



Advice and assistance reforms update

To: Civil advice and assistance solicitors

Issue 9
22 May 2007

Your practitioner number
Your firm code
Your branch code

This update mailshot contains information and guidance about the changes in civil advice and assistance that are now in use from 1 May 2007.

Please ensure that all staff involved in providing civil advice and assistance are made aware of its contents.

Civil advice and assistance update contents

This update provides further guidance on the civil advice and assistance reforms that came into effect on 1 May 2007 and includes:

- **Attached - Further guidance on completing the new forms** - this covers some of the common questions and issues that solicitors have been raising since the changes came into use on 1 May 2007. The guidance is set out by section, as in the forms. This also includes guidance on applying for increases in authorised expenditure for applications and previous increases granted before 1 May 2007.

You should read this guidance to ensure you are completing the new forms correctly, to help avoid any delays in having applications or increase requests rejected.

- **Enclosed - Civil advice and assistance reform - your guide to the changes** - provides you with details on how civil advice and assistance operates. It includes greater detail on some elements of the new system, such as diagnostic advice and assistance, as well as covering the main points included in guidance issued with update 7. The guide also includes flowcharts of the key steps in an application. There are questions and answers that cover the issues that solicitors raised at information seminars, together with common issues that have emerged over the first weeks of the new system being in operation, which are also detailed in the further guidance list.

We will be issuing shortly guidance and copies of the new advice and assistance accounts synopsis forms that the Board issues for each case. For criminal practitioners, we will also be issuing the criminal increase form and guidance.