

Resolution working for you – Civil Contracts Consultative Group

Resolution represents members at these meetings. There were several important updates at its most recent meeting.

Financial eligibility checks

Providers who have complex queries in relation to a client's financial eligibility assessment, can seek assistance from a dedicated team of caseworkers before granting emergency representation under delegated functions. Queries should be sent to ContactMeansExpert@justice.gov.uk. They will aim to respond to these emails within 48 hours.

They answered 846 queries on this service June – October 2025 (195 in October). Main queries were:

- Acceptable evidence and documents
- Money which may not be accessible
- Trapped Capital
- Aggregation issues
- Seeking reassurance before using delegated functions on complex assessments

The LAA ask you to note this service is to ask complex means queries but not to have full means forms checked to determine a client's eligibility for legal aid.

Gateway evidence checks

Where you are unsure whether the evidence of abuse meets the relevant regulation, the LAA is offering an email service so providers can check with the LAA whether evidence would be considered valid to bring the matter into scope before delegated functions are used.

We know that members find this service very useful and have asked that they retain it after the contingency period.

Please email GatewayEvidenceCheck@justice.gov.uk. They aim to respond to these emails within 48 hours.

- They have answered about 2,093 provider emails on this service for 2nd June – 21st November 2025. Main points from the team:
- Review the evidence first and highlight the part you believe meets the criteria or you are unsure of.
- Provide the parties' names, proceedings applied for and the client's involvement as well as children's names and where they live where applicable.
- Please don't copy clients or provide this email address to domestic abuse services. This email service is for providers to support them in making decisions that proceedings are in scope of legal aid.
- The LAA should not need to check non molestation orders, Certificates of convictions, Health Professional letters that follow the template letter as these should meet the requirements, refer to the [evidence requirements guidance](#). Please do not sent these for checking.

High Cost Family Performance

Since entering level 2 contingency on Friday 13th June the LAA have received on average 282 case plans per week. They will continue to accept contingency arrangements for Family VHCCs –until Monday 5th January 2026.

They are turning around case plan decisions on average within 20 – 24 working days.

They have approximately 5,500 records that have yet to be entered on to CCMS.

High Cost Family contingency measures can be found here for ongoing cases submitted under contingency measures <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/legal-aid-agency-cyber-security-incident#civil-applications-high-cost-family-work>

New case plans should be submitted via CCMS.

The VHCC fixer service remains available if you cannot see a case on CCMS that you would expect to be there or if you are not content with a decision they have made.

highcostfamilyfixer@justice.gov.uk

Disbursement tips

In 2024, 19% of all civil certificated rejects were due to issues with disbursements. To avoid the rejection of claims or a reduction against your costs, the LAA require these key details on all invoices uploaded:

- The hourly rate used by the expert and any apportionment of costs. If prior authority has been obtained you should upload confirmation of this with your claim.
- A full breakdown of the time spent by the expert. This is to ensure that the work is reasonable and in scope.
- Start/end addresses (ideally postcodes, but the town(s) travelled to/from as a minimum) for all travel costs claimed by yourselves or an expert.
- To help caseworkers find the required information, and to help them pay your claim first time, the LAA suggests you could consider doing the following:
- Provide only the documents required for us to consider the claim to avoid a mass of evidence where a document could be missed
- Highlight, number, or label court orders where required for specific expert fees (e.g. toxicology) for caseworkers to easily cross-reference with the corresponding voucher
- Upload documents in a searchable format (e.g. PDF rather than scans or photographs)
- Flag anything unusual and include clarification within your bill narrative.

References

Electronic Handbook (EHB) [Finance Electronic Handbook](#) Section 10 for full guidance on disbursements. Section 16.1 for full reduction and rejection reasons

[Getting your disbursement vouchers paid first time](#) – Legal Aid Learning

CCMS provider: [actions, notifications and documents – Submitting Electronic Evidence](#)

[Toxicology \(EHB 10.14\)](#) Cross-reference court orders with the corresponding vouchers to ensure the person tested, substances tested, method of testing, and the testing period all match.

[Cancellation Fees \(EHB 10.5\) & Minimum Charges \(EHB 10.18\)](#) If an invoice includes a cancellation charge, the notice of cancellation should be clearly stated (i.e. whether it was within 72 hours or not).

If an invoice includes a minimum charge, provide justification alongside 3 alternative quotes dated within 12 months of instruction.

