

Civil news: fee claims for HMCTS flexible operating hours pilot

A 'flexible operating hours' (FOH) pilot for court work in Brentford and Manchester starts September 2019 and legal aid providers can claim for taking part.

The pilot is being run by HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) and will run from 2 September 2019 to 13 March 2020 in these courts:

1. Brentford County Court – civil cases only
2. Manchester Civil Justice Centre – civil and family cases only

The pilot is being funded by HMCTS but payments are being administered by the LAA.

How much can be claimed?

Two fees are payable:

- £100 for attendance at a duty solicitor session for Housing Possession Court Duty Scheme work only at a single FOH courtroom
- £50 for attendance at a single hearing in a single FOH courtroom

These HMCTS payments relate only to the 'participation fees' for taking part in the pilot.

They will be paid in addition to regular payments for legal aid work carried out for clients during the pilot sessions.

You should continue to claim for your legal aid work in the usual way.

Who can claim?

Participation fees can only be claimed by legal aid providers attending a court hearing or court duty session listed during flexible operating hours sessions.

Full details of how to claim fees and the criteria used can be found in the guidance.

Where can I find out more?

Detailed guidance on how to claim is available to download on GOV.UK together with a claim form.

Further information

[HMCTS Flexible Operating Hours – Pilot Participation Fee Guidance](#)

[Flexible operating hours: prospectus for civil and family court pilots](#) – HMCTS guidance page

[Funding available for professionals testing extended court hours](#) – HMCTS news story announcement on 15 May 2019