



Legal Aid
Agency

Headline Intentions for Inquests Contract Work

On the 8 May 2026, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) published its consultation document, *Legal Aid for inquests: Changes to fee schemes*, a response to which will be published shortly.

This document also announced the intention to introduce a new Inquests Category of Law for providers wishing to focus on this work. This would sit alongside existing rules allowing providers to undertake inquest work under other Categories of Law where the subject matter of the inquest falls within the definition of that Category.

The Legal Aid Agency (LAA) will shortly be inviting Tenders for contracts to deliver Inquests work under the 2024 Standard Civil Contract.

This procurement is being launched in advance of Royal Assent to ensure sufficient provider capacity is in place and ready to deliver services as soon as possible following commencement of the legislation. The timing of service launch will be subject to the Parliamentary timetable and agreement of the formal commencement date. The contract will end on 30 June 2028, in line with the broader 2024 Standard Civil Contract (subject to the rights of early termination and the LAA's right to extend by up to a further 2 months).

Outline of Services

There will be an unlimited number of contracts available for those wishing to deliver Inquests Contract Work and no fixed limit to the volume of Controlled Work Contract holders in this Category can undertake.

All organisations that are assessed as being compliant and as meeting the minimum service requirements set out below, including those who already hold a 2024 Standard Civil Contract, will be able to tender to deliver Inquests Contract Work:

Quality Standard

Contract holders will be required to hold a Quality Standard throughout the Contract Period.

Authorisation By A Relevant Professional Body

The required services include “reserved legal activities” which can only be carried out by authorised persons, exempt persons, or certain non-commercial organisations which are subject to transitional provisions, as defined within the Legal Services Act 2007. Contract

holders must, therefore, ensure that they have all necessary licences and authorisations from a Relevant Professional Body to conduct Contract Work.

Office and Presence requirements

Contract holders will be required to have an Office within the Procurement Area of England and Wales that meets at least a Part-Time Presence definition.

Supervisor requirements

Contract holders must employ a Part-Time Equivalent Supervisor who will actively supervise the Inquests Category of Law.

Access to an Authorised Litigator

Contract holders must have access to an Authorised Litigator who will be available to each of its Offices.

Procurement Process

The procurement process for this Category of Law will open in August and organisations interested in undertaking this work from service commencement will be required to tender by September, date to be confirmed. Subsequently Tenders will be opened on the first working day of each month following their submission.

The procurement process will assess an organisation's suitability to contract with us, as well as an organisation's ability to meet our minimum service requirements. All organisations that are assessed as being compliant and as meeting the minimum service requirements will be awarded a 2024 Standard Civil Contract.

Any organisation assessed as being non-compliant will be able to re-bid or amend their bid and have the opportunity to obtain a 2024 Standard Civil Contract. Our new proposed approach will mean no organisation will be prevented from obtaining a 2024 Standard Civil Contract simply because it cannot meet our requirements at a particular point in time.