



Civil news: Re-opening the 2024 Standard Civil Contract procurement process

The Legal Aid Agency (“LAA”) previously opened procurement exercises on 13 September 2023 and 18 March 2024 to deliver publicly funded civil legal aid services from 1 September 2024 under the 2024 Standard Civil Contract (“2024 Contract”).

The LAA will be opening a further procurement exercise and inviting **additional** tenders from organisations that have not previously tendered or did so unsuccessfully. In addition, current 2024 Standard Civil Contract holders who wish to apply for additional offices or categories of law.

Current Providers do not need to submit a response to this procurement process unless they wish to apply for new offices or categories of law

Tenders can be submitted under this procurement process only in the following circumstances:

- **an applicant’s tender for a 2024 civil contract was rejected because it failed to verify its Tender by the relevant deadline ; or**
- **an existing contractor wishes to apply for additional Categories of Law and/or from additional offices/Procurement Areas : or**
- **a new organisation that has not submitted a bid before.**

The procurement will remain open during the term of the 2024 Contract so that new entrants can apply for a contract at any time. This provides a more flexible approach removing hard deadlines. It also supports our commitments to doing all we can to enable suitably qualified providers to offer legal aid funded services.

The LAA intends to award contracts under this process to commence as soon as possible after the verification process is complete. Depending on the circumstances, it could be several months from the date of application and relies on the submission of timely and accurate information by the organisations. Inaccurate or incomplete evidence may delay the issuing of a contract.

This exercise will cover the following Categories of Law:

- Family.
- Housing and Debt and Welfare Benefits.
- Immigration and Asylum (including work at Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs)).
- Mental Health.
- Community Care.
- Claims Against Public Authorities.
- Clinical Negligence.
- Public Law.
- Family Mediation.



- Education; and
- Discrimination.

All organisations that meet the minimum contract requirements can tender to deliver services under a 2024 contract.

All organisations that successfully tender will be awarded a 2024 Standard Civil Contract. There is no limit to the number of contracts awarded under this process.

Passporting

Organisations that previously tendered for 2024 Standard Civil Contract but were unsuccessful will be given “passporting” opportunities where rejection related solely to a failure to provide compliant tender verification information by the relevant deadline. This will only be applied when the following conditions are met:

- An applicant’s contract award was withdrawn because it failed to verify its tender; and
- The Selection Questionnaire (SQ) response remains the **same** as the original submission(s) for the Standard Civil Contract 2024 Contract (which opened on 13 September 2023 or 18 March 2024); and
- There are no changes to the original Tender

Passported applicants only need to complete the verification process. Further guidance on passporting will be published when the procurement opens on 4 December 2024.

Those Applicants eligible for passporting will also be sent communication via the e-tendering system before the procurement opens so they can review our previous messages about what was missing and/or incorrect from their verification submissions.

Length of contract

The 2024 Contract expires on 31 August 2025, however, can be extended by up to an additional 36 months.

Procurement process

The procurement process will assess an organisation’s suitability to contract with us, as well as its ability to meet our minimum service requirements.

Applicants will be required to complete and submit:

- i) a response to the Selection Questionnaire Invitation to Tender (SQ ITT); **and**



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ii) a response(s) to the relevant Award Invitation To Tender (Award ITT); and

Tenders must be submitted using the [LAA's eTendering system](#).

New applicants and existing 2024 Contract holders that wish to tender for additional offices or categories of law must submit a Response to this SQ ITT, regardless of whether they have previously submitted a SQ Response as part of any other procurement process.

Applicants must ensure that they also complete and submit a response to each relevant ITT.

Timetable

The procurement process will open on 4 December 2024.

Passported providers will be managed under the bespoke passporting principles which will be published when the procurement opens on 4 December 2024.