

Resolution working for you – updates from the Civil Contracts Consultative Group

Resolution members are represented at quarterly Civil Contracts Consultative Group meetings with the LAA. This provides an opportunity for the LAA to update the representative groups and for us to put forward any issues raised by members.

If you have any queries you would like us to raise anonymously with the LAA, please send an email to legalaid@resolution.org.uk

Contact Means Expert

If you have complex queries in relation to a client's financial eligibility assessment, you can seek assistance from a dedicated team of caseworkers before granting emergency representation under delegated functions. Queries should be sent by email to ContactMeansExpert@justice.gov.uk. The LAA aims to respond to these emails within 48 hours.

The LAA answered 185 provider queries on this service between June 2026 and August 2026. The main issues were in relation to:

- Property, equity and trapped capital
- Evidence requirements and documentation
- General eligibility and means assessment queries
- Benefits, passporting and disregards

The LAA emphasises this service is for complex means queries. Full means forms cannot be checked to determine a client's eligibility for legal aid. The service does not deal with Legal Help matters or merits scope/proceedings.

There is a short recording on the Legal Aid Learning website regarding [Civil Apply passported application means tips – Legal Aid Learning](#).

Complex business means

When clients are self-employed, in a business partnership, are a company director, or own shares in a company, the LAA often need more information about their income and assets.

To make things easier, the LAA tested a new method where clients can be contacted directly by a caseworker for additional information. The LAA says this pilot was successful, saving providers significant time (between 30 minutes and several hours) especially in complex cases involving business interests.

We are now extending this option to all civil providers for business cases only (this covers clients who are self-employed, in a business partnership, a company director or owns shares in a company).

More information on how to use this service [is here](#).

Child Focused Courts Model – how to record delegated functions

The LAA provided some hints and tips to enable you to use delegated functions successfully and ensure you have legal aid cover. This applies where a decision to grant legal representation has already been made up to Family Help (Higher). There is no fixed end date for this interim measure [Changes to Delegated Authorities \(Merits Criteria Regulations\) - GOV.UK](#). The LAA says a longer-term solution will be developed in due course.

The LAA says you must still submit an amendment for these cases in order for LAA to consider the use of delegated functions and back-date cover accordingly. You should include reference to the case being a Child Focused Model case in the statement of case for the amendment and record the use of delegated functions.

The LAA says that under the Child Focused Model, a Decision Hearing may play the same role as a Final Hearing. They say the same criteria should be followed to determine whether the Decision Hearing should be paid as a final hearing:

- The hearing is listed as a Decision Hearing (the intention is for it to be a contested hearing that will resolve the case).
- The hearing is effective at making a final determination.
- The certificate covers attendance at a Final Hearing.

The LAA warns that if the certificate has not been amended to cover a final hearing, no fee can be paid for an effective Decision Hearing. If the hearing is not listed as a Decision Hearing/contested hearing to make a final decision, or is not utilised as a Decision Hearing, then an interim hearing fee should be paid.