL AID LAWYER OF THE YEAR AWARDS



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