



Legal Aid

Agency

CCMS: YOUR FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

APPLICATIONS AND AMENDMENTS

Q) Are clients still required to sign applications? What evidence is required in support of the signature?

When an application is completed, the system produces a summary of all case details for the provider to print and ask the client to sign. The LAA require the provider to keep a record of this on file should we need to see it at a later stage for auditing purposes. (Standard Civil Contract 2010 Rule 5.8(b) and Standard Civil Contract 2013 Rule 5.5(b) require that the signed application form is retained on file). Where files are stored electronically, a scanned version of the application is acceptable, provided it is an electronic PDF copy of the entire form.

Q) Do Guardians still sign the application on behalf of the child?

Yes, this process has not changed.

Q) Can a part-completed application be saved?

Yes. However, if the application is not amended within 42 days, it will be deleted. The number of days the application is saved is taken from the last date the application was last amended, not the date it was created.

Q) If an application is started and the provider experiences a technical issue, is there an auto-save function?

Yes, there is an auto-save function as the user moves from screen to screen.

Q) Does the user have to be a solicitor to submit an application?

This remains part of the declaration. There are no changes to the current processes.

Q) Do solicitors have to sign the application?

All portal users agree to abide by the Terms and Conditions of the Online Portal. These can be found on the portal page. This removes the need to physically sign an application.

Q) Can providers review applications once they have been submitted?

Limited information is available once the application is submitted. However, a summary of the application must be printed for the client to sign, and in most cases, this will be available for review. If the provider wishes to review the application after it has been submitted, they should print or save this summary.

Q) Will there be paper-based applications, e.g. if the system is down?

Paper applications may be used as a contingency. If this is necessary, users will be advised and full details of the processes to follow will be available on the CCMS website.

Q) Will the certificate reference numbers be different in CCMS?

Yes. Certificate references will be made up of 12 numbers only. For cases started on CCMS, references will start with the number three. Once existing cases (currently managed on paper), are transferred to CCMS, their reference number will begin with the number one.

Q) Will providers be required to enter a password on behalf of the client?

The password is used to identify the client as part of a security check should they contact the LAA Customer Services.

Q) How are details of 'Fee Earner' and 'Supervisor' added to the relevant drop down boxes in the provider details section of the application?

The 'Fee Earner' and 'Supervisor' drop down list are populated from information held in the 'Contacts' section in CWA. The firm CCMS System Administrator can access CWA and create 'Contacts' to appear as fee earners and supervisors.

Q) How does the client see the data entered online on their application?

Clients can view the means / merits summary report which providers need to print and get the client to sign.

Q) Will providers still receive hard copies of certificates in the post?

Providers will receive a notification through CCMS with a copy of the certificate attached as a PDF document. This can be downloaded and printed / saved. We will send clients a paper copy of their funding certificate.

Q) Can a provider amend the client's date of birth?

No, once a client has been registered it is not possible to amend the date of birth. Should this need to be amended a request should be sent to the LAA for the details to be updated. This can be done as a case enquiry.

Q) How quickly will providers receive the request for evidence after submitting the application?

Within 20 minutes.

ASSIGNING COUNSEL AND MANAGING COSTS

Q) Do providers need to allocate or assign costs for in-house advocacy?

No. If the costs to be claimed are within the provider's own bill, there is no need to allocate or assign costs.

Q) If the provider has allocated costs to a particular counsel / advocate, and a replacement undertakes the work, how are the costs managed?

All advocates who undertake any work on a case must be assigned to the case on CCMS.

In this scenario:

- reduce the amount allocated to the initial advocate accordingly
- assign the additional advocate and allocate the relevant portion of the costs

Q) Is an LAA caseworker required to approve allocated costs to counsel?

The system automatically grants an amendment to the certificate to allocate costs to counsel. It is not reviewed by a caseworker.

Q) Does the cost limit allocated to counsel replace the bill?

No. The cost limit assigned to counsel limits the total costs they can claim under a certificate. Counsel still need to submit a bill for the work undertaken which will be reviewed by a caseworker and assessed using current criteria.

Q) What should the provider do if the scope of the work undertaken by counsel changes and their costs increase?

The provider can change the costs allocated to counsel at any time during the life of the case. It is important that providers and counsel communicate regularly during the case to ensure the costs are appropriate.

Q) Can costs be apportioned retrospectively if counsel costs increase / decrease at the hearing?

Yes. The cost allocation can be amended retrospectively, but this must take place before counsel submits their bill.

Q) If more than one counsel is instructed on a case, should costs be allocated separately to each?

Yes. Costs are allocated to specific counsel. Each individual counsel who has acted on a case has their own individual cost limit.

Q) Can the overall cost limitation on a certificate can be amended retrospectively?

The system allows you to apply for such an amendment. Caseworkers apply the same rules around granting / refusing the amendment as they do currently.

Q) How are costs allocated to counsel agreed?

Costs should be agreed between the provider and chambers, based on an estimate of the costs for the work to be undertaken. This should take into account any appropriate rates set by the LAA.

Q) Is this an opportunity for providers to negotiate costs with counsel and, potentially, agree a lower rate for the work undertaken?

The agreed cost allocation should be appropriate to the work counsel have been instructed to complete. It should be based on any rates set by the LAA, e.g. under the FAS scheme

Q) What if counsel have difficulty getting a firm to process any changes in counsel / costs allocations / assigning counsel, etc?

Chambers must try to resolve these issues with the firm involved. If this cannot be resolved with the firm, issues can be escalated via Bar Contract Managers.

Q) Can counsel see any information on a case before they have been assigned to it?

No, counsel can't see a case until they have been assigned a cost limit on CCMS.

Q) Will counsel receive a notification through CCMS when they have been assigned to a case?

Yes. Counsel will receive a notification in the following scenarios:

- when the solicitor allocates counsel to the case
- if counsel's allocated cost limit has been amended by the solicitor.

Q) Once assigned, can counsel see the scope and limitations on a certificate?

Counsel can see limited information about the case. This includes certificate status and level of service, but not the specific scope limitation. This means the provider should still send a copy of the certificate to counsel, as per the existing contractual requirement.

Q) Can counsel remind solicitors to assign them to a case via CCMS?

Yes, counsel can submit a general enquiry through CCMS, using the 'Create Request' area of functionality.

Q) Will assigned counsel be notified when solicitors submit their final bill?

In civil (non-family) cases, the provider should inform chambers that they can now submit their bill. In family cases, a notification will not be sent because counsel do not need to wait for a solicitor to submit a bill before they can submit a claim under these schemes. Where the case falls outside of the FAS / FGF schemes, counsel will not be paid until the provider has submitted their final bill.

CASE SUPERVISION AND MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

Q) How can users ensure an application or bill is checked by a supervisor before it is submitted?

Responsibilities are divided so that one person could create an item, and another would be able to submit it. This means:

- The Case Management role allows a user to create an application or amendment, but Case Management Supervisor role is required to submit the item
- The Billing Preparation role can create a POA or bill, but the Billing Supervisor role is required to submit it

By giving a user the Case Management or Billing Preparation roles only, the user will be unable to submit the item. A user with the supervisor role will be able to access the item, review it and submit.

Q) How does a user know if an application, amendment or bill has been submitted?

Whenever an item is submitted to the LAA, you will see the 'Submission Confirmation Screen'. If an application has been submitted, this will show as 'Submitted'. When the case is accessed, a Case Summary page will be displayed rather than the Application Summary. Once an amendment has been submitted, the 'Amend Case' option will no longer be visible. When the case is accessed, an Amendment Summary is visible. This shows high level information about the amendment (i.e. additional proceedings). See further details by selecting the option to view a read only version of the case. If a cost increase has been requested, this will be displayed as 'costs requested'. Once the amendment has been granted, this will change to 'cost awarded'. Once a bill or POA has been submitted, it will appear in the Statement of Account screen, both in the table in the first half of the page, and at the bottom of the screen.

Q) Can a user see who has submitted an application, amendment or bill?

No. A user with the relevant role can see the named Case Contact, and the acting Fee Earner / Supervisor, if these have been specified on the case.

Q) Can the detail of an application, amendment or bill be viewed once it is submitted?

No, once an item has been submitted users can no longer see a detailed breakdown of the information.

Q) Is it possible to save a copy of the application, amendment or bill to hold on file?

For every case draft item, users are given the opportunity to print a detailed breakdown before it is submitted. Application: the Assessment Summary screen includes all the information entered into the application. This page can be printed. Amendments: the Assessment Summary includes a comparison between the existing certificate and the requested changes. This page can be printed. Bills: once the bill is complete, there are two options. A copy of the bill can be opened in a new window by selecting 'Bill Summary' or a copy of the bill can be sent to the user via a notification, by selecting 'Request Draft Print'.

Q) Will the provider receive a copy of the funding certificate?

Yes, a copy of the funding certificate will be sent to the case contact as an attachment to a notification once the application is granted by the LAA. When an amendment is made to the certificate, you will receive an updated copy of the certificate via a notification.

Q) Can scanned documents be accessed after they have been sent in response to an evidence request?

No, once a document request has been sent it cannot be accessed through CCMS.

Q) How does the provider know which documents were sent in response to an evidence request?

Users must respond to an evidence request to confirm all documents have been sent. A list of the documents sent can be typed into the 'further details'. Users can see this response by searching for closed notifications. This will include the time and date the documents were sent, as well as the name of the user who responded to the action.

Q) Can the provider see the content of a general enquiry after it has been sent?

No, however once a response has been received from the LAA; users can see both the original message and the response by searching for closed notifications.

Q) Can the provider see who has sent a general enquiry?

Once the LAA has responded to a request, the provider can see details of the user who submitted the initial request, as well as the date and time it was submitted.

CHILD ABDUCTION CASES

Q) What is the client signature requirement for Hague Convention cases?

The same process applies for all clients resident abroad. The application summary can be emailed / faxed to obtain a true signature. While a wet signature is preferable, the scanned signature is sufficient, as long as there is a clear audit trail to demonstrate how this signature was obtained e.g. copies of the email chain.

CONTRACT NOTICES

Q) The recent notice sent to all civil providers refers to 'Post Certificated Work'. What does this mean?

Post Certificated Work refers to all subsequent work required on a certificate, for instance, requests for amendments, payments on account, bills and prior authorities.

Q) Under what circumstances will you permit new Licensed Work paper applications?

If the system prevents you from submitting an application on CCMS, we'll provide tailored guidance on how you can submit an application.

Q) The recent notice sent to all civil providers refers to 'Post Certificated Work'. What does this mean?

Post Certificated Work refers to all subsequent work required on a certificate, for instance, requests for amendments, payments on account, bills and prior authorities.

COST LAWYERS/DRAFTSMAN

Q) Can cost draftsmen / lawyers use CCMS?

Yes, they can use the system to create and submit bills.

Q) How are cost draftsmen/lawyers given access to CCMS?

Providers can set cost draftsmen/lawyers up as system users in the same way as other users in their organisation. Each individual will then be given a unique login and password to access cases for each organisation or person they work for.

Q) Can an email address be used as their username?
No. This could cause problems if the cost draftsman/lawyer accesses CCMS for more than one firm. We recommend the format first name, last name, and an identifier for your firm. For example, a firm named Bennett Black might set up their cost draftsman John Smith as: JOHNSMITHBB
Q) Do I need to set up each cost lawyer / draftsman as a separate user?
Yes. Each person should have their own unique user account.
Q) Can a cost lawyer / draftsman do work for multiple firms with the same user account?
No. If an individual does work for more than one firm they will need each firm to set them up with a user account.
Q) What role should the cost lawyer / draftsman have on CCMS?
There are two roles which would be appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Billing Preparation – allows a user to create POAs and bills • Billing Supervisor – allows a user to submit POAs and bills You may choose to give your cost lawyer / draftsman one or both these roles.
Q) What information can a cost lawyer / draftsman see about a case?
Users with the roles specified in above you can see the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client names (but no other client details) • Cost limit details • Case details (proceedings, etc) • Case notifications • Opponents and other party details.
Q) Can a provider limit the cases a cost draftsman / lawyer can see?
No. The cost draftsman / lawyer will be given the same level of access to all cases. Providers may choose to ask cost draftsmen / lawyers to sign an agreement confirming that they will only access cases they have been instructed to bill for.
Q) What actions can a cost draftsman / lawyer take on a case?
In line with the roles specified in 95, they are limited to creating/submitting POAs and bills. They can't request new applications or amendments to existing certificates.
Q) Who receives the evidence request after bills are submitted?
This is sent to the person who submitted the bill.
Q) Can a cost draftsman / lawyer prepare evidence to support bills?
Yes, they can prepare evidence. However, if a user in the provider's organisation will be submitting the bill, the provider may need to consider how the prepared evidence is returned to them, i.e. will the cost draftsman scan the evidence bundle and email it.
Q) Where can a cost draftsman / lawyer access help on using CCMS?
The CCMS website contains training and guidance materials to help system users. If, having reviewed the available materials, help is still required, any CCMS users can contact our Online Support Team.
Q) Can independent costs draftsman/lawyers register and access the training?
Yes – this is available to all users of CCMS.

ELECTRONIC REMITTANCE	
Q) How will electronic remittance advice be sent?	You will get a notification in CCMS.
Q) Who will receive the electronic remittance advice?	You can nominate a user to receive the remittance advice. The user who is chosen should be given the CCMS Finance User role when setting up new users or current user profiles can be amended to include this role. Chambers users will now receive a single remittance advice for all counsel under chambers.
Q) How will other users access the remittance advice?	You can use the, 'refine search' option to get access. Chambers users can search by date to access the remittance advice of all advocates in their chambers.
Q) How do I use the, 'refine search' option?	From the home page click on your actions and notifications. In the top right of the screen will be the, 'refine search' option and you need to select this. A screen of search fields will be shown e.g. status or date etc. If you want to see closed notifications you need to select the small tick box at the bottom left of the screen. Once all fields are complete you need to select search. You will see a list of all notifications that fulfil the criteria you selected. If you ticked the close box it will show closed notifications as well.
Q) How do I get back to my search list?	If you select the, 'view case notifications' option this returns you to your search list.
Q) Will I continue to receive a paper version of the remittance advice?	Yes, until we've finished roll out. We'll give you at least four weeks' notice of when we'll stop.
Q) Will the electronic remittance advice be different to the paper version?	No.
Q) When will I start receiving remittance advice electronically?	We're rolling out gradually. We'll email you with your start date.
Q) Can I opt out of receiving the remittance advice electronically?	No, although during roll-out, you'll continue to receive a paper version too.
Q) Who should I contact if I have a question about this?	Please continue to use our existing channels for both technical and payment enquiries. Details can be found on the Contacts page.

GENERAL	
Q) Can a provider search using their case reference number?	Yes, if the case reference has been entered into the 'provider details' section of the application.
Q) What does an error message mean when it is given in blue text, rather than red?	This is a warning message, rather than an error message, and will not prevent a user moving to the next screen. The user may amend the data provided on the screen if they choose.
Q) Will existing cases stay on paper?	No, existing case data, with a small number of exceptions, will be migrated across from the previous system onto CCMS once all providers are using CCMS for their new cases.

Q) Does the LAA maintain records of casework deliberations?
CCMS records details of any decisions made by a caseworker. If a decision is made to refuse / reject an application or provisionally assess a bill, the caseworker will record their reasons for this decision on the system. The notification to inform the provider or advocate of the decision will include this information. Where a bill has been provisionally assessed, the notification will include a line by line breakdown of the items assessed, as well as the reason for the assessment.
Q) What are the turnaround times on caseworkers responding to queries / notifications received via CCMS?
Our current published timescales for processing work will remain unchanged although the end-to-end processing times should be reduced.
Q) What should a user do if they have an urgent query?
Providers can use CCMS to send messages/ raise queries to LAA caseworkers via a Case Enquiry in the first instance. For urgent queries providers can contact the relevant team over the telephone in the normal way once exhausting the case enquiry route.
Q) Is the document scanning centre a free service?
Yes, scanning is free. Documents should be sent using the appropriate cover sheet to: Legal Aid Agency 1 PO Box 10619 Nottingham NG6 6DX
Q) Will documents sent to the scanning centre be returned?
No. Documents sent to the scanning centre will be securely destroyed. Only copied documents should be sent to the document scanning centre.
Q) What is the document retention period and what date is it taken from?
The retention period is taken from the date the matter closes, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when a final bill is paid on a case or • when any debt is incurred (for instance, if a certificate is revoked or the statutory charge arises). The current retention period is six years.
Q) Will Legal Help cases be managed on CCMS?
Legal help matters will continue to be managed using the existing processes. CCMS will only cover certificated work.
Q) What contingency plans are in place if the system crashes?
Paper applications and bills may be used as a contingency. If this is necessary, you will be advised and full details of the processes you should follow will be available on the CCMS website.
Q) What type of query is classified as a non-case specific query?
This includes any query that does not relate to a specific case, i.e. a query regarding guidance or regulations. You should also submit a non-case specific query if you want to submit a complaint or request a certificate is transferred to you.
Q) Do providers need to continue to give clients leaflets?
This requirement has not changed. The leaflet 'Paying for your legal aid' can be found here:

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/legal-aid/assess-your-clients-eligibility/civil-eligibility>

MEANS ASSESSMENT

Q) What if a client can't come to the provider's office to go through the application e.g. prisoners, clients in mental health units, home visits?

The Promissory declaration should be used in such instances.

Q) Will providers be required to complete NI numbers for children, e.g. on Special Children Act matters?

Children will not have an NI number unless they are over 16. This field may be present, but completing it is not mandatory.

Q) Will the system reject emergency applications without documentary evidence of means?

No. When making an emergency application, CCMS will not ask for evidence of means or merits. Evidence will be requested when an amendment is submitted to add a substantive limitation and convert the emergency certificate to a substantive certificate.

Q) Should providers still submit capital means assessment evidence, e.g. bank statements?

Yes, evidence requirements have not changed.

Q) What will happen if the client doesn't return with the means information or evidence required?

You won't be able to progress the application. This reflects the current process where a substantive certificate will not be granted without sight of means information and evidence.

Q) Will the results from the DWP check be received straight away?

Yes, there is a real-time link. In the event that the DWP check comes back as 'undetermined', if the provider has documentary evidence that the client is in receipt of a passported benefit, they can declare as such and scan and upload as part of the application.

Q) Is a means assessment required with every amendment?

No, a means assessment is not required if the provider is requesting a change to the scope or costs of a certificate, or is assigning counsel. Please note that if the provider clicks on the means assessment link it will trigger the assessment and you will be required to complete it. It is only necessary to complete the assessment when requested to do so by the LAA or you are notified of a change in your client's circumstances.

Q) Will clients receive requests for information when a means reassessment is required?

Yes. Providers are sent an action through CCMS, informing them a reassessment is due and requesting they contact the client to arrange to complete the assessment on CCMS. At the same time, the client is sent a letter with similar information, requesting they arrange an appointment with their provider.

Q) My client is in receipt of universal credit but this isn't an option in the interview screens, what do I do?

Clients in receipt of universal credit are passported on income. For the purposes of the interview please select 'Guaranteed State Pension Credit' from the drop down list on the screen 'Passported Benefit Test: What Benefit?'

Q) Do requests for further information go to the client or the provider?

Most will go to the provider but occasionally we will write directly to the client for further information.

Q) Can a client pay their first payment by cash?

No. The method is for the client to use the automated credit and debit collection service (tel. 0300 790 0154).

MERITS ASSESSMENT

Q) Do providers have to do the application twice for emergency applications?

Providers can submit all the required information for both the emergency application and the substantive certificate in one step, provided:

- they can use delegated functions and
- all required evidence is ready and the necessary client declarations can be obtained.

If the application is made without use of delegated functions, a two step process will be followed:

- an initial application is made including all relevant means and merits information. You will not need to provide any evidence at this stage.
- once the emergency certificate has been granted, an amendment should be submitted to add a substantive limitation to the certificate.

Q) Can narratives be added to an application?

Yes. The provider can provide a statement of case using free text boxes within the application, or upload the statement as a document.

Q) Do scope limitations need to be entered manually?

There will be pre-populated drop-down options on scope limitations.

Q) Will providers be asked to enter a child's date of birth when entering their details as subject of proceedings?

Yes. It is a requirement under the regulations that the LAA is notified of the date of birth of the child who is the subject of proceedings

Q) What should a provider do if they are unable to find the category of law they wish to make an application for?

CCMS will only allow providers to create an application within a category of law the provider has the appropriate contract for

Q) Can delegated functions still be used?

Yes. When the application is entered onto CCMS, the provider will be asked to confirm if they have used delegated functions.

Q) Can delegated functions be exercised twice in one day?

Yes. The policies around the use of delegated functions have not changed.

Q) Are emergency certificates revoked if the substantive amendment is not submitted within five days?

The emergency certificate will be reviewed if the full substantive application has not been submitted within five working days of using delegated functions (or within

five working days of the grant of the emergency certificate, for non-delegated functions emergencies).

In such instances the application could be nullified or revoked based on the following:

- revoked – if you respond to the ‘show cause’ and demonstrates that you have made every attempt to receive the necessary information (means) from a client to be in a position to submit the substantive, however, the client has been uncooperative then we would move toward revocation.
- nullification – if you have not complied in any way and have not responded to the ‘show cause’ we will nullify after the time period has lapsed and you will be unable to bill for any work.

Q) Where two sets of proceedings are added to a certificate, does each proceeding carry its own limitation?

If referring to scope limitations, each proceeding has its own scope limitation and changes to scope limitations need to be made per proceeding. If referring to cost limitations, the cost limitation applies to the whole certificate, rather than an individual proceeding, and applications for a cost limit increase should be made accordingly.

Q) Can a certificate be amended after it is discharged?

There are limited amendments that can be made after discharge; for example, change of case correspondence address, case reference and provider contact name. A provider cannot add / change proceedings cost limits or request prior authority.

Q) How are cost limitations managed on linked certificates?

In civil (non-family) cases, each linked certificate will have its own separate cost limit. Pre-apportioned bills should be submitted for each certificate. If the cost limitation on one certificate is sufficient, the provider may choose to claim all costs for all certificates within one bill. If the provider chooses to do this, they must submit outcomes and nil bills for the remaining certificates. In family (linked) cases, one certificate will be nominated as the lead certificate. The total cost limit of the case will be on this certificate and all other certificates will have a zero cost limit. One bill will be submitted on the lead case only. A nil bill should be submitted on the remaining cases to close them.

Q) What information must be provided to request a change in cost limitation?

Providers requesting an increase to the certificate cost limitation will be asked to update the information provided in the merits interview to justify the request for a cost increase. Counsel need to contact the acting solicitor to request any increase to their costs limit on a case.

Q) Can a provider copy the statement of case from a word document into CCMS?

Yes, however CCMS does not support some special characters, for instance, `#` \\$. If these characters are used an error message will be displayed when the provider attempts to progress to the next page. Microsoft Word also has a feature called ‘smart quotes’ which may auto correct the text and change the character that has been typed. Search online for ‘Turn off smart quotes in Microsoft Word’ to find help on disabling this feature for your version of Word.

Q) Can more than one set of proceedings be added to an application?

Providers can add as many proceedings as needed to each application. Once the first set of proceedings has been added, return to the 'Proceedings and Costs' page, select 'Add Proceeding' to add additional proceedings.

Q) How does the provider know if the scope and cost limits allowed differ from those requested?

If an item has not been granted or has been amended by a caseworker, a notification will be sent alongside the updated certificate to explain why.

NOTIFICATIONS

Q) Will users be sent an email when an action or notification is received through the system?

You will receive an email to let you know that you have notifications on CCMS. The email will go to the address registered to your user account.

Q) Can more than one contact be nominated for a case?

No. Only one contact can be named per case.

Q) Can users access actions and notifications for other users within the firm?

A user with the Office Manager role can search for and view all actions and notifications through the 'Refine Search' option within the Actions and Notifications area of the system.

Q) How can you tell if someone has responded to an action or notification?

The status of an action or notification will show if an action has been responded to.

Q) Can you see the response to an action or notification after it has been sent?

Yes. The response can be seen by searching for closed actions or notifications.

OUTCOMES AND BILLING

Q) Can users prepare a bill but not submit it?

Yes. You can prepare a bill as a draft claim and save it on the system for up to 84 days. The time is calculated from the date the bill was last amended, not the date it was created.

Q) What evidence is required in support of outcomes?

A copy of the final order or agreement, and relevant correspondence/documents relating to the outcome of the case / order for costs.

Q) Do the outcomes need to be submitted before the final bill on a case?

The system doesn't offer an option to submit a final bill until an outcome has been submitted against every proceeding on the certificate. During the outcome process, the provider will be offered the chance to discharge the case but the discharge is not a prerequisite for submitting a final bill.

Q) Will the provider be asked for evidence in support of outcomes?

Yes, the evidence request will be sent to the assigned case contact.

Q) Can claims and documentary evidence be submitted electronically for existing cases?

Existing cases will continue to be managed via the old paper process until we transfer these cases onto CCMS.

Q) Where hourly rates are claimed, does the bill have to be entered line-by-line?
Current users enter each line of the bill separately. We are working closely with software vendors to develop system enhancements which will enable the bulk upload of bills from case management systems.
Q) Do individual lines need to be entered for every standard letter and telephone call?
No, standard letters and calls can be claimed as one line each within the bill, with the total quantity entered for each line.
Q) Can users include more than one aspect of work within the same bill?
Yes. This applies in Private Family (PFLRS) cases which may include 3 aspects of work. CCMS allows users to claim against 1, 2 or 3 aspects on a single bill. The system will ask the user to select the aspects they wish to claim against at the start of the bill. A fixed fee line can be created per aspect. This means that on the same bill a user can have an aspect that stays in the fixed fee and an aspect that escapes, and separate bills are not required. If the user chooses, separate bills can also be submitted.
Q) When an interim bill is processed, how does a caseworker choose the POAs that will be recouped?
When a provider submits an interim bill, the user will be asked to indicate which POAs should be recouped. The caseworker processing the bill will also review the POAs paid on the case, and may choose to recoup POAs that have not been specified, as they do currently when bills are submitted for cases managed on paper.
Q) How does the provider bill on a linked case, if the lead case ends but the other case (the second certificate) carries on?
The lead case link is used for billing purposes only. The process allows caseworkers to work with providers to change the case that is the lead case or remove the lead case completely so that separate, apportioned billing can take place on each case if required. The provider should contact the LAA via a 'provider enquiry' task on CCMS to explain why the lead case link needs to be broken and re-set.
Q) Where cases are linked, if one case 'breaks away', i.e. if the client moves to a new firm, does this affect the lead case / billing?
If one case 'breaks away' (i.e. if the client moves to a new firm) this does affect the lead case / billing. As part of the provider transfer process the cost limits allocated to the lead and linked and breakaway cases will need to be amended as appropriate, and in some circumstances a new lead case will need to be set up as well. This is all part of the provider transfer process
Q) Can an additional client / certificate be linked to an existing set of linked cases?
Yes.
Q) For claims under FAS, is the original Advocate Attendance forms still required?
In line with the current process, we will accept a scanned version of the Advocates Attendance Form.
Q) Do electronically scanned documents need to be certified as originals?
Yes.
Q) On a transferred case, how do you bill under FAS?

The existing process should be followed.
Q) At final billing stage, are copies of counsel claims or fee notes required as evidence?
No, the provider does not need to upload copies of counsel claims or fee notes as evidence, unless they have included counsels' costs within your claim.
Q) Do counsel need to be paid before the provider?
In family cases, where counsel claim costs under the FAS / FGF schemes, all counsel must be paid before the provider can submit their final bill. For civil (non-family) cases, the provider should submit their bill first. Counsel can then submit their bill, and the bills will be processed and paid at the same time.
Q) If counsel's bill is less than their allocated costs on assessment, does the LAA change the apportionment?
No, this is managed by the provider and cannot be amended by a LAA caseworker.
Q) Can providers and assigned counsel see a breakdown of each other's claims, e.g. FAS bolt-ons and conference fees?
The system only shows individual counsel's total costs and what they claimed on their own bills. The provider can see total costs claimed for each bill submitted on a certificate but not individual items claimed within each bill.
Q) If there was a dispute over costs with counsel and providers, who resolves this?
Disputes over costs between counsel and providers should be resolved between themselves.
Q) If evidence has been provided in support of a POA disbursement, does it need to be re-submitted with the final bill?
The system will not make the link between previously requested evidence and newly requested evidence. Any previously submitted evidence is stored on the system. Therefore, when the new request for evidence is sent, replying to say it has already been sent (giving details of when, and with what submission) is a valid reply.
Q) What happens when providers are intervened?
Intervention will result in two outcomes. One option is that the case will transfer to a new acting solicitor and all billing from all providers can continue as normal. The other option is that a case is discharged because there is no acting solicitor.
Q) Will counsel be able to claim when they have acted on a case for a provider who has intervened?
Yes. The LAA caseworkers will work with counsel to ensure that counsel can bill their costs via CCMS.
Q) Where a case escapes the fixed fee, will late submission penalties or sanctions be applied?
The system does not enforce such rules automatically. The rules on timely reporting have not changed. Caseworkers and Contract Managers will manually enforce rules for late submission, as appropriate.
Q) Will we need to provide evidence in support of court assessed bills?
The evidence requirements have not changed.
Q) Will separate bills be required where different providers are representing clients on linked cases?
If different firms are handling different legally linked cases, separate pre-apportioned bills will be required.

Q) Will the amount of time and cost to prepare a bill change?

We will continue to assess the time claimed for bill preparation and pay those costs considered reasonable.

Q) In civil (non-family) cases, who decides if the provider should include counsels' costs within their claim?

This should be agreed between the provider and chambers.

Q) Do advocates have to physically sign anything when submitting their bill?

All portal users agree to abide by the Terms and Conditions of the Online Portal. These can be found on the portal home page. There is a billing declaration and tick box agreement which advocates have to tick when submitting their claims. This removes the need to physically sign a bill.

Q) Is there a deadline for advocates completing a bill on CCMS, or any sanction for late billing?

The system does not automatically enforce these, and there is no change to current rules.

Q) Can advocates claim for payment directly on court-assessed bills?

In civil (non-family) cases, advocates can choose to submit their own claim through CCMS or the acting provider can include advocacy costs within their own claim. If this latter option is used, all costs will be paid directly to the provider who will be responsible for forwarding costs due to advocates. In family cases, advocates should continue to claim directly under the FAS / FGF schemes.

Q) Can cases outside of FAS (e.g. Rule 16.4 Child Abduction cases) now be billed directly by advocates rather than through providers?

Yes.

Q) Do advocates still have to send copies of invoices to providers?

Yes. This helps ensure that the costs allocated to advocates are correct and cover the cost of work undertaken.

Q) Are there controls in place to prevent a provider including advocate's costs within their claim if this has not been agreed with the advocate?

The system will not prevent the provider including these costs. However, any advocates assigned to the case are sent a notification once the provider has submitted their final bill. At this stage, advocates can submit their own bill for the case, allowing caseworkers to identify if the provider has included counsels costs. In this scenario, the bill submitted by advocates is paid and the appropriate costs disallowed from the providers claim.

Q) What happens when a family case escapes the fixed fee and the proceedings have been heard in more than one court?

The costs can't be claimed as part of one bill so two separate bills must be submitted - an interim and final bill.

Q) What evidence do I need as proof of panel membership?

When claiming membership enhancement, written justification is sufficient evidence of panel membership as long as the name of the fee earner and the panel are included.

PAYMENT ON ACCOUNT

Q) Are POA payment rules the same, i.e. only two POA's profit costs can be submitted per 12 months?

Yes.
Q) Do providers need to submit a copy of the ledger to show evidence of costs incurred in support of POA Profit costs?
Yes, we require evidence to ensure payments on account are claimed and paid within the appropriate rules.
Q) Do providers still only get paid up to 75% of those costs?
Yes.
Q) Does CCMS identify if a provider is claiming in excess of 75% of the costs?
The provider is asked to enter 100% of the profit costs incurred to date and then the system calculates 75% of the costs.
In cases where a fixed fee applies, do providers receive 75% of the actual costs or the fixed fee amount?
The costs paid are calculated in the same way as the existing process.
Is a separate POA required for every disbursement?
If the type of disbursement to be claimed and the VAT value is the same, claims can be bundled together and one line entered into CCMS as long as the evidence includes a breakdown of each of the items claimed.
Will CCMS provide a running total of costs on a case?
CCMS will provide summary level information about POAs and bills which have been submitted. However, it is not designed as a case management system and cannot be used as such. You should continue to use your own case management system or existing processes to manage the case costs.

SYSTEM COMPATIBILITY
Q) Does the training work on MACs?
Yes, but in order to complete the training you will require Adobe Flash Player.
Q) What if CCMS isn't compatible with my internet browser?
We expect CCMS to work with the main internet browsers as it complies with the relevant standards defined by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) which sets web standards. Where browser issues are identified, the LAA will investigate to ensure that there is no issue with CCMS or our compliance with the standards. Where the issue isn't caused by CCMS or doesn't question our compliance, we'd recommend that you change your browser which is quick and easy to do.
Q) What if both CCMS and a browser are fully compliant with the W3C standards but aren't compatible?
Most modern browsers comply with the standards but some aspects of the standards are not prescriptive. As a result, some standards have been implemented differently in different browsers. Due to the large number of browsers and browser versions available on the market (in 2014, no fewer than 30 different versions of Firefox alone were released) it would be impractical and cost-prohibitive for the LAA to test CCMS against every browser.

TRANSFERRING A CERTIFICATE
Q) Do providers need to know the certificate reference to transfer a certificate from another firm to themselves?

No. The new provider will request a transfer as a general enquiry, submitted through the 'Create Request' area of the system. If the provider does not have the certificate reference, they can provide the client and case details, which will allow us to identify the certificate.

Q) What happens if a case is transferred from a firm that is not using CCMS and vice versa?

Transitional processes are in place. We close the existing case on the system it was created on and open a new case on the system used by the new firm. The closure is not an official discharge but a 'behind the scenes' closure that allows:

- the systems to handle billing processes correctly and
- seamless transition of the case for clients and providers.

Q) On a transferred case, what does a new provider see on the case statement of account?

The new provider will see the total costs claimed by the previous provider, including POAs and bills. This will be at summary level. The new provider will not be able to see details of the items claimed.

Q) On a transferred case, does the costs limitation transfer across?

When a case is transferred, the new provider must allocate costs to themselves, ensuring sufficient costs remain with the previous firm to cover the value of any work undertaken.

USER SET-UP

Q) Will users have individual log-ins or will log-ins be firm wide?

Log-ins will be for individuals. Access will depend on the role assigned to users.

Q) Can individuals have more than one role within CCMS?

Yes. Individuals can be assigned more than one role depending on the functions and activities they will undertake through CCMS.

Q) How can a user get access to the system?

The CCMS Firm / Chambers Administrator is responsible for giving roles to each person who requires CCMS access within your organisation. If you are not sure who your CCMS Firm Administrator is, please contact Online Support.

Q) How do counsel and clerks access CCMS?

Counsel are linked to their main chambers. Clerks can work on behalf of all counsel within chambers using a chambers level log in. The CCMS Chambers Administrator is responsible for setting up clerks to use CCMS. If counsel undertake work for more than one chambers, they will need to delegate access to their own individual account to any clerks who are not in their main chambers.

Q) Will costs draftsmen / lawyers have access to CCMS?

You can set up costs draftsmen / lawyers as users giving them the specific access needed to create bills in CCMS. You can also give them a role which allows them to submit bills.

Q) Can a user access all areas of the system?

No, the user roles available limit the access a user has.

Q) Can a user access all cases?

Individual users can only see cases they are allocated to as a case contact. Cross Office Access or the Office Manager role is required to allow them to see other cases across the firm.

Q) Is there a role which allows a user to access all cases?

Yes, the Office Manager will allow a user to access all cases. The Cross Office Access role can also be given to any user. This can be used to supplement an existing role, and allows the user to see cases across the firm.

VERY HIGH COST CASES (VHCC)

Q) Are VHCCs managed via CCMS? Does the process change?

Yes, VHCCs are managed through CCMS. The process of negotiating a case plan takes place offline. Billing is undertaken through the system, but while CCMS will price claims for other types of case, the rates to be claimed for high cost cases are entered manually as the bill is entered.

Q) Will events-based cases be on CCMS?

Yes, all civil and family applications are managed online.

Q) Will advocates receive notifications when VHCC case plans are submitted on a case they're assigned to?

The system doesn't automatically send notifications when a case plan has been submitted but caseworkers will send them out if required.

Q) How will the introduction of outcomes impact on billing at various stages / events for VHCC? Will this mean we can only bill once at the end of the case?

Staged billing is allowed, as it is now on a VHCC case. The system offers an option to send interim bills throughout the VHCC case. All outcomes still need to be submitted before the final bill is sent.