

[News story: Crime news: changes to defendants' costs order Fastrak claims](#)

Starting on 11 September 2017 Fastrak bills for a defendant's cost order should be submitted by email.

You should start sending your bills for defendants' costs order (DCO) Fastrak work to this email address from 11 September 2017:

dcofastrak@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk.

Using this mailbox will allow us to assess your claim more quickly.

What to include with your claim

In order for us to assess your claim the electronic bundle must include:

1. Fastrak POCA cover sheet
2. certified and signed 5911 claim form
3. copy of DCO made by the court
4. copies of relevant travel or disbursement receipts e.g. expert invoices, counsel fee notes, travel or parking receipts where the total exceeds £20
5. appropriate evidence of retainer's contract i.e. client care letter and any amendments
6. client's authority to pay costs to solicitors

An electronic DCO Fastrak cover sheet will be sent by email to all providers who have previously made DCO claims.

Copies of the form may also be obtained by emailing:

dcofastrak@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk

[News story: Crime news: change of address for cost judge appeals](#)

New address from 11 September 2017 for notices of appeals to a cost judge for graduated fee scheme work.

Advocates and litigators should use a new address from 11 September for notices of appeals to a cost judge relating to graduated fee scheme work.

Your appeal papers should in future go to this address instead of the

graduated fee team in Nottingham:

Central Legal Team
7th Floor, Zone C (7.39)
Legal Aid Agency
102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9AJ

Notices already sent to Nottingham will be forwarded to Petty France.

What the regulations say

These appeals are covered by the Criminal Remuneration Regulations. Advocates and litigators are allowed to challenge a redetermination decision on their fees under the Graduated Fee Scheme to a cost judge.

Regulations 29(3) and 29(4) require the appellant to serve a copy of the notice of appeal and any relevant supporting documents on the LAA.

In cases where electronic evidence is in dispute this would include a copy of the disc(s) or USB(s) containing the evidence being claimed for.

[News story: Crime news: digital form for Proceeds of Crime Act claims](#)

Starting 11 September 2017 all Fastrak and non-Fastrak Proceeds of Crime Act bills should be submitted using a digital claim form.

Electronic claim forms are being introduced on 11 September 2017 for all Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) bills.

This change will allow POCA claims to be assessed faster. It follows on from the introduction of email submissions for POCA work in January 2017.

The introduction of the electronic claim forms will reduce the number of supporting documents required with your claim and improve the quality of determination notes you receive from us.

Email addresses will remain the same:

- poca@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk
- pocafastrak@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk

Fastrak and non-Fastrak forms

There are separate claim forms for Fastrak and non-Fastrak claims. Copies of the claim forms and guidance on their completion will be sent to all providers who have previously made claims by email.

Copies of the claim forms may also be obtained by emailing:
poca@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk

[Press release: New and revised permits for Horse Hill oil and gas site](#)

The Environment Agency has issued a variation and new permit for Horse Hill Developments Ltd, for use on their site near Gatwick Airport in Surrey.

The company already held a permit to drill the exploratory borehole and manage wastes arising from that process. This variation allows them to drill a new borehole, drill a side track from the original borehole and carry out flow testing to understand the long term economic viability of the oil and gas reserves. No hydraulic fracturing will take place as part of this activity.

The company has also been issued with an environmental permit to allow them to store oil on site following production.

The company will need to adhere strictly to the conditions set out in these permits, which will ensure the local community and environment are protected.

The Environment Agency considered the opinions raised by local people during the 4 week consultation with communities, interested groups and other professional organisations before reaching this decision.

A spokesperson for the Environment Agency said:

We would like to thank all those people who responded to the consultation. Since the consultation period closed, Horse Hill Developments Limited has provided additional information to clarify some of the aspects of their application for flow testing.

After considering all of the information available and completing our assessment we are confident that the environment and people will be protected. Environment Agency officers will now ensure compliance with these operating conditions during the next phase of works.

For all media enquiries please contact 0800 141 2743 or email Southeastpressoffice1@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Press release: Visitors and wildlife to benefit from East Farleigh lock improvements

The Environment Agency project has refurbished the lock, in East Farleigh near Maidstone, Kent, stabilised the weir, and installed a new fish pass. The previous lock was last refurbished over a century ago, and these improvements enhance and protect the River Medway for local residents and river users.

The refurbished lock was constructed within the existing lock and not only secures the future of the structure but improves the safety and convenience for boaters using it. New features include improved mooring systems, new access steps, and new rubbing timbers and fendering to reduce the risk of damage to visiting vessels.

Wildlife on the River Medway will also benefit from the works at East Farleigh. A new fish pass has been installed alongside the weir, providing climbable slopes for fish wanting to travel upstream, meaning freshwater fish, such as barbel, roach, perch, dace, chub and pike, will be able to pass the site freely.

Julie Foley, Environment Agency Area Manager, said:

The lock refurbishment is a £3.65 million investment in the River Medway that will be a great asset to visitors, river users, and wildlife for many years to come.

With a newly refurbished lock and weir we will be able to continue to maintain the upstream water levels for boaters, anglers, cyclists and walkers to enjoy, and the lock is essential for a number of commercial river operators.

It's great for the river that 9 of the 10 locks on the River Medway now have fish passes in place. Allowing free movement of fish will ensure that it becomes a healthier river than it has been in at least the last 250 years, offering better access to spawning grounds for fish.

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