



Welcome to the Legal Aid Online E-Newsletter - our monthly updates highlight new developments and forthcoming events and provide hints and tips and keep you up to date on forthcoming events and new features.

If you have any comments or feedback about this E-Newsletter or about Legal Aid Online, please contact Diane Ireland using the contact details at the end of this newsletter.

January 2012

Online accounts update

From 29 November 2011, we made available new functions and improvements to Legal Aid Online, including the following online account updates.

Advice & Assistance Account Upgrade

We have received very positive feedback regarding the changes to the online advice & assistance account. We have also received a number of queries about the changes. To help you further, we have outlined below our guidance on the most common queries:

Criminal Advice & Assistance Start and Stop Times

Under the Criminal Code of Practice, it is a requirement to record start/stop times on your file notes. It is mandatory to provide this information with the account as it allows the system to automatically generate the correct fee for you and avoids any errors in recording the overall time spent. It also means that we do not have to delay payment of your account by having to ask you for this information if it is not provided.

Apportionment – Requirement for Legal Aid Reference Numbers

It must be clear and transparent in your accounts that travel and, where appropriate, waiting time have been properly apportioned to ensure that:

- one client does not subsidise another client, as some certificates may be subject to a contribution or claw-back; and
- there is no duplication of charging.

It must also be clear in each individual account what proportion of travel and waiting time has been allocated to that account (see Civil Legal Assistance Handbook, Part V – Advice and Assistance Accounts, Sections 10.10 to 10.16. This applies to both civil and criminal advice and assistance).

To assess whether charges have been apportioned correctly, we need to know the legal aid reference number(s) of the other case(s) so that we can check them. It is not sufficient to only provide names because client(s) could have multiple grants of legal assistance.

To assess each charge and how it should be apportioned, you need to provide the relevant legal aid reference number(s) to be conjoined. To avoid duplication of work, we have changed the online account synopsis so that you do not need to record the other legal aid reference numbers relevant to apportionment in that form.

However, we recognise that some firms may not have recorded the reference numbers of the cases dealt with at the same time, and that it may be unduly burdensome to review previous records. For older cases, we will allow a period of adjustment to this new process. However, we expect this information to be recorded wherever possible. This requirement applies to both online and paper accounts.

Work item – 'Other' - only used for £Nil Entries

The 'other' work item is for nil entries only. If you select the work item 'other', you will be prompted to enter a description and this will be added to your account with a value of £0.00.

Draft Accounts

This only applies to editing draft accounts which you created prior to 29 November 2011.

In cases where your draft account contains a work item where start and stop times are required, and you are yet to enter these, you will be prompted to update the start and stop time information to allow you to continue to draft the account. This is to allow the apportionment to be automatically calculated online. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact 0131 240 2058.

Online accounts update cont.

Advice & Assistance Account Upgrade Cont.

Performance

If you are experiencing some delay when selecting work items in the new Advice & Assistance account and you are using **IE7 or a newer version**, we recommend that you install the **Google Chrome Frame plugin** which you can access from the legal aid online log in page.

Legal Aid Online secure login

Legal Aid Online

Enter your username and password to log in to your account.

Username:

Password:

Need some help?

Get in touch with our Helpline

For assistance with Legal Aid Online please telephone **0131 240 2037** or email online@slab.org.uk

Our Helpline is open Monday to Friday 09:00 to 17:00.

No account yet? Sign up for Legal Aid Online now!

It is quick and easy. Please refer to our "[Getting started](#)" guide for details.

News and updates

System Availability

The LAOL Helpdesk will close at 12:00pm on the 23rd and 30th December 2011

Police station duty scheme

Go to our [news](#) section of our main website to view information about the operation of the police station duty scheme and our comments on the information issued by the Law Society on 1.7.11

New version of Legal Aid Online is launched

If your browser is Internet Explorer 6 or older, you will need to upgrade to a newer version - please see the links below to help you.

Browser Information

For **IE7 and later** we recommend you install the [Google Chrome Frame plugin](#)

Please note that **Internet Explorer 6 is no longer supported**. To upgrade to a supported version please download any of the following browsers:

- [IE7 - minimum supported version](#)
- [IE8 - recommended by Microsoft for Windows XP users](#)
- [Firefox - great for all platforms](#)

- [Chrome - great for all platforms](#)

Reset account to 'Draft' status

We have added functionality to allow you to reset an account to draft once it has been submitted to us. You may want to do this if, for example, you realise that you have missed items from your submitted account. You can do this through 'View case' by selecting 'Details' next to the account you wish to reset to draft. Select 'Reset', and once you have entered a reason, it will be reset to draft. You will then be able to edit the account. If there is no reset option available, then your account is no longer at a stage in the process at which it can be reset and you should contact the Accounts Department.

VIEW CASE

LARN: C195070511 [Create New Message](#) APPLICANT: SHIRLEY CLAOF

[Return to View Case](#)

Case Actions

[View Case Printable Summary](#) [Create New Sanction](#) [Create New Stage Report](#) [Add Attachments](#) [Print Barcode](#)

Actions	Type	Invoice Id	Registration Number	Date	Status	Lodged Amount	Paid Amount
View Print Reset	Reimbursements	4670341	REG0004559809	07/12/2011	Under Assessment	£200.00	
View Print Reset	Stage Payment	4670342	REG0004561105	07/12/2011	Under Assessment	£1,500.00	

[Return to View Case](#)

Roadshow update

We have just completed a series of online account roadshows. These gave you an opportunity to tell us what you think about the online accounts process, find out about recent online accounts updates, learn about planned developments and receive online accounts demonstrations.

These sessions were very popular and all the feedback provided is being reviewed so that we can include changes or improvements in the future. Further road-shows will be planned around Easter 2012 to further promote new online account services. We will also work closely with the Accounts Specialist Team for the roll out and training for the solemn account.

Legal Aid Online Client Mandates

Keep the signed client mandate on file

Legal Aid Online Client Mandates are important forms because these are the documents that contain important declarations that both the applicant and solicitor read and sign as part of the process of making the application. It is important that the mandates are completed in every case by you and the applicant and that they are kept in your file and are readily available to us. If you are unable to produce the completed mandate when requested by us, we may not be able to pay your account or may have to recoup payments we have already made.

You can complete the mandate using Legal Aid Online when you meet with the applicant in your office, print it out and both sign it. Alternatively, you can print the paper mandates we have produced and made available on our website. You should always use the latest mandates for the purpose of capturing the client's signature. You can find the latest copy of the mandates along with guidance at: <http://www.slab.org.uk/profession/legalaidonline/new%20site%20August%2009/Mandates.htm>

Advice and assistance client mandates

The AA/LAO/CIV and AA/LAO/CRIM (Version June 2011) include an important declaration about the applicant's capital. For civil and children's advice and assistance, please note that if you use Legal Aid Online to complete the mandates, the capital declaration has not yet been updated on the system and the applicant must also sign the AA/FIN//CIV, available on our website at: <http://www.slab.org.uk/profession/eForms/index.htm>

Data capture forms—a useful resource for you

For some types of cases, we have also provided a 'data capture' form which enables the solicitor to record information about the applicant and the case in a paper format. The solicitor can then use this to help them complete the application online themselves; or give it to a member of staff to complete online or dictate the details to a member of staff to complete the application online. **The data capture form does not require to be signed.**

Data capture forms are available for: Criminal ABWOR, summary criminal legal aid applications, Criminal Appeals Reg 15, civil legal aid applications.

General Hints & Tips

- ★ Please ensure you select the correct aid type when submitting advice & Assistance applications online for children's cases. If the matter relates to Children (Scotland) Act—Part II, chapters 2 and 3, then you should make sure you change the aid type from 'civil' to 'children's' and then select the relevant category from the drop down list.
- ★ If you encounter a problem in the process of submitting your applications, you should check whether the original application has been successfully submitted prior to creating another one as this could result in duplicate applications.
- ★ Remember you can now apply for your Criminal Appeal Regulation 15 directly online instead of calling the Board. We have also provided a Regulation 15 data capture form which you can find on the mandate page.

Tip of the Month—financial verification

In Advice & Assistance, if your client has capital and signs the declaration then, when you complete the financial verification section of the application using Legal Aid Online, you should select 'yes' to the question which asks whether the applicant has capital and enter '*Capital declaration signed by the client*' in the 'Evidence seen' description box.

Notifications printing over 2 pages

If you are using Google Chrome as your web browser and you print notifications, you may have noticed that an extra page is produced. This problem is not related to Legal Aid Online. We have contacted Google and they have informed us they are working on the problem. This problem should not arise if you are using any other browsers.

Online Notifications

All system notifications are sent to the person who submitted the application/account. In circumstances where the recipient may not be able to access the notifications, such as whilst on holiday or if they do not regularly use Legal Aid Online, then you should ensure that another person in the firm accesses all of the firm's notifications. You can do this by using the 'Display other firm notifications' function on the notifications page. You can then view all the firm's notifications and action them where necessary.

If you have any questions or comments about Legal Aid Online, or you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please contact Diane Ireland:

Email: irelanddi@slab.org.uk

Phone: 0131 240 2013

www.slab.org.uk/online

