



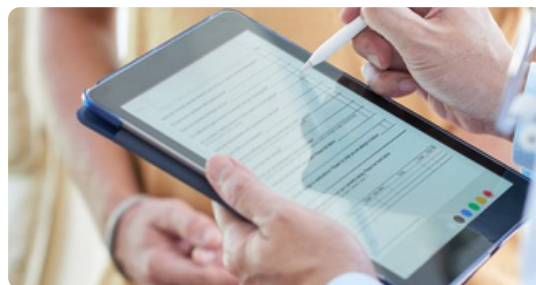
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Each month we provide our Retainer clients with a highly rated compliance bulletin covering what they need to know and what action they must take. Below is a summary of our compliance bulletin.

COMPLIANCE & MANAGEMENT

SRA financial sanctions questionnaire

The SRA will shortly be contacting firms to request completion of its financial sanctions questionnaire. The questionnaire will require firms to complete a short assessment of the practices they have in place to ensure compliance with the UK's financial sanctions regime.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The SRA's news release can be found at:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/financial-sanctions-questions/>

The specimen questions can be accessed at:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/globalassets/images/specimen/approach-to-financial-sanctions--sample-questions.pdf?version=4980fd>

Dealing with complaints practice notes

The Law Society has published two new practice notes on dealing with complaints. The first covers how firms should handle complaints made directly to them. The second looks at what firms should do when a complaint is brought before LeO and the process followed by LeO when reviewing a complaint.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The handling complaints practice note can be accessed at:
<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/client-care/handling-complaints>

The practice note on what to do when a complaint is referred to LeO can be read in full at:
<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/Topics/Client-care/Practice-notes/What-to-do-when-a-complaint-goes-to-the-Legal-Ombudsman>

SRA diversity data collection

The SRA has announced that it will be conducting its regular diversity data collection exercise during summer 2023. The exercise, which is conducted by the SRA every two years, seeks to collate data about the diversity of those working within SRA-regulated firms.



FURTHER INFORMATION

More information about the SRA's collection, reporting and publishing requirements can be found at:
<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/diversity-toolkit/your-data/#5486>

Updated probate application guidance

The Law Society has issued new guidance about applying for grants of probate. The updated guidance is designed to reflect recent changes to how professionals can apply for probate.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The Law Society's update on changes to probate applications can be found at: <https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/Topics/Private-client/Whats-changing/probate-changes>

The Law Society's latest guidance on applying for probate can be read in full at: <https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/Topics/Private-client/Guides/Applying-for-probate>

SLAPPs and conduct in disputes thematic review outcome

In late 2022, the SRA undertook a review of the conduct of firms working in litigation matters. The outcome of the review generally found good practice, but also identified the need for more work to prevent the risk of SLAPPs.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The SRA's news release following their review can be read at: <https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/conduct-dispute-thematic-review/>

The SRA's thematic review report, including checklists and other resources can be accessed at: <https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/conduct-disputes/>

Solicitors Indemnity Fund update

The SRA has decided to assume operation the Solicitors Indemnity Fund (SIF) from 1 October 2023. There previously had been uncertainty about the future of the scheme and in late 2022 the SRA consulted on its proposal for bringing the scheme under its control.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The SRA's news release, including a link to the consultation outcome and amended SRA Indemnity Fund Rules, can be read at:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/six-year-negligence-claims-rules/>

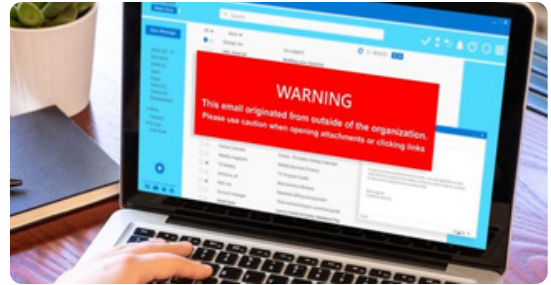
The Law Society's guide can be found at:

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/Topics/Professional-indemnity-insurance/Guides/SIF-and-PSYROC>

DATA PROTECTION

New NCSC online safety tools

The NCSC has launched two new free services to help firms remain cyber secure. The services have been introduced as part of the NCSC's Cyber Aware campaign, which aims to increase awareness of cyber security risks.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The NCSC's news release can be read at:

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/news/ncsc-launches-new-services-help-small-organisations-online>

The Cyber Action Plan can be accessed at:

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyberaware/actionplan>

The Check Your Cyber Security service can be found at:

<https://checkcybersecurity.service.ncsc.gov.uk/>

More information about the NCSC's Cyber Aware campaign can be accessed at:

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyberaware/home>

AML & FINANCIAL CRIME

Updates to the Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Regulations 2017

The Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2022 introduced some changes to the Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Regulations 2017 (MLR). Some of the key changes came into effect from 1 April 2023. The official guidance from LSAG on the effect of these changes for law firms has now been published.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The latest guidance can be accessed at:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/globalassets/documents/solicitors/firm-based-authorisation/lsag-aml-guidance.pdf?version=4964b3>

Economic Crime Plan and Levy

The UK government has published its second Economic Crime Plan, which is designed to reduce money laundering, sanctions evasion and fraud, and recover more criminal assets.

The plan will be funded in part by the Economic Crime Levy - a fee charged to businesses operating within the Money Laundering Regulations 2017.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The Law Society's news story on the Economic Crime Plan can be accessed at:

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/Topics/Anti-money-laundering/Whats-changing/Economic-crime-plan>

The government's Economic Crime Plan can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/economic-crime-plan-2023-to-2026>

The Law Society's news release on the Economic Crime Levy can be read at:

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/Topics/Anti-money-laundering/Whats-changing/Economic-crime-levy>

LEGAL AID

HLPAS tender

The LAA has opened a new tender for HLPAS contracts in limited areas of the country.

The LAA's deadline for submitting tenders is 12pm on Friday 28 April 2023.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The LAA's news story can be read at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-loss-prevention-advice-services-hlpas-and-housing-and-debt-services-from-august-2023#full-publication-update-history>

Trial of new civil financial eligibility tool

The LAA is inviting providers to test its new service for checking the eligibility of clients for civil legal aid.

The new service is being introduced to replace the previously withdrawn Civil Legal Aid Eligibility Calculator.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The LAA's news story can be read at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/civil-news-providers-invited-to-help-test-new-eligibility-tool>

The financial eligibility tool currently used by providers can be accessed at:

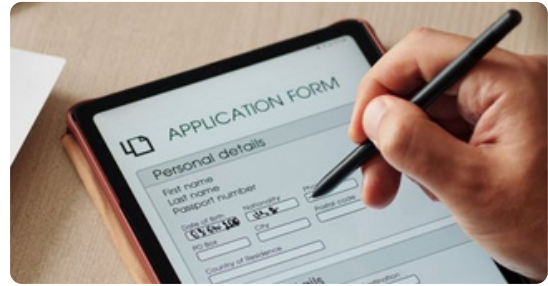
<https://legalaidlearning.justice.gov.uk/course/view.php?id=186>

The legal aid checker tool for use by the public can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/check-legal-aid>

Trial of new Crime eForms replacement service

The LAA will begin testing its new digital service which is designed to replace the CRM14 and CRM15 eForms. Testing of the new service will commence with a small number of providers and caseworkers during summer 2023.



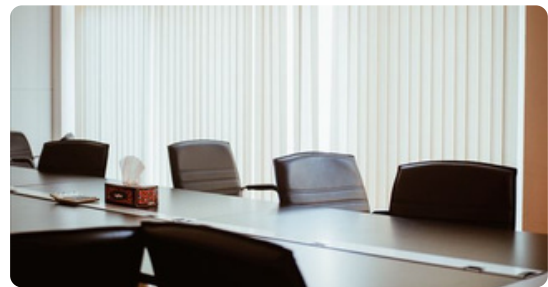
FURTHER INFORMATION

The LAA's news story can be accessed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/crime-news-testing-on-eforms-replacement-starts-summer-2023>

Mental Health contract changes

The LAA has made changes to contracts for Mental Health providers. The changes are designed to recognise cases where a Tribunal has appointed a provider to represent a client, but the client no longer wishes to engage with the provider.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The LAA's news story about the changes can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/civil-news-mental-health-work-change-for-tribunal-appointments>

The Mental Health Category Specific Rules can be read in full at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1143982/230214_2018_Standard_Civil_Contract_Mental_Health_Category_Specific_Rules_SW_Final_.pdf

The LAA's Mental Health Contract Management Guidance, which sets out the amendments at section 6, can be accessed at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1143984/Mental_Health_Guidance_-_Contract_management_-_GOV.UK_2023.pdf

DG LEGAL RETAINER SERVICE

Most of our clients prefer to use our services on a retainer basis simply because the cost is far cheaper than instructing us on an hourly rate or fixed fee basis. The scope and nature of the services provided tends to vary from firm to firm, as each organisation has different needs and priorities.

In addition to our monthly compliance bulletins, all of our retainer clients benefit from:

- assistance with quality assurance accreditations and audits, including Lexcel, SQM, CQS and WIQS
- drafting a suite of compliance documents and provision of templates
- telephone and email support
- guidance in relation to UK GDPR and data protection
- assistance with communications from the SRA, whether these relate to audits, thematic reviews or investigations
- assistance with LAA audits
- COLP & COFA compliance software
- discounted rates on premier training courses.

FURTHER INFORMATION

More information about our popular retainer service can be found at:
<https://dglegal.co.uk/services/retainer-service/>

To arrange a discussion with our team about how our retainer service may benefit your firm, please contact us using the details at the bottom of this newsletter.



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