



Legal Aid Agency

21 September 2026

Dear Provider,

For the attention of all legal aid practitioners:

Updates marked for the attention of ‘legal aid practitioners’ are intended for all Solicitors, Barristers and others who interact with the Legal Aid Agency’s systems and processes.

Changes to Special Guardianship Order (SGO) Proceedings in CCMS and Civil Apply

We are making changes to Special Guardianship Order (SGO) case categories in CCMS and Civil Apply to help providers identify the correct application route and ensure applications are assessed under the appropriate funding criteria.

These changes are designed to help providers identify the correct case category at the point of application; improving accuracy and reducing rework and administrative burden.

From 22 September 2026, new SGO case categories and validation checks will be introduced in CCMS and Civil Apply.

New proceedings will be available for:

- Public Law Special Guardianship Order cases
- Applications to vary or discharge a Special Guardianship Order

We are also updating existing SGO category names and descriptions to make it clearer which proceeding category should be selected for parental and non-parental guardianship cases.

As part of the merits assessment, providers will be asked additional questions to confirm:

- whether the client is the parent of, or has parental responsibility for, the child subject to the proceedings
- whether the client opposes the Special Guardianship Order
- for public law matters, whether the application is being heard as part of ongoing public law proceedings

These responses will be used to validate that the correct case category has been selected.