



Family Telephone Advice Application Form CLS Direct Family Pilot



Applicant's Information

Details of applicant organisation	
Name of applicant	
Applicant contact name	
Applicant address and DX address (if applicable)	
Applicant contact telephone number	
Applicant contact email address	
LSC account number (if existing LSC provider)	
Type of organisation applicant falls into (e.g. solicitor's firm, Not for Profit agency, charity, commercial organisation)	

IMPORTANT NOTES

In answering the questions in this Application Form, please consider the details provided in the Information for Applicants, particularly the **'Selection Criteria'** and **'Conditions of Tender'**.

Where indicated, please only complete the relevant sections, depending on whether you are a new organisation or you currently hold a contract with the LSC.

The space provided for answers is not reflective of the size of the response required. If there is insufficient space in the box, you should increase the size of the box, or may refer to an attached extra page. All pages must be numbered sequentially, including extra pages (e.g. page 1 of 6). Please also number any appendices and documents submitted to support your application in the same way and mark them at the top with the applicant's name.

Please ensure that you answer every question on the form. If a question is not relevant, please write 'not applicable' rather than leave it blank.

Telephone advice to be provided	
Please indicate how many family telephone advice hours you are bidding for	
Total hours over the 12 month pilot contract term:	
Are you bidding to provide family legal advice to Welsh-speaking clients?	

**Section 1 Essential criteria for providing the service
(listed in order of importance)**

1. Experience of managing and delivering a telephone advice service offering complex legal advice in family to a similar client group

(a) Management and delivery of the service

Please give a detailed description of your experience in managing and delivering a telephone advice service offering complex legal advice in the family category of law (including taking details of the problem, discussing options and advising on potential courses of action) to:

- (a) vulnerable client group(s); and
- (b) clients eligible for legal aid; and
- (c) clients whose only form of access to such advice is via the telephone.

For each group (a), (b) and (c), please include details on:

- (i) what the overall service was;
- (ii) the specialism/ areas of law advice was offered in;
- (iii) the size and effectiveness of the service;
- (iv) the level and source of funding; and
- (v) how successful the service was/ services were, any challenges faced and how these were overcome.

Please note that we will prefer applicants who can meet all three elements of (a), (b) and (c) above to applicants who only meet one or two elements. Each element of this criterion will be assessed.

Current or recent experience in offering family telephone advice (i.e. within the last two years) will be preferred over previous experience.

(b) Referees

Please provide details of two referees who we can contact for a reference; if possible these should include at least one public organisation. The references should be for services provided within the last two years.

For each contact, please provide:

- (i) a brief outline of the services that you provide(d);
- (ii) the length of time that you have provided the services;
- (iii) how successful the service was/ services were; and
- (iv) details of the nature of the relationship with that referee (e.g. funder, delivery partner).

Details of first referee

Details of second referee

2. Availability of suitably skilled, experienced and trained advisers

You will need to demonstrate the availability of:

- (a) suitably skilled, experienced and trained caseworkers to deliver the telephone advice (including casework); and
- (b) suitably skilled, experienced and trained supervisors to supervise the caseworker's work

in the category of family law.

Both caseworkers and supervisors must be able to provide family advice across the full range of family problems as set out in the section 'Level of service / topics' in the Information for Applicants.

(a) Caseworkers

Please inform us of:

- (i) the range of skills and qualifications held by the proposed caseworkers; and
- (ii) the length, depth and breadth of their experience in private law family and public law family work.

We will prefer applicants whose caseworkers have greater experience in providing family advice and can cover the greatest range of family advice.

By “suitably skilled, experienced” caseworkers we mean as our first preference, qualified solicitors or FILEX, and secondly, paralegals, trainee solicitors and other legal advice workers.

(iii) Please confirm that all caseworkers will be able deliver a full range of family advice by the contract start date.

b) Supervisors

Please provide a brief summary for each supervisor showing:

- (i) their relevant qualifications;
- (ii) their competency and breadth and depth of experience providing legal advice in family law (including any experience relevant to providing a telephone advice and casework service);
- (iii) at which organisations they gained their experience; and
- (iv) any work they have done for legal aid firms.

We will prefer applicants whose supervisors have greater experience in providing family advice and can cover the greatest range of family advice.

By “suitably skilled, experienced” supervisors we mean as our first preference, qualified solicitors or FILEX, and secondly, paralegals and other legal advice workers.

Please complete the attached ‘supervisor standard and self-declaration form’ in respect of each supervisor.

Copy ‘supervisor standard and self-declaration form’ in respect of each supervisor attached.

If not enclosed please provide the reason.

3. Quality of advice

All applicants must be able to provide telephone advice in accordance with the Quality Standards specified, and

(a) Existing LSC contract holders only:

Please provide confirmation that you:

- (i) hold the SQM in family law;
- (ii) comply with the Additional Requirements and Definitions for Telephone Services; and
- (iii) are able to meet the Quality Standards.

(b) Applicants that do not hold a current LSC contract only:

Please provide the following:

- (i) evidence of an externally validated quality management system, e.g. ISO 9001:2000, Lexcel, Investors in People, Charter Mark; and
- (ii) details of how you measure and monitor the performance of similar services you currently provide; and
- (iii) please describe your current procedures for ensuring quality services are provided and how you ensure that standards are maintained in those procedures; and
- (iv) please confirm that you are able to meet the Quality Standards.

(c) All applicants:

What action do you plan to take to assess the quality of work of your caseworkers and supervisors on an ongoing basis?

4. Value for money

You are required to demonstrate your ability to offer value for money through competitive hourly rates and the ability to expand (should demand for the service exceed projections).

Please complete the separate Price Bid Form. This information must be submitted separately and must NOT be referred to elsewhere (i.e. it must not be referred to anywhere in this Application Form or any attached documents).

5. IT requirements

You will be required to meet the IT requirements set out in the section on 'Technical requirements' in the Information for Applicants.

(a) Individual requirements

Please provide details of how you will meet the requirements regarding:

- (i) your IT infrastructure and environment – it must support the standards specified in relation to IPsec VPN, IETF and voice over IP;
- (ii) your internet connection, including confirmation that it is of sufficient quality and capacity for the number of caseworkers using it and willingness to upgrade in the future if necessary;
- (iii) each caseworker having access to an individual direct line telephone and a computer with access to a named email account and the internet, in particular, www.clsdirect.org.uk;
- (iv) those responsible for providing your IT and telephony services – operating the IPsec connection for data and, in future, voice transfer; provide a standard direct dial telephone connection to each Caseworker until VoIP services are in place, and to act as a backup at such times as the IPsec VPN is not available; and
- (v) business continuity plan.

Where you do not meet the requirements, please provide details of:

- (vi) the requirements you do not yet comply with;
- (vii) the action required for you to comply with them; and
- (viii) timescales for compliance.

(b) Case management

(i) Please provide details of the system that you propose to use to record data from the Operator Service's Electronic Case Management System and allow provision of the required reports to the LSC.

(ii) Please provide details of your data storage arrangements and how data will be transferred securely.

(c) Back up and maintenance

Please give details of your IT expertise, i.e. number and experience of IT maintenance staff and details of any support contracts held for IT or telephony equipment, including back-up systems in place and timescales for resolution.

(d) Back-up requirements

You will be required to maintain a backup copy of all the data held on telephone advice clients advised under the contract for the full contract term plus an additional two years. Please confirm your arrangements for doing this.

6. Ability to meet any regulatory or legal rules and to deliver the telephone advice

(a) Applicants who do not hold a current LSC contract only (e.g. commercial organisations/ potential new providers):

You will be required to meet any regulatory or legal rules. For example, if you are a commercial organisation employing solicitors to provide any element of the services, you will need permission/ freedom to deliver advice as regulated by Rules 4 and 7 of the Solicitors' Practice Rules 1990 and the Employed Solicitors Code 1990; or for NFPs/charities/ companies, you will need to comply with (or amend) any rules or restrictions laid out in your constitutional documents.

Do you meet all the requirements necessary to be able to offer advice under the contract?
Please provide details of all relevant requirements and, if required from e.g. The Law Society,
a copy of your waiver from The Law Society.

Copy of relevant documents enclosed (please insert ✓ or x):

If there are any issues, please give details, and your timescale for resolving these issues.

(b) All applicants:

Please provide a copy of your current professional
indemnity insurance certificate (please insert ✓ or x):

If not enclosed please provide the reason.

7. Flexibility and management of staff

You must have the ability to:

- (a) expand the contract to deliver a greater number of hours of family telephone advice at a future date, in the case of higher than forecast demand for the service; and
- (b) effectively manage resources in a controlled and reasonable manner so as to allow the service to respond to peaks and troughs in call volumes; and
- (c) rapidly increase the number of caseworkers available to give family telephone advice during occasional or sustained peak times.

(a) Expansion

Are there any limitations, such as premises, which might limit the maximum size of contract that your organisation could sustain?

If so, please provide more details and indicate at what size this would become an issue.

(b) Managing resources in a controlled and reasonable manner

Please provide details below as to how you would manage your staffing levels to cover:

- (i) front door calls (new clients); and
- (ii) back door calls (repeat clients); and
- (iii) casework (follow-up work resulting from calls);

and

- (iv) in times of sickness and absence; and
- (v) to cover planned leave or training; and
- (vi) over the Christmas period.

(c) Peaks in demand

Please provide details below on:

- (i) your ability to increase the resources available during times of short term demand; and
- (ii) your ability to increase the resources available in times of sustained demand.

8. Willingness to deliver this service under the CLS Direct brand.

As part of Community Legal Service Direct, you would be expected to answer the telephone according to a standard script, have the name and logo on your letterhead and all marketing would be carried out under the name of Community Legal Service Direct.

Does this pose any problems for your organisation?

Yes No

If yes, please give details.

9. Willingness to deliver training and produce and update the Case Handling System

(a) As part of providing the service you will be required to deliver training modules in family law to the Operator Service.

Does this pose any problems for your organisation?

Yes No

Is there a limit to the amount of training that you would be able to provide?
If yes then please give details.

Are there any areas of family law in which you will not be able to provide training?
If yes then please give details.

(b) As part of providing the service you will be required to produce and update the Case Handling System as set out in the Information for Applicants.

Is your organisation able to do this?

Yes No

Is there any limitation on your organisation's ability to do this? If yes, then please give details.

10. Provision in Wales

For those bidding for contracts for telephone advice in Wales only:

Please provide details of your ability to provide a full family telephone advice service:

- (i) bilingually – English/ Welsh (verbally and in writing); and
- (ii) with sound knowledge of Welsh procedures.

Please state whether caseworkers are bilingual English/ Welsh.

**Section 2 Desirable criteria for providing the service
(listed in order of importance)**

1. Experience of managing a dedicated telephone line

Please give a detailed description of your experience of managing a dedicated telephone line delivering advice over the telephone and not just e.g. responding to ad hoc queries requesting advice.

Please provide:

- (a) a brief outline of the services that you provide(d);
- (b) the specialism/ areas of law advice was offered in;
- (c) which caseworkers provided the service;
- (d) the length of time that you have provided the services;
- (e) the size of the service; and
- (f) how successful the service was/ services were.

Current or recent experience in offering family telephone advice (i.e. within the last two years) will be preferred over previous experience.

2. Caseworkers and supervisors have experience of delivering family advice over the telephone

Can you demonstrate that your caseworkers and supervisors have experience of delivering family advice over the telephone?

(a) Caseworkers

Please inform us of the length, depth and breadth of experience of your proposed caseworkers in providing advice over the telephone on:

- (i) private law family; and
- (ii) public law family work.

We will prefer applicants whose caseworkers have greater experience in providing family advice over the telephone and can cover the greatest range of family advice.

b) Supervisors

Please inform us of the length, depth and breadth of experience of your proposed supervisors in supervising caseworkers who provide advice over the telephone on family law.

We will prefer applicants whose supervisors have greater experience supervising family advice over the telephone.

3. Financial stability and sound financial management of the applicant organisation

NFPs:

Please provide a:

- funding matrix showing make-up and length of existing funding;
- last two years' audited accounts; and
- Annual Report (if you have one).

Enclosed (please insert ✓ or x)

Solicitors and commercial organisations:

Please attach your audited accounts for the last two years.

For new businesses/ organisations only:

Please provide documentation equivalent to that requested above.

All organisations:

Please provide:

- one bank reference; and

- one credit reference

4. Working in partnership with the LSC and Operator Service

The ability to work in partnership with the LSC and the Operator Service e.g. by testing new ways of working, striving to continuously improve CLS Direct, participating in new initiatives and finding new ways of adding value, - so as to increase the value for money and client satisfaction.

Please give examples of similar contracts where you have experience of:

- (a) testing new ways of working;
- (b) improving the service;
- (c) improving client satisfaction in the service; and
- (d) improving the value for money provided by the service.

5. Number of caseworkers and supervisors you propose to use

You will need to demonstrate that the number of caseworkers (and supervisors) you propose to deliver (and supervise) the telephone advice hours you are bidding for is reasonable and will enable you to adhere to all the contract requirements, such as quality standards.

(a) Time spent on supervision

How many hours per week do you expect each supervisor to spend on supervision under this contract (as opposed to their other obligations, such as casework under other contracts, etc)?

How many caseworkers does each supervisor supervise?

(b) Recruitment

For organisations that need to recruit caseworkers or supervisors for the contract start only:

- (i) please provide details of your recruitment process for caseworkers and supervisors, including timescales for the recruitment process and confirmation as to when fully trained recruits will be available; and
- (ii) how can you be confident (based, for example, on previous recruitment exercises) that your plans will be successful?

6. Ability to make the service operational by the start date

You must be able to make the service operational by the pilot start date, 2 July 2007. Please indicate YES or NO in the box below. If NO, please give reasons and when you would be able to become operational.

Is your organisation able to do this?

Yes No

7. Staff induction and training

You must demonstrate that you have clear plans in place relating to staff induction and ongoing training.

(a) Induction and training

Please provide a training and induction plan for caseworkers and supervisors, including details of training and induction for existing staff and any new staff, where these are required, so as to ensure that all caseworkers and supervisors possess the skills required for their respective roles.

Enclosed (please insert ✓ or x)

(b) Ongoing training

Please provide details of any ongoing training that you will provide for caseworkers and supervisors to ensure that they remain suitably skilled and continue to meet all of the contract requirements throughout the life of the contract - in particular, to ensure that supervisors keep up to date with court procedures so they are able to advise when a case should go to court.

8. Fit with other work

You need to demonstrate the ability to fit this contract in with other work and the availability of other work streams, allowing caseworkers and supervisors to keep up to date with the law by conducting casework and attending training courses in family law.

Please provide details below of how you would manage your staffing levels to cover staff undertaking other work.

Will the caseworkers undertake any other work than the work on the pilot? If so, please state what that is.

9. Caseworkers can identify problems and refer where appropriate

You will need to demonstrate that caseworkers are able to identify other problems the client may have and know how and when to refer them to another service.

(a) Identify problems

Please set out any training that your caseworkers have had on identifying problems of family clients e.g. that a client who is getting divorced may also have a debt problem and a housing problem.

(b) Referral

Please set out the referral arrangements that your service has in place. If you do not have arrangements in place, please indicate when you are likely to have these.

Please provide a list of organisations to which your service refers clients.

10. Organisations working across more than one site

For organisations proposing to provide the telephone advice from more than one location (e.g. split sites) only:

Please demonstrate your ability for all your caseworkers and supervisors to work as if they were on one site (e.g. access to files, telephony systems in place).

11 Reporting

Please confirm your ability to report all the data outlined in the section 'Monitoring and Reporting' in the Information for Applicants. Please include information on your ability to produce and analyse data as specified and to submit the reports in the format requested accurately and on time.

12. Termination notices

For existing and previous LSC contract holders only:

Please provide details of any letters/ notices you have received from us since 1 February 2004 terminating your contract for any reason. Such a letter/notice is relevant even if you are currently in the appeal process.

If you received such a letter/ notice but it was later set aside, please state what happened and when.

13. Peer Review

For existing LSC contract holders only:

You need to demonstrate that you have not received any adverse findings from any Peer Review carried out on any of your work in the last 12 months (an adverse finding means a rating of PR4 or PR5 – ‘Below Competence’ or ‘Failure in Performance’). If a Peer Review has rated you as PR4 or PR5 you must be able to provide evidence that corrective action has been taken and problems rectified to our satisfaction.

Have you had a Peer Review carried out since 1 February 2005 on any work you carry out for the LSC (e.g. under a General Civil/ Criminal Contract)?

If so, what rating did you receive? On what date?

Did you appeal that rating? On what date?

Is the outcome of any appeal against your rating known or are you still in the process?

Do you know when you are likely to hear the result of your appeal?

If a Peer Review resulted in a rating of 4 or 5, and this rating is not currently subject to appeal, please provide evidence to show that corrective action has been taken and problems rectified.

14 Not for profit organisations

For LSC contract holders only

You need to demonstrate that you have shown acceptable levels of contract performance since 1 February 2005 – i.e. you have performed 95%+ of your contracted hours.

Please attach a copy of your latest statement from the LSC showing your recent contract performance.

15. Commitment to providing access to disabled clients and clients with poor or no English

Within the LSC we are committed to providing access to services for every member of the community. Please give details of your commitment to and experience of providing access to your services for:

- (a) clients with disabilities, and any experience of using Typetalk; and
- (b) clients with poor/no English, including details of any additional languages spoken by your caseworkers and supervisors.

16. Corporate social responsibility

For applicants who do not hold a current LSC contract (e.g. commercial organisations/potential new providers) only:

Please provide:

- (a) information about your corporate social responsibility statement and your record of meeting it; and
- (b) confirmation that you comply with all necessary race/ sex/ disability discrimination/ employment legislation.

Section 3 Additional information

Please set out any other information you consider to be relevant to your application that you have not set out anywhere else in this form or the attached documents. Please limit yourself to 500 words.

Section 4 Declaration

I/we hereby apply for a Specialist Family Telephone Advice Pilot Contract in accordance with the Information for Applicants, this Application Form and the Price Bid Form. I/we certify that the information provided in the Application Form and Price Bid Form (and other related documents) is accurate to the best of my/our knowledge, information and belief. I/we confirm that I/we have not colluded with anyone (including other applicants) or canvassed views from anyone in connection with this application. I/we understand that if I/we have not answered every question on either form, my/our application may be rejected; further, that any material inaccuracy or omission in the information that I/we have provided may lead to the Application Form and Price Bid Form being treated as invalid and/or any contract offered or awarded being withdrawn or amended by the Commission. I/we confirm that I/we have considered any questions and answers posted on the Commission's website relating to this tendering exercise before submitting the Application Form and Price Bid Form. I/we understand that this application does not bind either the Commission or me/us to enter into a contract.

I/we hereby declare that the person(s) involved in the preparation and collation of this Application Form and Price Bid Form were, or are in no way, associated with the initial preparation by the Commission of the tender documentation or with the subsequent evaluation, assessment, analysis, management and decision making process of this tender.

Signed:	Date:
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Name:	Status:
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Signed:	Date:
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Name:	Status:
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This Application Form must be signed for you by a person who can bind you to it. If the organisation is a partnership, a partner must sign. If it is a sole practitioner solicitor, the sole practitioner (principal) must sign. If it is a company, a director must sign. If it is an LLP, two LLP members must sign.