



17 September 2025

Dear Provider,

Today's message provides an update on Crime Restoration, and some guidance ahead of Civil Restoration.

As of Monday 15 September, we are pleased to have begun restoring access to our **Crime Apply** and **Submit a Crime Form (NSCC)** platforms. Providers with Crime contracts (including those with both Crime and Civil Contracts) will have begun to receive activation emails for their users in order to access **Sign in to Legal Aid Services (SiLAS)** which is the replacement to our legacy sign-on platform Portal. So far, we have seen an uptake of **around 7,000** users activated, and applications flowing through the system.

As we are still working through the process of restoring Civil Applications (Civil Apply and CCMS), Civil only providers will **not yet receive their SiLAS activation emails**. This is because there will be no applications to be accessed through SiLAS at this time. This will be the same for civil users that work for providers who have Crime and Civil contracts, they will not be able to access any Civil applications once signed into SiLAS.

We are continuing to engage with representative bodies to understand your experiences and help us shape the steps to system restoration in a way which supports you most effectively. Thank you for your understanding and patience.

Crime Restoration

As a reminder, in order to access the Crime Applications, you will need to complete your account activation, and then the identified Administrator for your company or associated provider will be able to assign the correct permissions to access Crime Apply and Submit a Crime Form (NSCC). Once this has been done, you will be able to see these applications once you have logged into SiLAS.

Your activation emails will come from laa.activation@notifications.service.gov.uk with the title '**Sign in to legal aid services – activate your account**'. If you have not received your activation email as expected, please allow another 48 hours before contacting our Service Desk as we are in the process of sending the final activations.

Key information to be aware of

- For Criminal Legal Aid applications, we will continue to allow submissions via the email contingency route for **two weeks** following system restoration. This is to help with the transition from manual to digital processes for both providers and LAA staff. The last date for Criminal Legal Aid email submissions will be **Tuesday 30 September by 19:00**
- For Non-Standard Crime Claims (**CRM 4** - application for prior authority to incur disbursements in criminal cases and **CRM 5** - application for extension of upper limit) we will be returning to **digital**

submissions only once Submit a Crime Form is restored. Please do not submit any CRM4s by email from **Wednesday 17 September 2025**

As a reminder, you are still permitted to use your delegated functions for Representation to providers on **Summary only, Either way and Prescribed Proceedings cases in the Magistrates' Court or the Youth Court**, where the defendant is on a passported benefit, unemployed or is a Youth. This will continue until 30 September 2025, when the delegated tables will be updated.

We have sent out links to the relevant guidance on Monday which contain more detail on **activating your account, process changes, and where to seek support**, but as a reminder you can find these at the following links:

- [Crime applications restoration guidance – Legal Aid Learning](#) (opens in browser)
- [Sign in to legal aid services – Legal Aid Learning](#) (opens in browser)

Civil Restoration

To help you consider how to prepare for restoration, the following table details where responsibilities will lie once services are restored, for the input or update of applications. We will provide further detailed guidance relating to how onboarding and application access will be managed, ahead of systems resuming.

Application type

Who will enter or update the information

1. Existing Applications and Bills input prior to service outage

LAA will process and update – you are not required to take action

2. Contingency Applications and Amendments - the work that providers have submitted to the LAA by email via a manual contingency form and the LAA has already communicated a decision on **LAA will enter the item of work and update with the decision made by us** – you are not required to take action

3. Delegated Applications and Amendments - the work that providers have used delegated functions on and has not yet been submitted to the LAA **Providers will need to create new applications and enter them on CCMS** for all delegated cases that have started during the service outage and yet to be submitted to the LAA. **LAA will consider these** on CCMS once submitted as they did prior to the system outage.

4. High-Cost Family Work **LAA will enter and update** contingency case plans (including registration requests and amendments)

5. Exceptional and Complex Cases those designated under special cases work, and non-family high-cost cases **LAA will enter and update** contingency applications, contingency amendments and high-cost civil (non-family) contingency case plans.

Monitoring Payment and Recoupment

The average payment scheme will run until access to CCMS is restored for all users, and providers have had a full week to submit payments on account and bills, ensuring a stability of cash flow. The final average payment will be scheduled for the week before the first full week of claims being paid via the system, and we will provide the planned dates for this once we start onboarding users to the system.

Once underway, the balancing and recoupment phase of the Average Payment scheme will be kept under review by LAA.

The pace of recoupment will be capped at 25% of the weekly average but will be kept under close review. For example, if the weekly contingency payment you have received was £10,000 per week, the LAA would recoup £2,500 per week until the total amount of all contingency payments is recouped. The process of recouping the contingency payment will be started by the LAA once 2 weeks have passed, following the final average payment.

If the average pace of billing during the recovery period is significantly below this due to any limitations which occur on LAA processing, the pace of recoupment will be adjusted to accommodate this to ensure providers can plan for and rely on expected cashflow. We will also consider providers' overall billing patterns when considering this.

Where individual providers or counsel are experiencing hardship during the recoupment period, we will implement an escalation process to discuss on a case-by-case basis any appropriate prioritisation or adjustment to the recoupment schedule. Details of that process will be published prior to the recoupment period.

With thanks to input from the representative bodies, we understand that Payments on Account (POA) to providers and Family Advocacy Scheme (FAS) payments to barristers will form most priority submissions. We are confident we will be able to return to pre-outage payment timescales for these.

Cases created and submitted prior to the system being taken down on 16 May will be processed by LAA upon restoration of internal system access: this means providers may receive payment for these claims ahead of their own external access being approved. Some of these payments have already been made. Providers should monitor their remittance statements for these payments in the absence of any CCMS notifications.

Decisions on Delegated Cases during System Outage

As you upload delegated applications on to CCMS, we will begin to process them for certificate issue. Part of this process involves the review of means and merits to determine eligibility– this will continue to be conducted in line with the contract and regulations. However, we understand that extenuating circumstances may have occurred more frequently during the period of Business Continuity measures. As long as you can show you have followed a compliant process and made justifiable decisions, we expect to be able to issue substantive certificates.

FAQs

Updates have been made to the [SiLAS Registration and Sign In FAQs](#) (opens in browser) including the following:

- I need help unblocking my account when flagged as at-risk
- Can providers access SiLAS from outside the UK?
- Is Microsoft Authenticator a legitimate part of signing into SiLAS?

Updates have been made to the [SiLAS Managing your Users FAQs](#) (opens in browser) including the following:

- Why can I see account numbers in my SiLAS list for offices that no longer hold a live contract?