



Ministry  
of Justice



**What do you think about these changes to Legal Aid?**



EasyRead version

# The Ministry of Justice



We are the Ministry of Justice, we are a government department that looks after things like the courts and prisons.



Here we are asking you about some changes to **Legal Aid**.



This is an EasyRead version of the changes that get quite complicated. If you need more details please see: [tinyurl.com/legal-aid-means-test-review](https://tinyurl.com/legal-aid-means-test-review)

## Legal aid



When people go to court or need legal advice they can sometimes get money to help pay for lawyers to give them advice or speak up for them. This is when they do not have enough money to pay for a lawyer themselves.

This is called **legal aid**.



## What do you think about changes to who gets Legal Aid?

We are asking about making changes to who can get legal aid.



We need to know what you think by **7 June 2022**



You can do this on line here:  
**[tinyurl.com/legal-aid-survey](https://tinyurl.com/legal-aid-survey)**

This is not in EasyRead.

## What we check before giving legal aid

We check 2 things before we decide if someone can get legal aid:



1. How much money they have.



2. How likely their case is to be successful.



This way we can make sure the money we have goes to the people who need it most.

## How we asked people what we should change



We had lots of meetings with people who are involved in courts and other interested people and organisations.



## The changes we think we need

At the moment there are 2 different schemes for 2 different types of court cases. These are **criminal cases** and **civil cases**.





A **Criminal case** is when the police think someone has broken the law and it has been decided to take them to court.



A **Civil case** is usually a legal argument between people or organisations who think the other has done something wrong and is usually asking a court to decide on a payment to make up for it.

They have different legal aid rules.  
We want to make them more the same.  
So we want to:



- start with how much people need to live on and how much money they have spare after paying for things they need like rent or mortgage, council tax and childcare



- take away the £545 a month limit on housing costs for single people



- allow some money for work costs



- include money people are paying towards their debts.



**For changes just to the civil legal aid, we want to:**

- put up the amount of money people can keep by using figures that show how much it costs to live



- put up how much people can keep in savings



- not include any money people got for:
  - compensation or damages for personal harm



- back payments of benefit or child maintenance payments



- not include homes when the case is about them



- not include things that are worth a lot but difficult to get hold of until later when they can be sold



- not include the savings of people who get some benefits and don't own their own home



- check people who get Universal Credit and have more than £500 a month coming in and earn more than £500 a month



- give legal aid without asking how much money people have, to:

- children under 18



- parents whose children may have their lifesaving treatment stopped



- some people who have had a family member die.





**For changes just to the criminal legal aid, we want to:**

- put up the amount of money people can keep by using figures that show how much it costs to live



- give legal aid to everyone who is on trial at the Crown Court



- put up the time people pay for to 18 months

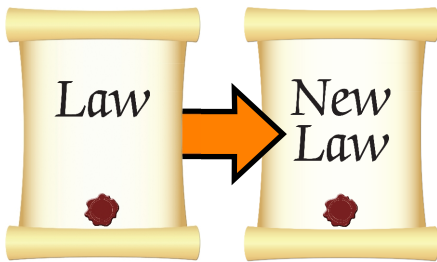


- check the savings of people on benefits if they own a home and are found guilty at the Crown Court.



## What happens next?

After we have thought about what everyone tells us we will say what we think the new rules should be.



We will then work on changing the law to make them happen.

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