

[News story: Civil news: escape cases and civil finance handbook updates and new guidance on expert witnesses](#)

We have updated the electronic handbooks for civil finance and escape cases and guidance on expert witnesses.

What has changed in the handbooks?

Interpreters – for work undertaken from 1 April 2019, attendance and waiting at a court hearing can be claimed at the codified rate for interpreters.

Subject Access Requests (copies of records) – as of 25 May 2018 anyone can make a request to a company or organisation to gain access to the personal information it holds on them and this right can be exercised at any time for free. This is in line with the changes made to charging for copies of records under a subject access request by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

On that basis we would not expect to see any claims for these costs from that date onwards. This will particularly impact charges for medical records and police disclosure fees but it is not limited to those.

Where an organisation considers that the request is 'manifestly unreasonable or excessive' there is provision for a charge to be made. Where the police have indicated that there will be a charge, for example where they are providing information on a different basis or the information is exempt from the GDPR provisions, we will fund these costs provided there is a justification on the file. This could be correspondence from the police force, or in the absence of that a note from the provider.

Evidence for advocates meeting – confirmation that we only require evidence where more than two meetings are held.

What has changed in the guidance?

Remuneration of expert witnesses – paragraph 6.29 of this guidance has been updated to clarify payments for legally aided interpreters at court.

How to use the handbooks

The electronic handbooks for both civil finance and escape cases contain our operational requirements and guidance.

They should be used together with the cost assessment guidance and also the relevant contracts.

Further information

[Make an escape fee case claim](#) – to download the ‘electronic handbook’

[Funding and costs assessment for civil and crime matters](#) – to download the ‘electronic handbook’

[Expert witnesses guidance](#)