



# Summary criminal legal assistance reform

*Implementation date: 30 June 2008*

TO: All criminal legal assistance solicitors

Mailing 6: 27 June 2008

*Your practitioner number*

*Your firm and branch code*

## REFORM OF SUMMARY CRIMINAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE: CATEGORY CODES CARD, EQUALITY CARD AND ORDERING FORMS

This mailing provides an update on information in Mailing 5, about form starter packs and materials for use from 30 June 2008. It also includes a list of contacts for any questions or queries about the summary criminal reforms. Enclosed with this letter are:

- Category Codes Card - in use from 30 June 2008
- Equality Card - in use from 30 June 2008
- order form for requesting supplies of legal aid materials available to solicitors.

*Please make all staff in your office who are involved with providing criminal legal assistance aware of this mailing.*

### Application form starter packs

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The new forms must be used for all applications for criminal advice and assistance/ABWOR and summary criminal legal aid made from 30 June 2008 onwards.

All starter packs have been issued and were due for delivery by Friday 27 June. In the event that you have not received any forms, you should:

- use our Legal Aid Online service for criminal advice and assistance/ABWOR work
- print out a pdf online version of the forms to complete. These are now available on our website [www.slab.org.uk](http://www.slab.org.uk)
- contact the Board's Communications Department on 0131 240 1985 to request a form is faxed to you, or to check an order, or request additional starter packs.

## Category Codes Card

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Enclosed is the new Categories Code Card, which includes the new criminal advice and assistance/ABWOR codes as provided in mailing 5. You should use this card for applications from 30 June 2008. If you wish further copies of this card, you can order them from our printers Stewarts, on the enclosed order form.

## Equality Card

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We have to collect information to monitor equality of access of people applying for and/or receiving services paid for from the public funds we administer. It is important that you ask your client to complete the equality information on our application forms, to allow us to gather information to monitor equality of access to legal aid.

Enclosed is a new version of our Equality Card. You should now destroy the Equality Card issued last year (which is on yellow card). You should use this card when completing the criminal application forms:

- **CRIM/SUMMARY**- Application for criminal legal aid in summary proceedings - Section L
- **AA/APP/CRIM** - Application for criminal advice and assistance/ABWOR - Section J
- You also use this card when completing advice and assistance applications for civil and children's cases.

We have made a number of changes to both the questions asked on the application forms and to the Equality Card, to make the information requested simpler to provide.

To complete the equality questions, you should give the Equality Card to your client and either:

- have the client complete the equality section - which is just before the application's declaration, where they sign the form
- ask them to tell you their answers to complete on the form

There are three equality questions to be answered:

- having asked your client to answer the questions, if they do not wish to answer, put a cross at question 1
- question 2 about ethnic group is now easier to complete. There is now just one number to be provided, with the option of writing in a specific answer where an "other" answer option is chosen.
- question 3 about disability now has answer options as cross boxes on the form. The card includes a definition of disability.

Although we will not return applications where the client has not answered these questions, it is important that you encourage clients to answer these questions.

You should also note that:

- the front page of the Equality Card explains to your client why we collect equality information
- your client should return the Equality Card to you after completing the section
- if you wish further copies of this card, you can order them from our printers Stewarts, on the enclosed order form
- the Equality Card is available in a number of other languages on the Board's website [www.slab.org.uk](http://www.slab.org.uk) in the other languages section. If you require a version in a language or format not available on our website, please contact the Board's Communications Department.

## Ordering printed forms and other legal aid materials

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Enclosed is a new legal aid materials order form for our printers Stewarts. This is also available on our website [www.slab.org.uk](http://www.slab.org.uk) from the forms page of our legal profession section.

You can now order any of the seven new criminal legal aid and advice and assistance/ABWOR forms, which are detailed on page 2. If you wish further starter packs of forms, please contact our Communications Department on 0131 240 1985.

The order form also has a new look, with civil and criminal forms listed on separate pages. You can also now order from Stewarts other legal aid materials including:

- the Keycard, Category Codes Card and Equality Card
- legal aid window stickers, which were previously available from the Board
- promotional leaflets and materials for the public - please note that some new leaflets and materials are being introduced and these will shortly be distributed to legal aid offices

The best way to order is to complete the form and fax it to Stewarts. Orders will be sent to you within 5 working days. Stewarts contact details are:

- • Fax: 01506 460 129
- • Tel: 01506 405 480
- • Postal address: 1 Lister Road, Kirkton Campus, Livingston EH54 7BL.

## Who to contact for queries

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To help you prepare for the changes from 30 June 2008, as well as holding a series of information seminars, we have issued a range of summary criminal legal assistance reform guidance and mailings, all of which are available on our website [www.slab.org.uk](http://www.slab.org.uk)

We will be issuing further mailings in the next week, and any queries will assist us identify where we could offer additional guidance.

If you have any questions or queries on the reforms, you should refer to our guidance and then if you still have questions, please contact the appropriate area as detailed below.

For questions about:	Name	Telephone number
Information about the summary criminal legal assistance reforms and using the new forms	Kingsley Thomas	0131 240 2085
	Owen Mullan	0131 240 1898
Criminal advice and assistance/ABWOR application queries	Advice and assistance - applications department	0131 240 2066
	Billy Mattison	0131 240 2051
	Kingsley Thomas	0131 240 2085
Summary criminal legal aid applications, or sanction, cease or transfer applications	Alison Craig	0131 240 2098
Accounts queries about criminal legal assistance changes	Steven Carrie	0131 240 2087
	Iain Shaw	0131 240 2054
Legal Aid Online - using the online service or getting started using it	Pat O'Connor	0131 240 1892
	Diane Ireland	0131 240 2013
	or email	<a href="mailto:online@slab.org.uk">online@slab.org.uk</a>
Queries about starter packs of forms, or ordering further starter packs, or copies of guidance materials	Communications Department	0131 240 1985 or email <a href="mailto:general@slab.org.uk">general@slab.org.uk</a>
Ordering ongoing supplies of forms and other materials including the Category Codes Card, Equality Card or Keycard	Stewarts	01506 405 480