



15 May 2026

Dear Provider,

Supporting the expansion of legal aid for inquests

The government has committed to expanding access to legal aid for inquests as part of the Public Office (Accountability) Bill (often referred to as the Hillsborough Law). This will significantly increase the number of people eligible for legal aid at inquests and, in turn, the volume of inquest work across the system.

To support this expansion, we are building new digital systems and processes specifically designed to support the delivery of inquest legal aid. We now need provider input to ensure this work reflects the reality of practice and supports a sustainable market as demand grows.

We are therefore seeking a mix of providers to take part in targeted user research including those currently undertaking inquest work and those considering expanding into this area in future.

Sign up here and select inquests: [LAA Digital - take part in user research with us](#)

Our Vision for Legal Aid

We want to transform and improve how legal aid is delivered. Our aim is to:

- Streamline the process for applicants to access legal aid
- Make it easier for providers to work with us

Before the cyber-attack, we had already begun a major digital transformation programme. While our long-term ambition remains unchanged, the attack created new challenges. We have needed to recover, strengthen, and in some cases replace our systems, reinforcing the urgency of transformation.

This programme gives us a valuable opportunity to take a more holistic view of our systems and the administration of legal aid for the first time — and we want providers to play an active role in shaping this.

The Transformation Programme

We are now embarking on a multi-year programme of work, starting with civil legal aid. Our focus is to replace legacy technology with modern, flexible, and secure services.

We recognise that modernising systems alone is not enough. We must also transform processes, improve how services are delivered, and ensure the long-term sustainability of legal aid.

Ministers have secured additional funding for this work, demonstrating a strong commitment across the department to the future of legal aid.

User Research with Providers

We will continue to work closely with representative bodies to ensure strong engagement with providers throughout the transformation programme.

Alongside this, we have established a research panel made up of providers who have taken part in research and testing sessions over recent months. This panel has already played a vital role in shaping the future of our digital services. We have worked with solicitors across a wide range of projects, including testing the new Record Controlled Work process, exploring how financial contributions impact criminal legal aid, and improving journeys in Crime Apply and billing for family claims.

This research is already driving meaningful change. Panel members have directly influenced how we design services by helping us focus on the right problems, refine our approach, and ensure that new systems reflect the realities of legal aid work. Their input is helping us build services that are more practical, effective, and easier to use for those delivering legal aid every day.

How to Take Part

We are looking to grow the panel so that more solicitors can help shape future services. We are therefore keen to involve a mix of providers to take part in targeted user research, including those currently undertaking inquest work and those considering expanding into this area in future. to help inform how future services support this area.

Research sessions typically last up to 60 minutes and are usually conducted remotely via Microsoft Teams (or a suitable alternative), although in-person sessions can be arranged where helpful.

You can take part in one-off sessions or join a series of sessions, with monthly research campaigns already underway. Sessions may include prototype walkthroughs, accessibility testing, or discussions about new designs before they go live. We will ask for your views on any changes and what would make systems and processes work better in practice.

Sign up here: [LAA Digital – take part in user research with us](#)

Data Protection and Privacy

Your details will be stored securely in line with GDPR requirements. We will only contact you about relevant sessions, and you can opt out at any time.

Yours sincerely,
Legal Aid Agency