

Dear ACL Legal Aid Group member,

***Re: Upgrade to CCMS and Update following meeting***

I would like to take this opportunity to update you following our meeting with the LAA and also to advise of some known ongoing issues and planned CCMS server restart.

***Update:***

***Evidential Requirements:***

Some members reported seeing unusual documentation requests following the submission of CCMS line-by-line bills. The CCMS notifications will automatically request documentation based on the content in your bill e.g. if there is a certain percentage of correspondence to the document lines then the LAA will also request sight of the correspondence. We intend to liaise with the LAA further on this point as it is key we know what documentation is likely to be requested when preparing any bill!

In terms of what evidence is required, the LAA have advised that the evidence which should be required is as per the checklists. **Importantly, the LAA have indicated that the advice in the Court Assessed Bills – Advanced: Quick Guide is no longer valid and this has now been removed from their website.** Consequently, if you have a claim which could qualify for Court assessment but you choose to submit a line-by-line CCMS bill for assessment, you cannot just provide file notes in excess of 3 hours – you will need to provide the documents as required in the checklist as for any other line-by-line CCMS claim.

***Performance Issues:***

Whilst the LAA have not been able to resolve the performance issues experienced with the larger bills, they have now identified the trigger point – 88 items. They are actively investigating options to resolve the performance issues, albeit, it does not seem like there will be a quick fix.

We have received confirmation that if you have a bill that would ordinarily be assessed by the LAA which will exceed 88 items, there is no need to try entering it on the CCMS, you can simply ask their online support team for permission to submit a summary level claim based on the likely number of items. Naturally, if the claim is one which would have qualified for Court assessment, you can simply proceed straight to a summary level claim in accordance with the guidance.

***CCMS Issues:***

There are two known issues with the CCMS which have recently arisen. The first issue relates to the CCMS asking questions which are irrelevant to the bill e.g. asking if the bill is for pre-high cost contract costs on cases which were never high cost. If the question comes up, you can select 'yes' and proceed as normal. The second issue relates to the ghost deletion of bills i.e. bills being deleted for no discernible reason. Both issues are being investigated by the LAA and, at least the first, is believed to be linked to the performance issues experienced with the larger bills.

The LAA restarted the server on Monday evening and it is hoped that the restart will resolve both the issue regarding irrelevant questions and the ghost deletion of bills but, it might not. If any member experiences irrelevant questions or ghost deletion of bills since the server restart, please do report these to the LAA via their Online Support Team through [online-support@justice.gov.uk](mailto:online-support@justice.gov.uk)

I have not been provided with any indication that the server restart will resolve the performance issues experienced with larger bills.

Thank you again for everyone who provided feedback in anticipation of the meeting – all information gathered was provided to the LAA in an anonymised format. Your ongoing assistance in identifying and reporting issues assists everyone so please do keep reporting the issues to the LAA and to us, particularly if it is an issue likely to impact on the wider Costs Lawyer community.

Kind regards,

Charlotte Flanders | ACL LAG Executive Committee



Association of Costs Lawyers, Inspire House, 1 Vinces Road, Diss, Norfolk IP22 4HQ  
Tel: 0203 174 0967 E: [jogeorge@costslawyer.co.uk](mailto:jogeorge@costslawyer.co.uk) [www.associationofcostslawyers.co.uk](http://www.associationofcostslawyers.co.uk)

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