



27 October 2025

Dear Provider,

Thank you for your continued patience and constructive engagement with us while we work on system restoration.

Exceptional and Complex Cases (ECC) timelines and application guidance

Following our communication on 6 October 2025, please note the following updated guidance in relation to ECC case timelines and applications: [Legal Aid Agency cyber security incident - GOV.UK](#)

Since the cyber-attack we had to undertake a full manual process for cases that fall under our Exceptional and Complex Case Team (ECCT). At present, 85% of our intake is being processed within 8 weeks of receipt, which is longer than we would normally look to process these matters. Civil processing information is available here [Civil processing dates - GOV.UK](#). To support the processing of submissions,

we wanted to relay some guidance which we hope will help you and the ECCT work through each application as quickly as possible. That guidance is set out below.

Where possible, providers should submit emergency funding applications or urgent application/amendment requests in good time prior to the relevant court/procedural deadline. We cannot guarantee that we will process funding requests submitted very close to deadlines due to the volume of applications we are managing manually. Where urgent work is required before the LAA determines the application, we will consider using our power to backdate funding to include this work. We appreciate that some applications may, depending on the circumstances, seek funding for imminent work. The reasons for the request for prioritisation should be specified clearly at the head of the email attaching the application, outlining fully what the urgency is and specifying key dates.

ECCT will generally accept an emergency funding application that satisfies regulation 46 of the CLA (Merits Criteria) Regulations 2013 (see LCG under section 4 at paragraphs 7.29-7.30) or a request to expedite an application/amendment where there is a legal or procedural deadline e.g.

- Where statutory limitation is about to expire
- For representation at a final or main hearing.
- Or to meet the deadline to lodge an appeal.

Where you have submitted a full application for funding on a non-emergency basis and the matter has now become urgent, please contact us by calling our customer services team on 0300 200 2020, to explain when the application was made and explaining fully why it is now urgent. Alternatively, you can email us with this information on ContactECC@justice.gov.uk.

We respectfully ask that you refrain from chasing funding requests that do not meet the above urgency criteria as this adds delay to working through our contingency intake. We will continue to update you as we progress your application.

For details of our current contingency arrangements in ECCT please see [ECCT submission quick guide](#). We ask that you include a copy of the [ECCT application coversheet](#) when making submissions.

Misinformation around CCMS and the LAA Average Payment Scheme

We are aware that emails have been circulating about CCMS and the LAA average payment scheme which do not originate from the LAA.

Please note that the latest position on systems restoration will be communicated in emails from us and on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk), and any communication originating from third parties should not be treated as a reliable source of information.

The average payment scheme is available if providers require payment support and, once paid, can be used at your discretion to cover any expert's costs incurred in the running of your cases. In the event that the average payment amount does not cover planned payments for large disbursements, an escalated payment for a specific amount can be sought via your contract manager.

Extension to the time and cost limits for emergency representation

As communicated on Thursday 23 October 2025, we would like to remind you that following a review of business continuity measures, and to support providers for Civil Application, we have announced a further extension to the time and cost limits for emergency representation.

The new limits for emergency representation granted under Delegated Functions has increased from 24 weeks to 32 weeks, and from £6,750 to £9,000 in costs.

Further information is available on GOV.UK - [Civil applications: Delegated functions to grant emergency funding](#)