

Guidance on making a Proceeds of Crime Act claim: Advocates and litigators

As of Monday 26 March 2018, Proceeds of Crime Act claims will only be accepted on the correct electronic claim form:

PA1: Advocate's claim form submitted to AdvocatesPOCA@justice.gov.uk

PL1: Litigator's Fastrak claim form for costs under £2,000 submitted to pocafastrak@justice.gov.uk

PL2: Litigator's claim for costs over £2,000 submitted to poca@justice.gov.uk

Copies of the form should be downloaded from the gov.uk website:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claims-paid-out-of-the-legal-aid-fund>

Claim forms should always be downloaded from the website rather than saved to your own computer to ensure you are using the most up to date version of the claim form.

The Criminal Cases Unit cannot accept claims that have been prepared on a form saved to a local drive. Protection has been applied to the forms to protect the integrity of the background formulae used to prepare your claim. It is important that this is preserved by downloading a fresh form each time you wish to make a claim.

The claim forms are password protected and whilst we cannot issue the password we are able to assist with any technical issues including adding more lines. Please contact the Criminal Cases Unit via the above mailboxes.

Claim forms should always be emailed as an Excel attachment. Claim forms sent as PDFs, scanned copies or via a cloud storage facility cannot be accepted.

Each claim form contains a declaration box which must be completed for every claim you submit. Agreement to the Legal Aid Agency's statement of acceptance should be indicated by selecting 'yes' from the drop-down list. Claims without a completed declaration field cannot be accepted.

Claim forms need to be completed in full. Information marked with a red asterisk is required to calculate the rate payable.

Claims will need to be made in decimals with hours and minutes or units converted to decimals. For example, 1 hour and 15 minutes would need to be billed as 1.25. The Criminal Cases Unit cannot accept claims that are not made in decimals.

Once your bill has been submitted on a fully completed claim form it should be processed within 20 working days by the Criminal Cases Unit.

Supporting information such as attendance notes may be emailed to the relevant mailbox. Attachments can be accepted up to 10MB.

Supporting information accompanying a PL1 form (Fastrak litigator) must be emailed.

It is recognised the supporting information accompanying a PA1 (advocate's claim) or PL2 (litigator claim over £2,000) may be bulky or difficult to scan. If it is not possible to provide supporting information electronically and you wish to provide a hard copy you will need to wait for the Criminal Cases Unit to issue a claim number and advise which Legal Aid Agency site your hard copy notes should be submitted to. There may be a delay in processing claims where notes are submitted without a reference.

To obtain a reference number please email your completed claim form to the relevant mailbox and explain you wish to provide hard copy supporting material.

Forms prepared on a version of MS Excel that pre-dates 2013 may not have full functionality. This will restrict your ability to use drop down lists but text may be entered instead. Further support can be provided on an individual basis by contacting the Criminal Cases Unit via the relevant POCA mailbox.

Once a claim is assessed the Criminal Cases Unit will unlock a separate redetermination section on the form. You should mark any items for redetermination as 'Yes' and this will automatically populate the relevant information for redetermination. There is a field for you to make any comments relevant to the redetermination. Once completed you may resubmit by email to AdvocatesPOCA@justice.gov.uk , POCA@justice.gov.uk or pocafastrak@justice.gov.uk. It would assist if you could state 'Redetermination Request' and give the client name in the email subject field.