

GUIDE TO PRO BONO AND OTHER FREE ADVICE IN ENGLAND & WALES

A directory for MPs, MSs and others
looking to signpost individuals to
free legal and other advice

Endorsed by the Attorney General's
Pro Bono Committee

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**PRO
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WEEK**

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

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This booklet is published annually for UK Pro Bono Week, a cross-sector collaborative initiative that through publications, launches, events and comms every November helps support the legal profession’s voluntary provision of free legal help to those in need.

Oversight of the publication is provided by the steering group of the [Attorney General’s Pro Bono Committee of England & Wales](#). Gratitude is expressed to the many people and organisations who supported the production of the Guide, whether by contributing information or their advice.

Feedback is encouraged to improve the next edition. **Please email your comments, additions or corrections to guide@probonocommittee.uk.**

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About this Guide

Who is this Guide for? Parliamentarians, their caseworkers and others seeking to signpost members of the public to sources of free legal and other advice.

What does the Guide signpost to?

- **Legal aid** i.e. legal assistance funded by the Government.
- **Pro bono** i.e. free legal advice or representation provided by volunteer lawyers to individuals and charities who cannot afford to pay but where legal aid is unavailable.
- **Front line advice organisations**, which provide assistance from general advice through to specialist legal support. Note some areas have regulatory restrictions in particular debt and immigration.
- **Online guidance** about legal issues and the legal process.
- **Specialist charities providing general advice/support** for particular groups or problems, reflecting that legal issues often occur alongside non-legal issues. Some of those charities may offer legal information or advice, or may be able to signpost to it.

The Guide includes a combination of full-page entries supplied by certain charities that facilitate legal help, with brief details about others. A summary is provided about the charity, with their website, email & phone numbers including helplines (but not opening hours which may change).

What geographical areas are covered? England & Wales. Except in the Wales guide (see page 118), usually only national rather than local services are covered. For the Scotland Guide see probonocommittee.uk/guide

Disclaimer:

- The Guide does not itself provide legal nor financial advice.
- The information it contains was sourced using independent internet research, whilst the full-page entries with logos were contributed and checked by the featured charity. The data will not be comprehensive.
- No liability is accepted to anyone as to the contents. Nor is a guarantee offered as to the listed organisations and websites or their services. The Guide is not designed to verify their suitability, standing or quality.
- Details may be out of date or otherwise inaccurate, so check the relevant website.

The limitations of pro bono and charitable help

- Solicitors, barristers and chartered legal executives volunteer to provide legal help for free to an unparalleled extent, helping some of the most disadvantaged people access justice.
- But **pro bono** projects cannot guarantee to help in every case:
 - There is an inherent limitation in a service which relies on volunteers.
 - Demand for help substantially outstrips the available supply.
 - Furthermore, the need for help in key areas of law may not match the specialisms of the volunteer lawyers.
- Pro bono is not a substitute for a proper system of publicly funded legal services i.e. **legal aid**. But note:
 - Not everyone will be financially eligible for legal aid (see pages 13 to 16).
- In addition to the system of publicly funded legal services (i.e. legal aid), so too must be emphasised the importance of supporting the not-for-profit **advice sector**:
 - Amongst other reasons, pro bono help by volunteer lawyers is often most effective and sustainable when delivered in partnership with frontline legal advice organisations.
 - However, those agencies themselves face huge demands for help, but have limited funding, and so may have very limited capacity to support additional clients.
- **Important: the Guide does not generally list the capacity of the charities to help, or response times. Service limits may be severe.** Charities may have waiting lists (e.g. 9 months for one project helping children) or may have suspended accepting new clients.

Factors to consider when signposting

System issues

- **Sector capacity / service limits:** as stated above, advice and pro bono charities have limited funding but face huge, increasing, demands for help, often far outstripping the supply. They cannot help everyone, so client expectations need to be managed.
- **Charity services may be fragmented:** in addition, it may prove frustrating for clients that many charities can only help in a narrowly defined remit (potentially reflecting funding restrictions).
- **Paid legal / no-win no-fee / legal aid** assistance may provide a more comprehensive legal service than a charity can offer.
- **Legal aid** should therefore be signposted/referred to whenever available to ensure specialist legal advice and representation. Additional reasons are that legal aid may: (a) also fund disbursements such as interpreters or court and expert fees; (b) protect against adverse costs (the lawyer will advise about this); and (c) free up limited charity and pro bono resources.
- **Pro bono as a last resort:** pro bono projects usually only provide help from volunteer lawyers when other avenues are not available.
- **Wales:** devolved law may mean that clients in Wales need to be referred to Welsh specific services (see Wales guide from pg 118).

Legal problems

- **Timing:** clients often approach organisations towards the end of a problem rather than having received early advice.
- **Multiple problems:** clients often approach organisations or constituency surgeries with multiple problems (so called “cluster problems”). This could be a combination of a legal problem with non-legal issues, such as a mental health problem. Individuals may also have more than one interlinking legal issue.
- **Priorities:** for some clients, solving a non-legal issue such as a debt or mental health problem may be most pressing. In other cases, addressing a legal issue through specialist legal help can have a transformative effect.

Other points for effective signposting

- **“Shopping around”**: some clients will approach numerous charities with the same request, using up limited resources. So, ask them whether they are already seeing or have seen an advice provider (particularly important where legal aid might be relevant).
- **Negative advice**: if the client has received negative legal advice from a lawyer or reputable organisation (e.g. that they do not have a good claim), they may need to be encouraged to heed that advice, rather than signposting/referring them to another agency.
- **Triaging**: Citizens Advice, Law Centres and other charities may provide a triage service, to identify the client’s problems and work out what can be done (and by whom) to address each issue. Where legal problems are identified, if they cannot help directly they may be able to refer to legal advice, including legal aid or pro bono.
- **Signposting**: for many clients, signposting them to the right organisation (e.g. website or phone number) may be sufficient.
- **Or referring**: for other clients, for example those with multiple problems or vulnerabilities such as mental health problems, they might be best helped by making a referral in their name to a local or specialist charity. This may ensure they get the help they need.
- **Request to MPs to intercede**: clients may present with a request for MPs to intercede with a Government department or a council.
- **Client comprehension/capacity**: consider the client’s ability to understand and action the signposting information.
- **Digital exclusion**: some individuals will not have access, or the capability, to use online materials or services. Some may be isolated without family/friends to help them navigate online. Whilst local libraries may offer internet access, some vulnerable people will need to be referred to a local agency offering in-person help.
- **Translation and interpreters**: consider whether the client needs translation or interpreter support in order to access advice.
- **Complaints, mediation & ombudsmen**: consider encouraging the client to use a complaints procedure, mediation process or ombudsman. For ombudsman see ombudsmanassociation.org.

Identifying a legal problem & training for MPs/caseworkers

- It is very common for individuals **not to be aware** they have a legal problem. Research has also shown most are unable to identify legal problems accurately. This is complicated by the fact that individuals can present with both legal and non-legal problems.
- The [Mind the Gap](#) survey conducted in 2022/23 of MPs across England & Wales emphasised again that MPs and their caseworkers play a **key role in signposting or referring their constituents** to the legal advice providers available to them, notwithstanding that not all MPs' surgeries have the resources or knowhow to identify when legal advice is required and when legal aid might be available.
- Where it is unclear if an individual has a legal problem, they may be best helped by a **local advice agency** or other specialist charity who can identify the problems and triage (including to signpost or refer to legal aid, other advice agencies, or to pro bono). See the next page.
- If specific legal problems are identified, this Guide may help identify where the individual can be signposted or referred to.
- **Free training is available to MPs and their caseworkers** on how to spot legal problems and other commonly encountered issues through the House of Commons Learning and Development team in collaboration with the [APPG on Access to Justice](#). Courses include:
 - An introduction to casework and advising constituents.
 - Housing law (including homelessness, possession, disrepair).
 - Mental health casework.
 - Community care casework.
 - Anti-social behaviour.
 - Special education needs.
 - Employment law.
 - Civil and criminal legal aid.

The APPG on Access to Justice publishes a Guide to Constituency Casework. The [House of Commons Library](#) also produces constituency casework articles that address common casework themes.

MPs working with local organisations

- For Parliamentarians and caseworkers undertaking constituency work, it is important to **investigate what local organisations** exist, and to find out about any local networks or other initiatives.
- This Guide generally does not list local advice agencies, but these can be located both through the websites of the umbrella organisations listed below (Citizens Advice, Law Centres and AdviceUK), and via advice.local.uk & advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk.
- MPs can **invite someone** from their local Citizens Advice, Law Centre or similar agency to provide an overview of local services.
- This may help **build relationships** between the MPs/caseworkers and the local organisations. This can particularly help ensure that effective referrals can be made.
- One model is for MPs to **deliver their surgery** within a Citizen Advice or Law Centre community outreach session or setting.
- Being able to make a **referral** for a named individual (rather than just signpost) to a local organisation may be more effective, especially for those with mental health or other vulnerabilities, or those with multiple problems where the local agency can triage.
- Getting to know the local organisation can also help with **practical information** for signposting or referrals e.g. knowledge of changes to opening hours, or that the office is on the ground floor.
- Remember to obtain the **individual's consent** to send their information to the advice provider. Also, it may be useful to include any information about disabilities in a referral.
- MPs might also investigate what **social prescribing** or other health partnerships are available in their area, whether linked to primary care or a charity such as Age UK. Also known as **community referral**, this is a means of enabling GPs, nurses and other health and care professionals to refer people to a range of local, non-clinical services. There are different models for social prescribing, but most involve a link worker or navigator who works with people to access local sources of support.

Overview of sources of legal help

1. Online resources

Online guides may help explain legal rights and how disputes can be resolved. See pages 17 to 20, including:

- advicelocal.uk
- advicenow.org.uk
- citizensadvice.org.uk

Guidance for litigants going to a court or tribunal and representing themselves include:

- advicenow.org.uk/goingtocourt
- citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts
- judiciary.uk/guidance-and-resources/advice-for-litigants-in-person

2. Help provided or funded by insurance

E.g. household or motor insurance.

Also, subscriptions (e.g. from [Which?](#)) may include legal advice.

3. Help from a Trade Union

Trade Unions might provide members with free or discounted legal assistance, e.g. on employment issues.

4. Privately paid legal help

From a solicitor: the Law Society solicitors.lawsociety.org.uk

A public access barrister: the Bar Council directaccessportal.co.uk

Visit legalchoices.org.uk for guidance about instructing all types of lawyer (including about no-win no-fee arrangements, and free initial appointments).

5. Legal aid (funded by Government)

Publicly funded legal advice and representation is available in certain areas of law but usually only for those with very limited means (pg 13).

6. Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service

Advice and advocacy may be available to renters at risk of being evicted and all mortgage holders facing repossession (page 16).

7. Local advice agency

A local charity or non-for-profit organisation may be able to help over the phone or in person. In many cases they will be the best starting point for individuals, including to triage multiple problems, or signpost/refer to other help including legal aid. See pages 18 to 22.

The key online directories to locate local agencies are:

- advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk
- advicelocal.uk

You can specifically locate Citizens Advice and Law Centres at:

- citizensadvice.org.uk
- lawcentres.org.uk

8. Specialist charities

There are many specialist charities helping particular categories of people or those with specific problems. See from page 38 onwards.

They may offer general advice and/or holistic support.

Some may be able to provide legal advice or representation, or may be able to signpost or refer to legal help (including legal aid).

9. Pro bono clinics and charities

Free legal assistance may be available from volunteer lawyers at clinics through the [LawWorks Clinics Network](#), at law schools, or through other charities such as [Advocate](#). See pages 23 to 37.

NB: pro bono help is usually only provided to those who do not have the means to pay for legal help and who do not qualify for legal aid.

10. Wales: devolved law

For those living in Wales, see the Wales guide from page 118 below.

2. GENERAL SOURCES OF FREE LEGAL ADVICE

This section signposts to:

- **legal aid**
- **key websites with online guidance**
- **websites to locate local agencies**
- **networks of advice agencies and pro bono clinics**
- **non-legal support at court.**

Referred to elsewhere as the “GENERAL section”.

Read in conjunction with the above INTRODUCTION section.

Legal aid



Legal aid may help meet the costs of legal advice, family mediation or representation in a court or tribunal. This is funded by the Government who determine who is eligible, and is operated by the [Legal Aid Agency](#). Legal aid is generally provided through private firms of solicitors and barristers, and some agencies such as Law Centres.

This is just a brief overview. For further detail, check the current rules at gov.uk/legal-aid and the links in this entry.

In summary, whether someone qualifies for legal aid will depend on:

- Means testing of their financial situation (save for limited exceptions);
- The type of case being “in scope”; and,
- The merits of the case (save for limited exceptions).

The means test is changing in some areas following the Government [response](#) to the Legal Aid Means Test Review. Phase 1 changes for [crime](#) and [civil](#) took effect from August and September 2023, and included removal of means testing for:

- Applicants aged under 18 seeking criminal advice and assistance or advocacy assistance, and civil representation;
- Civil representation for parents of children facing withdrawal of life-saving treatment;
- Applicants seeking legal help in relation to certain types of [inquests](#).

Legal aid solicitors can apply for legal aid for their client. To find a solicitor or family mediator with a legal aid contract: find-legal-advice.justice.gov.uk

Criminal legal aid

Criminal cases are in scope for legal aid, except for certain minor offences. Free legal advice (without means testing) is available for those arrested and taken to a police station.

Eligibility for advice/representation in the criminal courts will depend on (a) the merits or “interests of justice” test, and (b) the client’s means. See gov.uk/guidance/criminal-legal-aid-means-testing

Civil legal aid (including family)

- Legal aid providers can check eligibility for clients at: [check-your-client-qualifies-for-legal-aid.service.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/check-your-client-qualifies-for-legal-aid)
- The public can check eligibility at: [gov.uk/check-legal-aid](https://www.gov.uk/check-legal-aid)
- Civil Legal Advice may be able to provide free legal advice by phone to those eligible: [gov.uk/civil-legal-advice](https://www.gov.uk/civil-legal-advice) 0345 345 4 345.

Civil means test: Not everyone will be financially eligible for legal aid. In very simplified terms (noting that the rules are more complicated), the client's means combined with any partner's should meet the following criteria in order to be eligible for legal aid:

- Gross income of no more than £2,657 per month before tax, with no more than £733 per month of disposable income (the income test may be automatically passed where the applicant is receiving certain "passporting" benefits e.g. income support or universal credit); and
- Capital of no more than £8,000 in disposable assets/savings (£3,000 for immigration cases). This includes equity in their home, but the first £100,000 in equity is disregarded (with a further £100,000 disregarded where the home is the subject matter of the dispute, for example in repossession matters). A pensioners' capital disregard is also available for those aged 60 or over on low incomes.

Even where an applicant is found eligible for legal aid, they may still be required to pay a financial contribution towards the cost of their legal aid.

The means test is disapplied in some circumstances (e.g. for care and supervision order proceedings, cases heard by the Mental Health Tribunal and for Hague Convention and European Convention on Child Custody cases). This means that the applicant will be deemed financially eligible for legal aid without needing to pay a contribution. Income/capital caps may also be waived where the matter involves domestic violence or forced marriage, but a contribution may still be required.

See the full current means test [gov.uk/guidance/civil-legal-aid-means-testing](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/civil-legal-aid-means-testing)

In scope civil cases may include (check at [lawsociety.org.uk/legal-costs-help](https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/legal-costs-help) and [gov.uk/check-legal-aid](https://www.gov.uk/check-legal-aid)):

- Homelessness or losing one's home, or if it's in serious disrepair.
- Protection for the client or a child from abuse or harassment, e.g. domestic violence or forced marriage.
- Poor quality care received due to age, disability or SEN.
- Advice on finances, children or divorce after an abusive relationship.
- A child being at risk of being taken into care.
- Family mediation e.g. when separating or getting a divorce.
- Unlawful discrimination.
- Challenging the way government made a decision about the client.
- Seeking asylum.
- Immigration advice for victims of trafficking and domestic abuse, unaccompanied children and bail for immigration detainees.
- Advice if a family member's death is going to a coroner's inquest.
- Benefits: challenging a social security tribunal decision (points of law).
- Mental health: challenging being sectioned or detained.
- Exceptional cases where human (or retained EU) rights are at risk.

Whilst the following are likely to be **outside of scope**:

- Consumer and other contractual disputes.
- Most immigration cases other than those listed above.
- Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority cases.
- Most private family law e.g. divorce, finance and children matters (unless for example domestic abuse or violence, or child abuse).
- Personal injury or death.
- Tort and other general claims.
- Conveyancing.
- Will-making or matters of trust law.
- Company or partnership law or business law.
- Legal advice in relation to a change of name.
- Defamation or malicious falsehood.

Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service

Funded by the Legal Aid Agency, this free service is not means-tested: all renters at risk of being evicted and all mortgage holders facing repossession can get help. It has **two** elements:

1. Early legal advice: help is available from the moment a person receives written notice that someone is seeking the possession of their home (e.g. an email from their landlord or a letter from the mortgage provider). To get help they will need to contact their nearest law firm or charity operating the scheme at gov.uk/get-housing-loss-advice

A housing expert will help identify what may be causing someone to seek possession of the home and recommend potential solutions. For example, they may be able to provide legal advice on matters such as:

- illegal eviction
- disrepair and other problems with housing conditions
- rent arrears
- mortgage arrears
- welfare benefits payments
- debt

2. 'In court' duty scheme: whether or not they have received early legal advice, people with a possession hearing can arrive at court on the day and receive advice from a duty advisor. The court usher will be able to direct the defendant to them.

The duty adviser will meet the individual to gain a brief understanding of the issues and if they want will defend their case in front of the judge. They will try to get the eviction or repossession dropped, or to get more time from the judge for sorting out the problems that led to the potential loss of their home.

In order to access support, it is vital the defendant arrives as early as possible to discuss their case with the advisor before the hearing begins.

[Shelter](#) offers more information about how the duty scheme works. Further information concerning the Service and a directory of providers can be found online at gov.uk/get-housing-loss-advice. Paperwork from the court and notes accompany eviction notices will also include details of the scheme and may signpost to the local scheme provider.

Cost of living advice

Cost of living issues may comprise a number of areas where legal or non-legal advice can assist, such as regarding benefits, debt, housing, childcare, disabilities and health.

The national networks featured below in this section may be able to help with these issues, such as Citizens Advice and Law Centres.

See also the specialist charities listed in the BENEFITS and DEBT sections, for example Turn2US, National Debtline and Stepchange, noting that debt charities should be able to assist with fuel debt problems. Other specialist charities also provide cost of living advice and support for the communities they serve, for example Age UK.

There are a number of Government and charity websites which provide guidance on cost of living support (including regarding payments or discounts) and can signpost to relevant services, including:

- UK government: [gov.uk/cost-of-living](https://www.gov.uk/cost-of-living)
- Welsh government: gov.wales/help-cost-living
- London: london.gov.uk/costofliving
- Citizens Advice: citizensadvice.org.uk/costofliving
- Debt Advice Foundation: debtadvicefoundation.org/cost-of-living-support
- Money Helper: moneyhelper.org.uk/cost-of-living
- National Debtline: nationaldebtline.org/cost-living-hub-ew

In addition, local authorities may have webpages on cost of living, with signposting to specific local support.

Help through Hardship line 0808 208 2138 is run by Citizens Advice, in partnership with the Trussell Trust, to support people with emergency food and advice support for people struggling to afford the basics.

You can also locate foodbanks using advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk.

Advicelocal is a website developed by the *rightsnet* advice charity to help people with social welfare problems.

It provides links to tailored information for each area of law, and details of free, independent local advice organisations to help get advice and support with issues such as:

- Welfare benefits and tax credits
- Council tax
- Debt and money advice
- Housing and homelessness
- Employment and work issues
- Disability and social care
- Asylum and immigration

How to get help

Go to advicelocal.uk enter your postcode and choose an advice topic.

You will find both:

- Links to online sources of advice and information.
- Details of local advice organisations across the UK who may be able to assist via advicelocal.uk/find-an-adviser

advicenow.org.uk is an independent, not-for-profit website, run by the charity *Law for Life: the Foundation for Public Legal Education*.

Advicenow provides online information and support on rights and the law in England and Wales. The website provides a hand-picked and checked information service that draws together the best information about the law and rights online. It covers a range of areas of law to help the public understand their rights and options, including:

- Welfare benefits
- Communications and media
- Consumer affairs
- Education and training
- Employment
- Environment and countryside
- Family and personal
- Government, law and rights
- Health and social care
- Housing and homelessness
- Immigration and nationality
- Money and tax
- Police and crime
- Transport, travel and leisure

It also offers step-by-step guides at advicenow.org.uk/advicenow-guides and tools at advicenow.org.uk/help-deal-benefit-problems aimed at people with a legal problem but with no or little access to legal advice. Areas of law covered are:

- Family law issues
- Welfare benefits
- Civil claims
- Housing and homelessness
- Employment law rights
- Going to court

Citizens Advice is a network of charities that provides confidential advice online, over the phone, and in person for free. This can include legal advice. Citizens Advice can help in various areas, including benefits, work, debt & money, consumer, housing, family, law & courts, and immigration.

How to get help

1. Read online advice on various topics at citizensadvice.org.uk.
2. Speak to Citizens Advice on their national phonelines, listed at citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us (including options for online chat & RelayUK/textphone). These include:
 - National phone Adviceline 0800 144 8848 (England), 0800 702 2020 (Wales).
 - “Help to Claim” phone service re applying for Universal Credit: 0800 144 8 444 (England), 08000 241 220 (Wales), 0800 023 2581 (Scotland).
 - Money or debt problems: 0800 240 4420.
 - Consumer helpline: 0808 223 1133 (Welsh: 0808 223 1144).
3. Get help from your nearest Citizens Advice office or specialist services by visiting citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us
4. Those with a case in a civil or family court without representation may be able to get legal advice from the national service at RCJ Advice. For further details see rcjadvic.org.uk.

MPs working with Citizens Advice

The Citizens Advice MPs guide in [English](#) and [Welsh](#) has a range of information on how MPs can work together with Citizens Advice to help constituents, including:

- Practical steps MPs and their office can take when someone comes to you for help.
- How local Citizens Advice can help MPs advise constituents, manage casework, and access constituency data.
- How to work together in Parliament on national issues that impact constituents and others across the country.

A Law Centre is a law practice that is a charity. Law Centres employ expert solicitors and caseworkers to give free legal advice and representation to people who cannot afford a lawyer. There are over 40 Law Centres across the UK, each serving its local community.

They specialise in social welfare law and their services include some or all of the following areas:

- Welfare rights
- Disability rights
- Immigration and asylum
- Housing and homelessness
- Employment rights
- Social care
- Discrimination
- Debt relief

Other areas of work might include:

- Challenging decisions by public bodies in court
- Mental capacity to make decisions on one's own
- Family law
- Access to education and arrangements for special needs
- Young people and children's rights

Local services and types of legal assistance and current capacity to take on new cases will vary. Nearly all Law Centres are legal aid providers, but other sources of funding mean they may help even people who are not eligible for legal aid.

How to get help

Find your local Law Centre at lawcentres.org.uk.

For non advice related queries, the central contact point is info@lawcentres.org.uk.

If you do not have a local Law Centre and would like to find out how to set one up, please see lawcentres.org.uk/join-our-movement

With over 700 members, AdviceUK is the largest network of advice organisations across England, Scotland and Wales. Our purpose is to improve the lives of people in need of advice. We do this by supporting our members, so it is easier for them to help their clients, and by directly influencing policy-makers, decision-makers and funders.

Our members are diverse both in terms of organisational size and the range of advice given. They range from large providers e.g. National Debtline, to smaller community-based organisations and foodbanks. 50 AdviceUK members employ lawyers.

For some AdviceUK members, the provision of advice is their core activity. For others, advice is a part of their wider work in housing, community development, student welfare, disability, health as well as cultural activities. Some adopt a whole person/whole community approach to their work.

Some AdviceUK members provide advice across a broad range of social welfare issues including benefits, debt, housing, immigration and employment undertaking casework and representation at court or tribunal. AdviceUK members in some cases work with particular communities of interest or groups of people needing advice.

You can locate the individual AdviceUK organisations at adviceuk.org.uk/about/contact (see “*member directories*”).

Find an Adviser advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk is a directory to locate various advice organisations and other help on the following topics, using data maintained by AdviceUK. You search by postcode and it includes various local, regional and national organisations.

- Benefits
- Bereavement
- Debt
- Disability
- Domestic Violence
- Foodbanks
- Housing
- Homelessness
- Immigration
- Legal issues
- Mental health
- Work

AdviceFinder is also available via a variety of other channels. From aiding your helpline team to signpost or by feeding search data into a multitude of your organisation’s platforms (e.g. website, client portal or app). For more information, visit advicefinder.org.uk.

The LawWorks Clinic Network is a nationwide network of around 300 clinics which offer free initial legal advice, supported by LawWorks.

Clinics provide free advice to individuals on various areas of law including employment law, housing matters, consumer disputes, debt, and welfare rights. Some services are only able to offer advice to clients according to geographic location, client demographic and/or area of law.

Clients usually have 30 to 60 minutes to explain an issue and receive basic advice on the next steps to take. Some clinics may not be able to offer advice immediately, but provide a letter/email with a summary of advice.

How to get help

Visit lawworks.org.uk/clinics to find your local LawWorks clinic, including details of what help the clinic provides and their contact details.

You can search by postcode and filter by the following areas of law:

- Asylum
- Charity
- Child
- Civil litigation
- Community care
- Consumer
- Contract
- Corporate structure
- Crime
- Data protection
- Debt & insolvency
- Domestic violence
- Education
- Employment
- Environmental
- Family
- Health & safety
- Housing
- Immigration
- Insurance
- Intellectual property
- IT & internet
- Personal injury
- Property
- Tax & VAT
- Tort
- Welfare benefits
- Wills & probate
- Windrush

Law school/university clinics



Most university law schools offer free legal advice through their respective law clinics and other pro bono projects. The majority of university law schools are members of their umbrella charity the Clinical Legal Education Organisation (CLEO, cleo-uk.org) and of LawWorks.

University law clinics are mainly student led. In other words, students, under the supervision of academic members of staff or external partners such as law firms, offer free legal advice and assistance to clients.

The advice offered may range from general advice through to specialist advice on certain issues.

University clinics might also offer letters of advice, form filling, signposting and/or representation.

Note that most clinics will operate on an appointment only basis, and some may be closed during academic holidays.

University law schools may also produce free resources offering guidance on particular areas of law in the form of live presentations, online videos or paper (or online) guidance documents.

How to get help

Most law school clinics can be located at lawworks.org.uk/clinics

You can also contact your local university law school's pro bono team (details of which should be on the university's website) for information about their clinics and/or any guidance resources they may offer outside of a clinic setting.

Support Through Court



Support Through Court helps ensure people facing court alone can represent themselves with dignity, supporting them to have the fairest possible hearing.

<i>Geographical remit</i>	Across England and Wales. In addition to a National Helpline and National Online Service, services operate in Birmingham, Cardiff, Chelmsford, Leeds, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Sheffield and Southend. Find a service at supportthroughcourt.org/locations
<i>Type of help provided</i>	Volunteers provide practical, procedural and emotional support in many areas of civil and family court processes. They can: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain how the court works, help fill in forms, organise papers, and discuss settling issues.• Help clients plan what to say in court.• If needed, go with clients to court (remote or in person hearings) to provide support and help afterwards.• Provide details of specialist advice agencies where possible; help find if clients can get free legal advice. They do not provide legal advice.
<i>Areas of law</i>	Family and civil.
<i>Eligibility</i>	Anyone without representation in the civil & family courts.
<i>In person?</i>	For regional services see supportthroughcourt.org/locations
<i>Online/remote help?</i>	All regional services also provide remote support. Support can be accessed via a National Helpline and fully remote National Online Service.
<i>Pro bono?</i>	We signpost to pro bono organisations.
<i>Application route</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appointment booking forms on our website.• By calling our National Helpline: 0300 081 0006.• By calling local services (see above locations link).
<i>Website</i>	supportthroughcourt.org
<i>Email address</i>	ceo@supportthroughcourt.org

3. PRO BONO LEGAL HELP

This section highlights national services of pro bono advice and representation, provided voluntarily by lawyers across various areas of law.

Please note the limitations explained on page 5 above, including that demand for help usually exceeds supply, and help is usually only available to those unable to pay but not eligible for legal aid.

Read in conjunction with the above INTRODUCTION and GENERAL sections.



Advocate is the Bar's pro bono charity. It finds free legal help from volunteer barristers for people who need advice on a court case or help with a hearing, who cannot afford to pay but cannot get legal aid.

<i>Geographical remit</i>	England and Wales.
<i>Type of legal help provided</i>	Barristers can provide the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Representation in any court/tribunal• Legal advice in a meeting or over the phone• Legal advice in writing• Drafting documents such as skeleton arguments
<i>Areas of law</i>	Every area of law.
<i>Criteria/eligibility to get help</i>	Check eligibility here: weareadvocate.org.uk/how-our-service-works.html <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You need a barrister to help with your case• Your case is based in England and Wales• Your hearing or deadline is more than three weeks away after you submit a completed application (save in certain exceptional circumstances).
<i>In person service?</i>	No.
<i>Online / remote?</i>	Applications are processed online. Those without web access can request a paper form by phone or by post.
<i>Pro bono?</i>	All help is provided pro bono by barristers.
<i>Application route</i>	People can apply directly without a need for a referral from an agency or MP. However, an agency or MP can help the applicant collate documents and write a concise summary which will help them apply. See: weareadvocate.org.uk/how-our-service-works.html
<i>Website</i>	weareadvocate.org.uk
<i>Email address</i>	enquiries@weareadvocate.org.uk
<i>Phone number</i>	020 4518 6141 (voicemail only)
<i>Important notes</i>	Assistance from a barrister cannot be guaranteed.

LawWorks (the operating name for the Solicitors Pro Bono Group) is a national charity which connects people in need of legal advice and assistance, and the not-for-profit organisations that support them, with the skills and expertise of lawyers willing to meet those needs for free. LawWorks and A4ID (page 36) are merging to form a single charity.

LawWorks Clinic Network

LawWorks supports the LawWorks Clinic Network, a network of around 300 clinics which offer free initial legal advice. See page 23 above.

Free Legal Answers

Free Legal Answers is an online platform where people on low incomes can describe a legal problem or ask a legal question and receive pro bono legal advice. The focus is on early/initial legal advice on civil law matters. To see if you are eligible on Free Legal Answers and to sign up, we ask you a few questions. Visit freelegalanswers.org.uk.

Small charities and not-for-profits

The Not-for-Profits Programme brokers legal advice to small charities and not-for-profit organisations on a wide range of legal issues.

lawworks.org.uk/legal-advice-not-profits

Secondary specialisation casework

LawWorks has a series of projects which utilise in-depth pro bono training and supervision works to provide pro bono as effectively as possible in areas of need. In particular, projects regarding unpaid wages, and community care law for the families of children with life-limiting conditions.

lawworks.org.uk/solicitors-and-volunteers/get-involved/secondary-specialisation

Major incidents

The Law Society has partnered with LawWorks to launch a centralised online platform to help coordinate pro bono advice from the legal profession in the event of a major incident. In the event of major incidents, including terrorist attacks and civic disasters such as the Grenfell Tower fire, the digital platform will help members of the public access emergency pro bono legal advice. In such an event, information for the public will be published on the websites of the Law Society and LawWorks.

Business courts duty schemes

Barristers and solicitor advocates volunteer to provide “on the day” advice and representation for free to litigants who are intending or due to appear in interim applications lists in certain Business & Property Courts.

The schemes assist those who are unable to afford representation. They operate under Advocate’s licence, with the support of the Judiciary. The types of applications dealt with are injunctions and other emergency/urgent relief in commercial, chancery or property matters that fall within the remit of the Business and Property Courts. The Leeds scheme also assists with winding-up petitions (for the London winding-up list see COIN on page 32).

Advice and representation is provided by volunteers only to litigants involved in making (or intending to make) such applications to Court, whether they are the claimant, defendant, applicant, petitioner or respondent. The schemes are not clinics providing other legal advice. Those in need of other assistance should go to an agency such as Citizens Advice or a Law Centre, or where applicable make an application to a pro bono charity such as Advocate.

To get assistance, litigants attend the relevant court on the day when the application list is operating (or remotely where the court is sitting remotely). Litigants ideally should attend court before the start of the list. Where possible it is helpful for litigants to alert the relevant Court in advance that they may need assistance through the scheme.

Note: as with all pro bono schemes, help is not guaranteed in every case. More information: weareadvocate.org.uk/volunteer/partner-schemes.html

London: CLIPS (Chancery Bar Litigant in Person Support Scheme)

Chancery
Bar
ASSOCIATION

Overview: The original CLIPs scheme is operated by the Chancery Bar Association, in collaboration with Advocate.

Locations:

- The applications list in Court 10 of the Rolls Building (the High Court) in London (week days); and,
- The Business and Property Lists at the County Court at Central London (Fridays only).

How to get help: attend Court 10 and either see the duty lawyer in the next door CLIPS meeting room, or speak to the court usher.

Contact: admin@chba.org.uk or clips@weareadvocate.org.uk or contact the clerk to the duty judge.

Newcastle: NCLIPS

Overview: The Newcastle scheme operates in the District Judge Business and Property Applications List, held on Tuesdays.

Location: The Civil and Family Court and Tribunals Centre in Newcastle upon Tyne Court (Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8QF).

How to get help: Speak to the District Judges' Usher on the first floor.

Contact: newcastleclips@weareadvocate.org.uk

Birmingham: B-CLIPS

Overview: The Birmingham CLIPS scheme operates in the Business and Property Courts' dedicated B-CLIPS List held on nominated Fridays.

Location: Birmingham Civil and Family Justice Centre (Priory Courts, 33 Bull Street, B4 6DS).

How to get help: Speak to the Usher on the second floor.

Contact: birminghamprobono@weareadvocate.org.uk

Bristol & South West CLIPS (launching shortly)

Overview: The South West CLIPS scheme will operate in the Business and Property Courts' Application List each Thursday.

Location: Bristol Civil and Family Justice Centre (2 Redcliff Street, Bristol, BS1 6GR).

How to get help: Speak to the Usher on the first floor.

Contact: southwestprobono@weareadvocate.org.uk

Leeds Business & Property Courts LIP Scheme

Overview: The Leeds Business & Property Courts LIP Scheme provides

representation on every second and fourth Tuesday of the month in the Companies Court winding-up list and in the BPC District Judges' Applications List.

Location: Leeds Combined Court Centre (1 Oxford Row, Leeds, LS1 3BG) or West Gate (6 Grace Street, Leeds, LS1 2RP).

How to get help: Speak to the Court Staff on the ground floor of Leeds Combined Court Centre, or the 4th floor at West Gate.

Contact: leedsbpc@weareadvocate.org.uk

Manchester: M-CLIPS (new!)

Overview: The Manchester CLIPS scheme provides advice and advocacy for unrepresented parties in the Business and Property Courts' Application Lists held on nominated Fridays at the Manchester Civil Justice Centre.

Location: Manchester Civil Justice Centre (1 Bridge Street West, Manchester, M60 9DJ).

How to get help: Speak to the Usher on the level that the relevant hearing is due to take place on.

Contact: manchesterprobono@weareadvocate.org.uk

Other insolvency and commercial pro bono schemes

Bankruptcy Representation Scheme (Rolls Building, London)

Overview: The scheme provides advice and advocacy for unrepresented debtors in bankruptcy petitions heard each week during legal term time in the Business and Property Courts' (BPC) Insolvency & Companies Court List (Chancery Division) in the Rolls Building in London. The scheme is operated by the Chancery Bar Association and Advocate. Currently petitions are heard on Mondays and from November 2024 will be heard on Tuesdays.

How to get help: on the day of the bankruptcy petition hearing attend the first floor reception in the Rolls Building and speak to the court staff.

Contact: bankruptcy@weareadvocate.org.uk

Chancery Mediation Scheme

Overview: unrepresented parties that wish to mediate but who cannot afford to may ask for a barrister to volunteer as a mediator. Applies to suitable chancery or commercial cases including in the Business & Property Courts.

How to get help: weareadvocate.org.uk/volunteer/partner-schemes.html

Contact: enquiries@weareadvocate.org.uk

Company Insolvency Pro Bono Scheme (Rolls Building)

Overview: litigants appearing in the winding-up court can obtain free legal advice and representation from volunteer barristers, with the assistance of students on the Bar Course.

Location: Winding-up Court, the Rolls Building (the High Court), Fetter Lane, London EC4A 1NL.

How to get help: attend Consultation Room 17 at the Rolls Building from 9.30am on the day of the winding-up list, or contact:

admin@companyinsolvencyscheme.com

More info: companyinsolvencyscheme.com

Commercial Court and London Circuit Commercial Court

Overview: litigants in person with applications (not trials) with a time estimate of a day or less can apply for representation by volunteer barristers. The scheme is operated by the Commercial Bar Association (COMBAR) and Advocate.

Locations: Commercial Court; London Circuit Commercial Court.

How to get help: Litigants apply to Advocate (see page 27 above).

More info: admin@combar.com or commercial@weareadvocate.org.uk

Personal Insolvency Litigation Advice & Representation Scheme

Overview: Administered by Advocate, PILARS provides advice and/or representation from pro bono barristers to unrepresented debtors or bankrupts in bankruptcy proceedings who cannot afford to pay for help but are not entitled to legal aid.

How to get help: for assistance contact National Debtline or Business Debtline (see page 62) who refer PILAR cases to Advocate.

Appeal schemes

Advocate

Pro bono assistance from a barrister can be sought for an appeal before any court by applying to Advocate (see page 27 above). In addition, there are schemes for specific types of appeal as follows.

Criminal appeals

In addition to Advocate, see APPEAL (the Centre for Criminal Appeals) on page 58 below.

Appeals in employment and social security cases

See ELAAS on page 84 and FRU on page 44.

Appeals from County Court to the High Court in Bristol

Overview: The scheme supports litigants in person appealing to a High Court Judge in the Business & Properties Court by (i) assessing merits of an appeal, and if appropriate, (ii) providing written representation by way of a skeleton argument or, where required, (iii) providing oral representation.

How to get help: When in receipt of a compliant Appellant's Notice from a litigant in person, the Appeals Office provide an information slip informing them of the scheme. If they wish to access the scheme, they will be directed to contact Advocate via the below email address.

Contact: southwestprobono@weareadvocate.org.uk

Court of Appeal Scheme

Overview: The scheme aims to support litigants in person making submissions to the Court of Appeal by (i) assessing the merits of the appeal, and if appropriate, (ii) providing written representation by way of a supplementary skeleton argument.

How to get help: When in receipt of a compliant Appellant's Notice (N161 Form) from a litigant in person, the Civil Appeals Office will provide an information slip informing them of the scheme. If they wish to access the scheme, they will be directed to contact Advocate via the below email.

Contact: coas@weareadvocate.org.uk

Other pro bono in England & Wales

Many lawyers and firms provide free of charge legal assistance directly to the public, charities and community groups.

Lawyers also volunteer via a number of dedicated pro bono schemes, often operated in partnership with specialist charities who provide training and supervision, including:

- [Afghan Pro Bono Initiative](#): advice and representation to Afghan individuals, to assist in applying to be reunited with their family in the UK and to access the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy scheme, and provide information on the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme.
- [Bail for Immigration Detainees' ECF Project](#): assistance to current or previously detained individuals with unstable or at risk immigration status to obtain Exceptional Case Funding (ECF) to challenge deportation proceedings (page 101).
- [ELIPS](#): an advice clinic for Employment Tribunal claims (page 83).
- [ELAAS](#): representation at preliminary hearings in the EAT (page 84).
- [Domestic Abuse Response Alliance](#): representation for domestic abuse victims via the National Centre for Domestic Violence (page 72).
- [Family Reunion from Europe \(FRFE\) Project](#): advice and assistance with preparing ECF and family reunion applications for asylum seekers in Europe with family members in the UK, in partnership with Refugee Legal Support (page 100) and Coram CLC (page 48).
- [Free Representation Unit](#) (FRU): representation in tribunals for social security and employment cases (page 44).
- [KIND UK](#): legal advice and representation to undocumented children on immigration and nationality issues (page 50).
- [Not Beyond Redemption](#): family law advice and representation for mothers in prison to help them re-establish and maintain contact with their children (page 113).
- [Statelessness Project](#): advice and assistance to individuals to apply

for recognition as stateless, in partnership with Asylum Aid (page 98).

- [Ukraine Advice Project UK](#): immigration advice for Ukraine war refugees (page 100).
- [Voices for Families Initiative](#): advice and representation to families of children experiencing significant or life-limiting illnesses in areas of social housing and community care, in partnership with LawWorks and Together for Short Lives (page 47).
- [Who Cares](#): supporting adults with learning disabilities and mental health difficulties with welfare benefits tribunal appeals, charging disputes and community care disputes, in partnership with Access Social Care (page 53).
- [Windrush Legal Initiative](#) provides advice and support for people to apply to the Windrush Compensation Scheme, in partnership with Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit (page 104).
- [Z2K's pro bono project](#) supports low-income Londoners with free advice and representation to challenge DWP decisions at the First-Tier Social Security Tribunal (page 43).

In addition to the above examples, many other charities use pro bono help from volunteer lawyers alongside specialist lawyers and other staff employed in house by the charity. These include Law Centres, other front line advice agencies, law schools and various specialist charities listed in the next section of this Guide.

In addition, A4ID and TrustLaw facilitate pro bono involving lawyers both in the UK and overseas:



Advocates for International Development a4id.org

facilitates legal pro bono services for international development organisations and government institutions by identifying their needs and matching them with compatible legal service providers from its vast global legal network. In addition, A4ID deploys legal and judicial specialists from UK to ODA-eligible countries to strengthen the rule of law and judicial institutions. A4ID and LawWorks (page 28) are merging to form a single charity.

TrustLaw TrustLaw (trust.org/trustlaw) is the Thomson Reuters Foundation's global pro bono legal service. We connect high-impact NGOs and social enterprises working to create social and environmental change with the best law firms and corporate legal teams, to provide them with free legal assistance. With a community of more than 6,500 members in over 190 countries, TrustLaw is the world's largest global pro bono network.

Further charities and initiatives facilitate pro bono in the following ways:

- Schemes which facilitate solicitors and barristers working together on pro bono cases, in particular [Pro Bono Connect](#).
- Initiatives working on tackling broader issues, such as the [Chancery Lane Project](#) which helps address climate change.
- Charities which help provide training to enable volunteers to act pro bono, such as [Pro Bono Community](#).

Finally, a number of other charities, committees and initiatives provide support for pro bono across the jurisdiction, including the following. Please do not contact them for legal assistance unless they explicitly advertise that they accept such requests.

- [Access to Justice Foundation, a fundraising grant maker](#)
- [Attorney General's Pro Bono Committee of England & Wales](#)
- [Bar Council's Pro Bono & Social Responsibility Committee](#)
- FCA Pro Bono Committee
- [Government Legal Department Pro Bono & Volunteering Network](#)
- [In House Pro Bono Group](#)
- [Law Society of England & Wales Pro Bono & CSR Policy Adviser](#)
- [National Pro Bono Centre](#)
- [Pro Bono Committees](#) for Birmingham, Greater Manchester, Hampshire & the Isle of Wight, the North East, Wales, the West of England and Yorkshire.
- [Pro Bono Week organising committee](#)
- [UK Collaborative Plan for Pro Bono](#)

4. HELP ON SPECIFIC ISSUES

This section is separated alphabetically into legal issues, listed in the table of contents above on pages 2 to 3.

Each sub-section contains non-exhaustive lists of national (not local) charities and other services:

- Charities that provide legal or other specialised advice (and in some cases representation) on issues such as benefits, debt, employment, housing and immigration.
- Broader charities offering general advice or holistic support for categories of people e.g. disabilities. Many provide information and guidance, including on legal issues, but not necessarily individual legal advice. They may also be able to signpost to legal help.
- For some areas, public bodies, ombudsman etc (although they might not provide independent advice).

Each sub-section starts with non-exhaustive notes on:

- General websites with guidance & additional links.
- Legal aid (but note the criteria is more complicated).
- Local help from national networks.
- Other sub-sections on different legal issues to look at.

Note:

- The charities may not have capacity to assist (see page 5).
- If phoning a charity, try to visit their website first.
- Local help may be available from legal aid solicitors and local charities, see the GENERAL section above.

BENEFITS / WELFARE RIGHTS / TAX CREDITS

Online guidance on welfare benefits and tax credits:

- Advicelocal: advicelocal.uk/welfare-benefits
- Advicenow: advicenow.org.uk/benefits
- Citizens Advice: citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits

Citizens Advice “Help to Claim” service re applying for Universal Credit:

- England: 0800 144 8 444
- Scotland: 0800 023 2581
- Wales: 0800 0241 220

From the Government:

- Guidance: gov.uk/browse/benefits and moneyhelper.org.uk/en/benefits
- Benefits calculators: gov.uk/benefits-calculators
- Regarding mandatory reconsideration & appeals processes: gov.uk/mandatory-reconsideration

In addition to the below national charities, many local agencies will advise on benefits issues. These include over 400 of AdviceUK’s members, Citizens Advice, Law Centres (mainly on challenging benefits decisions), other front line advice agencies, some clinics on the LawWorks Clinics Network and some law schools. See the GENERAL section above. You can locate various local agencies at advicelocal.uk and advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk.

Note also that local authorities may have Welfare Benefits Teams that provide advice and assistance to residents about their entitlements.

Legal aid may be available to challenge decisions of the Social Security Tribunal on points of law. See page 13 above or gov.uk/check-legal-aid

Additional specialist charities listed in other sections may also advise on benefits issues, in particular see the DISABILITY, COMMUNITY CARE,

FAMILY and IMMIGRATION & ASLYUM sections. Some of those charities are listed immediately below.

Where relevant see also charities in the DEBT, MONEY & TAX section.

Charities focussing on benefits

- **Turn2US** turn2us.org.uk helps people in financial need, including online [guidance](#), a benefits entitlement [calculator](#) and [grants](#) search. Helpline: 0808 802 2000.
- **Free Representation Unit** provides free representation for benefit appeals in the first-tier tribunal and the Upper Tribunal – see page 44.
- **Gingerbread** gingerbread.org.uk provides support and advice on benefits and tax credit issues for single parents. 0808 802 0925.
- **Mental Health & Money Advice** offers online guidance about claiming disability benefits for a mental health condition at mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org/en/welfare-benefits
- **Z2K**: benefits advice to Londoners (see page 43 below).

For advisers/agencies

- **Child Poverty Action Group** cpag.org.uk/welfare-rights/advice-service provide advice about welfare benefits and tax credits to those advising the public: 020 7812 5231 advice@cpag.org.uk (NB only for advisers in a not-for-profit organisation, advice is not offered to the public.)
- **Rightsnet** rightsnet.org.uk provides daily [news and case law updates](#) across five areas of social welfare law; facilitates casework support to people working at the frontline via its range of online [discussion forums](#); and has a suite of free [web tools](#), including advice.local.uk, [pipinfo](http://pipinfo.org.uk) and [universalcreditinfo](http://universalcreditinfo.org.uk).

Charities whose service includes benefits advice

- Remember, as stated in the above box, local help on benefits can be obtained from **AdviceUK** members, **Citizens Advice** (mainly on

challenging benefits decisions), **Law Centres** and other local charities/clinics.

- **Age UK** ageuk.org.uk/services/information-advice amongst other areas helps older people claim benefits. They offer online [guidance](#) with a benefits calculator and a helpline 0800 678 1602.
- **Alzheimer's Society** alzheimers.org.uk offer benefits guidance to those with or caring for dementia: online [guides](#) and Support Line: 0333 150 3456.
- **Carers UK** carersuk.org/help-and-advice provide information and guidance to unpaid carers, including on benefits. Helpline: 0808 808 7777 advice@carersuk.org.
- **Chinese Information and Advice Centre** ciac.co.uk provides information, advice and support to disadvantaged Chinese people in the UK including to asylum seekers/refugees, in various areas including [benefits](#), welfare rights and [housing](#). 0300 201 1868 info@ciac.co.uk.
- **Macmillan Cancer Support** macmillan.org.uk has online [guidance](#) about benefits and provides welfare rights advice on their helpline to those with cancer: 0808 808 00 00 or by webchat or email via their [website](#).
- **Mind** mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines offers a welfare benefits line which provides information and guidance to anyone with mental health problems who is navigating the welfare benefits system: 0300 222 5782.
- Also, some **local Minds** provide benefits advice and advocacy services for those with mental health issues mind.org.uk/information-support/local-minds
- **Royal British Legion** provide benefits advice to members of the armed forces community. Contact Centre: 0808 802 8080 britishlegion.org.uk/get-support/financial-and-employment-support/finance/financial-guidance
- **Scope** scope.org.uk/helpline provides advice and support to disabled people and their families including regarding benefits.

Helpline: 0808 800 3333 helpline@scope.org.uk.

- **Surviving Economic Abuse** survivingeconomicabuse.org provide online information for victims of domestic abuse to address economic abuse, and can discuss benefits issues on the Financial Support Line: 0808 196 8845.
- **The AIRE Centre** airecentre.org/advice-1 assists EEA nationals and family members on free movement rights including on benefits.
- **The Terrence Higgins Trust** provides advice to those living with HIV on benefits, housing, debt, employment and immigration, via the THT Direct helpline 0808 802 1221, info@tht.org.uk and online [chat](#). See: tht.org.uk/our-services/living-well-hiv/advice-people-living-hiv

Complaints

- **Independent Case Examiner** reviews complaints about government agencies that deal with benefits, work & financial support gov.uk/government/organisations/independent-case-examiner

Z2K conducts specialist casework on behalf of Londoners experiencing complex benefits and housing issues causing financial hardship and crisis.

Geographical remit Casework and pro bono project London only, campaign and policy influencing England-wide.

Type of legal help provided Z2K provides advice and support to London residents on benefits issues, housing issues, and additional wrap around support.

In addition, our pro bono project supports low-income Londoners with free help to complete disability benefit forms and mandatory reconsiderations, and free representation for disability benefit appeals at the First-Tier Tribunal. We train and work with ten City law firms and two London University Legal Clinics to provide volunteer pro bono representation.

Areas of law? Social security benefits.

Criteria/eligibility to get help

- In receipt of or entitled to a means-tested benefit
- Live in London
- Of working age (18-65).

Other, non-legal help? Housing advice on matters where legal aid is not available.

In person service? We provide outreach in Westminster and can see clients at our offices if required.

Application route Individuals can refer themselves via our online form or by calling our helpline. Other organisations can also refer clients. z2k.org/get-help

Website z2k.org

Email address admin@z2k.org

Phone number 0207 259 0801

Other important information Our capacity is limited, and we cannot offer support to every person referred to us. We specialise in complex issues and do not give general, one-off advice.

Free Representation Unit (FRU)



FRU provides free of charge representation at certain tribunals for people who are not eligible for legal aid but who cannot afford lawyers.

<i>Locations</i>	London and the South East.
<i>Help provided</i>	Tribunal representation.
<i>Areas of law?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Benefit appeals in the first-tier tribunal (and Upper Tribunal).• Employment tribunals (and the Employment Appeal Tribunal).• Criminal Injury compensation cases in the First-Tier Tribunal (and Upper Tribunal).
<i>Criteria to get help</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have a hearing date at a tribunal in London and the South East.• Your case is referred to us by one of our referral agencies or an MP (unless short employment case, see below).
<i>In person or remote help?</i>	Remote help, unless a face to face meeting at our office in Holborn is required (by prior agreement).
<i>Uses pro bono lawyers?</i>	Our work is done by volunteers, mostly law students and junior legal professionals. All FRU's representatives are trained and supervised by our legal officers.
<i>Application route</i>	<p>Most cases have to be referred from an advice agency, but MPs can register to refer cases.</p> <p>Short employment tribunal hearings can be referred via thefru.org.uk/Employment-Self-Referral directly by claimants if the case is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An Employment Tribunal claim;• Listed for a final hearing of up to two days.
<i>Website</i>	thefru.org.uk
<i>Email</i>	admin@thefru.org.uk
<i>Phone</i>	020 7611 9555
<i>Other important information</i>	<p>Our service is intensive and our capacity is limited. We can't represent every person referred to us. We specialise in tribunal representation and don't give general advice.</p>

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

General guidance online about children and young people issues:

- Citizens Advice (including about getting help from the local council): citizensadvice.org.uk/family/children-and-young-people
- Advicenow guidance and various links: advicenow.org.uk/tags/children-and-young-people
- Government guidance: gov.uk/browse/childcare-parenting

The Youth Justice Legal Centre offers a series of legal guides and resources for professionals on youth justice issues: yjlc.uk/resources

Legal aid may be available for certain children issues, for example regarding a child being taken into care or regarding special education needs, see page 13 above or gov.uk/civil-legal-advice

Local agencies able to help may include Law Centres, other front line agencies and some clinics on the LawWorks Clinics Network (see GENERAL section above).

Advocate may be able to find a pro bono barrister (see page 27).

See also charities in the DISABILITY, EDUCATION and FAMILY sections.

General advice/support (including mental health)

- **Barnados** barnados.org.uk provides support to children, young people and their parents or carers. The website lists [local](#) services.
- **Childline** childline.org.uk/info-advice for children under 19 in need of support on a range of issues 0800 1111.
- **Children's Commissioner for Wales** childcomwales.org.uk advice & assistance [service](https://service.childcomwales.org.uk) 0808 801 1000 post@childcomwales.org.uk.
- **Family Rights Group** frg.org.uk advises parents, grandparents, relatives & friends about rights and options when social workers or

courts make decisions about their children's welfare. 0808 801 0366.

- **Home Start** home-start.org.uk is a local community network of trained volunteers and expert support helping families with young children through their challenging times. info@home-start.org.uk.
- **Meic** meiccymru.org is a helpline service for children and young people up to the age of 25 in Wales. Phone or WhatsApp 080880 23456. For other forms of contact see meiccymru.org/getting-help
- **Mind** provides information for young people (11-18) on mental health at mind.org.uk/for-young-people Their site includes rights based information to help young people understands their [legal rights](#) and how they might relate to mental health.
- **NSPCC** nspcc.org.uk have various services to help children at risk or who have been abused. They offer a number of dedicated [helplines](#) including a general helpline re a child's wellbeing 0808 800 5000, and abuse in education on 0800 136 663. help@nspcc.org.uk.
- **The Mix** themix.org.uk provides multi-issue support for young people (<25). They offer online information, support groups and telephone counselling. Also, 24/7 crisis support by texting THEMIX to 8525.
- **National Deaf Children's Society** ndcs.org.uk provides information and support on childhood deafness. Helpline: 0808 800 8880 and other forms of [contact](#).
- **Papyrus** papyrus-uk.org offer support and advice for children and young people <35 experiencing thoughts of suicide or anyone concerned about a young person 0800 068 4141.
- **Runaway Helpline** runawayhelpline.org.uk from the charity Missing People offers support to young people thinking about or who have run away. Call or text 116 000. 116000@runawayhelpline.org.uk.
- **St Giles** stgilestrust.org.uk help vulnerable young people criminally exploited through gangs, serious violence and offending, including with online guidance. stgilestrust.org.uk/how-to-get-support Contact 020 7708 8000 or info@stgilestrust.org.uk.
- **Stop It Now!** stopitnow.org.uk support adults who are worried

someone might be abusing a child. 0808 1000 900 and live [chat](#).

- **Young Minds** youngminds.org.uk offer mental health support for young people, including parents helpline 0808 802 5544 & [webchat](#).

Life-limiting conditions

- **Together for Short Lives** togetherforshortlives.org.uk supports parents and carers looking after children and young people with a life-limiting condition 0808 8088 100 helpline@togetherforshortlives.org.uk

Care/leavers

- **Become** becomecharity.org.uk provide advice and support to young people in care and care leavers. Online [guides](#) are available. Care Advice Line: phone 0800 023 2033, WhatsApp 0786 003 4982 and advice@becomecharity.org.uk.
- **Coram Voice** coramvoice.org.uk provides support and advocacy for young people living in care or recently left care, or those who feel they cannot live at home anymore. Advocacy helpline: 0808 800 5792.

International child abduction / Hague proceedings

- **GlobalARRK** globalarrk.org helps stuck parents who want to move with their child prevented by Hague Convention proceedings. Online [guides](#) and calls arranged using the web [form](#). info@globalarrk.org.
- **Reunite International Child Abduction Centre** reunite.org offer an advice line for practical advice, information and support to UK parents (etc) involved in cases of international parental child abduction. Plus a specialist mediation service. 0116 255 6234 advice@reunite.org

Legal advice & representation (and see next 3 pages)

- **NYAS** nyas.net offer child and family advocacy services and other support for care-experienced children, young people and vulnerable adults. Helpline: 0808 808 1011, online [chat](#) and help@nyas.net. **NYAS Legal** nyas.net/get-support/additional-support/nyas-legal-services provide advice and representation to children and young people on children and family matters: legal@nyas.net.

CCLC promotes and protects the rights of children in the UK and internationally in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It supports and advises children, young people, their parents and carers.

<i>Geographical remit</i>	England and Wales Offices in London and Colchester. Education law team advises clients in England and Wales under legal aid contract. Child Law Advice Service is for England residents.
<i>Type of legal help</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online information and guides• Email, telephone advice and webchat• Outreach advice• Legal aid & pro bono casework, representation & litigation.
<i>Areas of law</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing law• Immigration and asylum• Family law• Education and related discrimination law• Community care and public law.
<i>Criteria to get help</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Child Law Advice Service is available to all England residents who do not have legal representation.• Legal aid casework subject to means and merits tests.• Other services are largely subject to capacity.
<i>Other, non-legal help?</i>	CCLC is part of the wider Coram group which provides a range of services concerned with the welfare of children.
<i>In person service?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• London & Colchester in-person under legal aid.• In-person outreach advice around London.
<i>Online help?</i>	The rest of the services mainly digital first; phone; email.
<i>Pro bono lawyers?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CCLC is part KIND UK project (below).• CCLC partners with Refugee Legal Support and pro bono law firms on Family Reunion from Europe project.• CCLC offers a school exclusion pro bono project.
<i>Application route</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child Law Advice Service (family law): 0300 330 5480.• Child Law Advice Service (education law): 0300 330 5485.• Education law casework: call Legal Aid Agency (page 13).• British Citizenship applications: see KIND UK (page 50).• All other general enquiries/referrals: below email or phone.
<i>Contact</i>	info@coramclc.org.uk 0207 713 0089
<i>Websites</i>	childrenslegalcentre.com childlawadvice.org.uk

Just for Kids Law is a charity that helps children and young people navigate their way through challenging times with a unique casework model that combines youth advocacy, legal representation and youth opportunities support.

- Geographical remit:* London & South East
(Modern slavery and criminal exploitation nationally, if child is normally based in London or the South East).
- Legal help:* Legal advice and representation.
- Areas of law:* **Criminal law:** our criminal lawyers can go to police interviews, provide representation in court and advise on every step of the criminal case.
- Key criteria:* Children and young people up to aged 25.
- In person?* Remote and in person services available.
- Application route:*
- Referral form: [JustforKidsLaw.org/referral](https://www.justforkidslaw.org/referral)
 - If form cannot be submitted, phone or email (see below).
- Website:* [JustforKidsLaw.org](https://www.justforkidslaw.org)
- Email:* Enquiries@justforkidslaw.org
- Phone:* New client enquiries team: 020 3174 2279.
- Note:* We cannot guarantee we will have capacity to take on your case but will endeavour to signpost to alternative resources if not.

KIND UK protects the rights of undocumented children and families as they navigate the UK's immigration and nationality procedures. It is a collaboration between Central England Law Centre (who hosts the project), Coram Children's Legal Centre, Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit, JustRight Scotland, and the Migrant and Refugee Children's Legal Unit at Islington Law Centre.

<i>Geographical remit:</i>	UK-wide, primarily London, West Midlands, Manchester, Scotland but can take cases anywhere in the UK.
<i>Type of legal help provided:</i>	We provide free legal help to children, young people and families by partnering with lawyers and law firms across the country to ensure the best quality legal advice and representation. We also provide resources and training for Local Authorities, social workers and other professionals.
<i>Areas of law:</i>	Immigration, nationality, citizenship.
<i>Criteria/eligibility to get help:</i>	We take on cases of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children and young people aged 0 to 18• Applications for UK citizenship• Applications for leave to remain in the UK. Asylum cases not usually covered (as they can be covered by legal aid).
<i>In person or remote?</i>	First contact via our website, then email and phone. Clients will be allocated to the team at one of our partner firms across the UK. Appointments/contact with their legal team can be in person, on the phone or online, and would likely be a combination of all as their case proceeds.
<i>Use pro bono lawyers?</i>	All work is by pro bono lawyers, who are supervised by one of our specialist immigration lawyers.
<i>Application:</i>	Referral form kidsinneedofdefense.org.uk/get-help
<i>Website:</i>	kidsinneedofdefense.org.uk
<i>Email:</i>	info@kidsinneedofdefense.org.uk
<i>Other important information:</i>	We are currently experiencing high demand for our service. Our current average waiting time is 9 months.

CIVIL LITIGATION

Advicenow have various online guides about going to civil court:
[advicenow.org.uk/guides/going-civil-court](https://www.advicenow.org.uk/guides/going-civil-court)

See also Advicenow's guide to civil mediation:
[advicenow.org.uk/guides/survival-guide-civil-mediation](https://www.advicenow.org.uk/guides/survival-guide-civil-mediation)

"No win no fee" etc may be available for civil litigation – see page 10 above.

For legal aid see page 13.

See the GENERAL and PRO BONO sections above for details of the national organisations where free assistance may be available regarding civil claims. These include:

- **Support Through Court** provide practical and emotional assistance (page 25).
- Some clinics on the **LawWorks Clinics Network** may be able to assist regarding civil claims (page 23).
- **Advocate** may be able to find a pro bono barrister to help with a civil matter (page 27).
- Other **civil/business pro bono** schemes on pages 29 to 34.

See also the sections regarding specific civil areas e.g. CONSUMER RIGHTS, EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING, PLANNING.

- **RCJ Advice** rcjadvice.org.uk provide a national service offering legal advice to those resident in the UK who have a civil case in a court in England & Wales. Please note that RCJ Advice do not offer representation nor advice on the merits of a claim, procedural advice only. To access the service see:
rcjadvice.org.uk/our-services/civil

COMMUNITY / SOCIAL CARE

NB devolved in Wales – see page 124

Online guidance about community/social care may be found at:

- Advicelocal: advicelocal.uk/disability-social-care
- Citizens Advice has online guidance for carers: citizensadvice.org.uk/family/looking-after-people/carers-help-and-support
- Advicenow social care links: advicenow.org.uk/tags/social-care
- NHS guidance: nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide
- Government guidance: gov.uk/browse/disabilities

Legal aid may be available regarding poor quality care received due to disability, age or special education needs e.g. in a care home. See page 13 above or gov.uk/check-legal-aid

Local agencies able to help may include Citizens Advice and Law Centres (see GENERAL section above). You can locate various local agencies using advicelocal.uk/disability-social-care

See also charities in other sections: BENEFITS, CHILDREN (e.g. Coram Children’s Legal Centre), DISABILITY (e.g. Disability Law Service), HEALTH RIGHTS, IMMIGRATION, MENTAL HEALTH/CAPACITY and OLDER PEOPLE.

- **Carers UK** provides help and advice for carers across the UK carersuk.org Helpline: 0808 808 7777 advice@carersuk.org.
- **Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman** lgo.org.uk can investigate individual complaints about councils and all adult social care providers in England (inc. care homes & home care agencies).
- **PohWER** pohwer.net amongst other services provide Care Act advocacy. Helphub: 0300 456 2370 pohwer@pohwer.net.
- **The Advocacy Project** advocacyproject.org.uk offer advocacy services in London (NHS, care, mental health, mental capacity).

Access Social Care (ASC) is specialist advice organisation that exists to make sure that older, disabled people, and carers get the social care they have a right to.

<i>Geographical remit</i>	England currently.
<i>Type of legal help provided</i>	Health and social care.
<i>Areas of law</i>	Community care.
<i>Criteria/eligibility to get help</i>	On-line help is available for everyone through AccessAva , ASC's online tool. ASC is a membership organisation. Members can make referrals into our legal service. ASC are funded by trusts and foundations to work with regional communities and communities of practice. These communities can make referrals into our advice service.
<i>Other, non-legal help?</i>	ASC provide public legal education, rights awareness and confidence building. AccessAva provides free legal information and supports users to personalise legal letters to advocate for their needs to be met.
<i>In person service?</i>	No.
<i>Online help, or remote services?</i>	Online. Remote services available in some regions.
<i>Services use pro bono lawyers?</i>	Pro-bono available in some regions.
<i>Explain application route</i>	Via the members form on our website for members. Via advice coordinators in our communities. Via AccessAva for members of the public at accesscharity.org.uk/accessava
<i>Website</i>	accesscharity.org.uk
<i>Email</i>	enquiries@accesscharity.org.uk

CONSUMER RIGHTS (goods & services)

Online guidance about various consumer issues can be found at:

- citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer
- advicenow.org.uk/topics/consumer-affairs
- advicenow.org.uk/topics/transport-travel-and-leisure
- which.co.uk/consumer-rights
- gov.uk/government/collections/cma-consumer-enforcement-guidance

Citizens Advice offer a consumer helpline: 0808 223 1133.

Local help may be able from Citizens Advice, other front line agencies and some clinics on the LawWorks Clinics Network. See GENERAL section above. You can locate your local Citizens Advice at citizensadvice.org.uk.

- **CEDR** cedr.com/consumer provides alternative dispute resolution services for consumers in various areas.
- **Consumer Council for Water** ccw.org.uk helps consumers resolve complaints against their water company, while providing free advice and support. England: 0300 034 2222, Wales: 0300 034 3333.
- **Information Commissioner's Office** ico.org.uk offers information about data protection and information rights. 0303 123 1113.
- **International Consumer Centre** (UKICC) ukecc.net provides advice to UK consumers who have experienced problems when buying abroad. Web [form](https://form.ukicc.org), 01268 88 66 90 or ukicc@tsi.org.uk.
- **Ombudsman and ADR schemes** may be able to impartially resolve consumer complaints (but might not themselves provide independent advice):
 - Advertising Standards asa.org.uk
 - Airlines & airports see the Civil Aviation Authority caa.co.uk

- Energy energyombudsman.org
- Communications (mobile, broadband, landline or pay TV providers) commsombudsman.org
- Double Glazing & Conservatory Ombudsman dgc.org.uk
- Financial financial-ombudsman.org.uk (see also page 63)
- Furniture & Home Improvement fhio.org
- Gambling ibas-uk.com
- Legal service providers legalombudsman.org.uk
- Parking on Private Land Appeals popla.co.uk
- Motor (garages, dealerships, vehicle manufacturers and warranty providers) themotorombudsman.org
- New homes nhos.org.uk
- Rail railombudsman.org
- Removals industry removalsombudsman.co.uk
- **Trading standards** gov.uk/find-local-trading-standards-office

CRIME

Advicenow has online guides and links regarding crime related issues: advicenow.org.uk/topics/police-and-crime

In addition to the below, some local agencies and some clinics on the LawWorks Clinics Network (see GENERAL section above) may offer initial advice to defendants and victims. Advocate may also be able to find a pro bono barrister (see page 27).

See also other sections: DEATHS, DISCRIMINATION & HATE CRIMES, DOMESTIC ABUSE (including Rights of Women entry), PRISONERS.

Defendants

- **Legal aid** may be available (see page 13 above). In addition, advice is free for those arrested and taken to a police station.
- Legal aid for **problems abroad**: gov.uk/legal-aid/legal-problems-abroad
- **The Law Society** has a criminal law guide, including to find a solicitor lawsociety.org.uk/public/for-public-visitors/common-legal-issues/criminal-law
- For appeals, see also **Advocate** (page 27) and **APPEAL** (page 58). Also university innocence projects: [Cardiff](#), [London](#), [Manchester](#).
- **Post Office** convictions: citizensadvicenorthumberland.org.uk/post-office
- **TV license** prosecutions: APPEAL offers template forms and letters to assist those threatened with or being prosecuted for not paying the TV license: appeal.org.uk/tv-licensing-faqs
- **Just for Kids Law** provides legal support to children and young people on [criminal law issues](#), see page 49.
- If relevant also see the PRISONERS section below.

Victims, witnesses, community safety

- **CPS** guidance on reporting a crime: cps.gov.uk/reporting-crime

- **Crime Stoppers** [crimestoppers-uk.org](https://www.crimestoppers-uk.org) receives crime information anonymously online or via 0800 555 111. Also offers guides with practical [advice](#) about a range of crime issues with further links.
- **Free Representation Unit** [thefru.org.uk](https://www.thefru.org.uk) facilitates free representation at criminal injury compensation hearings (page 44).
- **London Victim and Witness Service** [londonvws.org.uk](https://www.londonvws.org.uk) offers independent support for all victims and witnesses of crime in London. Helpline: 0808 168 9291.
- **Modern slavery** – see IMMIGRATION section below on page 103.
- **Neighbourhood Watch** [ourwatch.org.uk](https://www.ourwatch.org.uk) crime prevention advice.
- **Police**, including to report a crime: [police.uk/pu/contact-us](https://www.police.uk/pu/contact-us)
- **Sexual and domestic abuse victims:** see DOMESTIC ABUSE section below (including the [Rights of Women](#) criminal law advice helpline on page 77) or see [sexualabusesupport.campaign.gov.uk](https://www.sexualabusesupport.campaign.gov.uk).
- **Victim Support** [victimsupport.org.uk](https://www.victimsupport.org.uk) provides support to victims and witnesses of crime and traumatic incidents in England & Wales: 0808 1689 11.
- **Witness Service from Citizens Advice** [citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/legal-system/going-to-court-as-a-witness1](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/legal-system/going-to-court-as-a-witness1) provides support to witnesses who live outside of London (in London see above both London Victim & Witness Service, and Victim Support).
- **Other victim support:** [gov.uk/guidance/victim-and-witness-services](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/victim-and-witness-services)

Police complaints/claims

- **Legal aid** or no-win no fee may be available, see pages 10 and 13.
- **Liberty** [libertyhumanrights.org.uk](https://www.libertyhumanrights.org.uk) (page 97 below) provide information and advice on various issues regarding the police.
- **Independent Office for Police Conduct** [policeconduct.gov.uk](https://www.policeconduct.gov.uk) is the police complaints watchdog for England & Wales. 0300 020 0096. enquiries@policeconduct.gov.uk

APPEAL (Centre for Criminal Appeals)



APPEAL is a charity and law practice dedicated to fighting miscarriages of justice and demanding reform. We fight the cases of individual victims of unsafe convictions who cannot afford to pay for a lawyer themselves. APPEAL's Women's Justice Initiative also represents women given unfair sentences, and those convicted of offences where the defendant's experience of domestic abuse, mental health issues or learning disabilities were not taken into account at trial.

<i>Geographical</i>	England & Wales.
<i>Type of legal help provided</i>	Advice and representation regarding criminal appeals to the Court of Appeal Criminal Division and the Criminal Cases Review Commission.
<i>Areas of law</i>	Criminal appeals.
<i>Criteria/eligibility to get help</i>	We act for male prisoners who have been wrongfully convicted and female prisoners who have been wrongfully convicted or unfairly sentenced. Please see our website for further guidance: appeal.org.uk/get-help
<i>Other help?</i>	We offer holistic support to our clients the 'Bound by Injustice' community via our Survivor Advocates.
<i>Extent to which services use pro bono lawyers?</i>	APPEAL does not charge for our services, and only a very small proportion of our work is funded through Legal Aid. We also instruct external pro bono lawyers who are involved with screening our cases all the way up to representation at the Court of Appeal.
<i>Application route</i>	We request that anyone seeking assistance completes the intake application form available at appeal.org.uk/get-help To request a copy of this form, email or write to us at APPEAL, 6th Floor, 72-75 Red Lion Street, London, WC1R 4NA.
<i>Website</i>	appeal.org.uk
<i>Email address</i>	mail@appeal.org.uk
<i>Phone</i>	07735 434 268 (due to a limited number of staff we request that applicants write or email us).

DEATHS; WILLS; ACCIDENTS

Online guidance about deaths, including “What to do after a death”, and the coroner and inquest processes can be found at:

- citizensadvice.org.uk/family/death-and-wills
- gov.uk/browse/births-deaths-marriages/death
- met.police.uk/bereavement (Police information line: 0800 0329996)
- advicenow.org.uk/tags/death

Council bereavement services: gov.uk/find-bereavement-services-from-council

You can locate various bereavement services at advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk

See also the INQUESTS / CORONERS section below.

General support/advice about deaths and bereavement

- **Bereavement Advice Centre** bereavementadvice.org supports and advises people on what to do after a death 0800 634 9494.
- **Child Bereavement UK** childbereavementuk.org support children, young people, parents & families when a child grieves or when a child dies. Helpline 0800 02 888 40 support@childbereavementuk.org.
- **Child Death Helpline** childdeathhelpline.org.uk is a free helpline for all those affected by the death of a child, staffed by volunteer bereaved parents, overseen by Great Ormond Street and Alder Hey NHS Trusts: 0800 282 986.
- **Compassionate Friends** tcf.org.uk provides local support, online support (inc. a [guide](#) to coping with legal proceedings) and a helpline for bereaved parents & families: 0345 123 2304 helpline@tcf.org.uk.
- **Cruise Bereavement Support** cruse.org.uk provide bereavement support and information. Helpline: 0808 808 1677.
- **Grief Encounter** griefencounter.org.uk provides support to

bereaved children and young people: 0808 802 0111 and bereavementsupport@griefencounter.org.uk.

- **SAMM National** samm.org.uk supports people bereaved by murder and manslaughter. Helpline: 0121 472 2912. info@samm.org.uk
- **Sands** sands.org.uk support those affected by the death of a baby, including helpline on 0808 164 3332, [chat](#) & helpline@sands.org.uk.
- **Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide** uksobs.org provide peer-to-peer support to adults impacted by suicide. Helpline: 0300 111 5065 email.support@uksobs.org.

Wills and probate

- **Free Wills Month** freewillsmoonth.org.uk enables those aged 55 and over to have simple wills written or updated free of charge by participating solicitors in March and October.
- **Macmillan** offer a free will service. See also **Maggie's** wills page.
- **Mencap's** wills and trust service for those with a disability: mencap.org.uk/advice-and-support/wills-and-trusts-service
- Some clinics on the **LawWorks Clinics Network** may help with wills and probate (see page 23). For living wills see page 108.

Accidents

- **Brake** brake.org.uk support people bereaved & seriously injured by road crashes. Online [guidance](#) and National Road Victim Service 0808 8000 401 help@brake.org.uk. Also [guidance](#) on choosing a solicitor for fatal injury cases, including free initial consultations.
- **Carbon Monoxide and Gas Safety Society** co-gassafety.co.uk provides help to victims poisoned by carbon monoxide (etc).
- **Disaster Action** disasteraction.org.uk offers information and resources and for the bereaved and survivors of major disasters.
- **RoadPeace** roadpeace.org provide information (including [guides](#)), advocacy & casework support to people bereaved or seriously injured in road crashes. Helpline 0800 160 1069 helpline@roadpeace.org.

DEBT, MONEY & TAX

Online resources and links about debt, money and/or tax problems:

- advicelocal.uk/debt
- advicenow.org.uk/topics/money-and-tax
- citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money

Citizens Advice debt helpline: 0800 240 4420, also webchat/email service via citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us

Legal aid may be available for debt problems where there's a risk of losing the home: see page 13 above or gov.uk/check-legal-aid

Various local agencies provide debt advice (a regulated area): Citizens Advice, Law Centres, some other front-line agencies, some clinics on the LawWorks Clinics Network and some law school clinics (see GENERAL section above). Shelter's local clinics may also assist on housing related debts (see page 95). You can locate various local debt help at advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk and advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk and [Money Helper](https://advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk).

For related issues see the BENEFITS section above.

For TV license prosecutions, see the CRIME section above.

For insolvency hearings, see pages 29-33 for pro bono representation for corporate winding-up petitions and individual bankruptcy petitions.

- **Christians Against Poverty** is a charity that provides free debt help through local CAP Debt Centres, per the postcode locator at capuk.org/get-help/help-with-money-and-debt 01274 761 999.
- **Debt Advice Foundation** debtadvicefoundation.org is a charity which provides debt advice & education to those worried about loans, credit and debt. Helpline: 0800 043 40 50. Both pre-call information checkline and webchat links are at debtadvicefoundation.org/contact

- **Debt Free Advice** debtfreeadvice.com is a partnership of 16 charities providing free advice to indebted people in London, at an advice [centre](#), by WhatsApp or video chat or phone. 0800 808 5700.
- **Business Debtline** businessdebtline.org is run by the Money Advice Trust and offers free advice to help businesses deal with finances and debts: 0800 197 6026 and [webchat](#) on the website.
- **GamCare** gamcare.org.uk provide gambling support through local services, on the Helpline 0808 8020 133 and by webchat, WhatsApp and Facebook messenger via the [website](#).
- **Macmillan Cancer Support** offer online financial guidance at macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/get-help/financial-and-work, and offer advice on their Support Line 0808 808 00 00.
- **Mental Health & Money Advice** mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org online guidance for those with mental health and money issues.
- **The Money Charity** themoneycharity.org.uk offers online guidance about money issues and a [budget builder](#).
- **Moneyhelper** (formerly the **Money Advice Service**) moneyhelper.org.uk provides free money and pensions guidance from Money and Pensions Service, an arm's length body sponsored by the DWP. 0800 138 7777 (English) 0800 138 0555 (Welsh).
- **National Debtline** nationaldebtline.org is run by Money Advice Trust and provides free debt advice on 0808 808 4000, and by webchat, supported by a digital budget and debt solution tool. They also have factsheets e.g. dealing with bailiffs, creditors/bills, insolvency options.
- **Personal Insolvency Litigation Advice and Representation Scheme (PILARS)** provides pro bono advice and/or representation for unrepresented debtors or bankrupts in bankruptcy proceedings (page 33). Referrals via National Debtline & Business Debtline (above on this page).
- **StepChange Debt Charity** stepchange.org provide free debt advice on 0800 138 1111 and an online debt advice service.

- **Shelter’s Specialist Debt Advice Service** provides consultancy support to eligible professionals who help clients with debt problems.
england.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/debt_advice
- **TaxAid** taxaid.org.uk is a charity that provides free tax advice to those on low incomes, who cannot be assisted by HMRC. Taxpayers helpline: 0345 120 3779. Specialist helpline (voluntary sector advisors only): 0300 30 5477. See also their sister charity **Tax Help for Older People** on page 110.
- Remember, per the above box, local debt advice can be obtained from **Citizens Advice, Law Centres** and other charities. Also see the BENEFITS section for charities such as **Turn2US** turn2us.org.uk.

Compensation schemes

- **The Financial Services Compensation Scheme** fscs.org.uk protects customers of financial services firms that have failed and can’t pay claims against it. FSCS can step in to pay compensation. 0800 678 1100.
- **The Pension Protection Fund** ppf.co.uk was set up by the Government to protect people with a defined benefit pension when an employer becomes insolvent. It is also responsible for [the Fraud Compensation Fund](#) and runs the Financial Assistance Scheme on behalf of the Government. 0345 600 2541 information@ppf.co.uk.

Complaints

- **The Adjudicator's Office** reviews complaints against HMRC or the Valuation Office Agency gov.uk/government/organisations/the-adjudicator-s-office
- **Financial Conduct Authority** fca.org.uk/consumers has information on how to complain about a financial product or service. Contact [form](#) and 0800 111 6768.
- **Financial Ombudsman Service** financial-ombudsman.org.uk provides a free and easy-to-use service that resolves complaints between consumers and businesses that provide financial for example banks or insurance companies. Helpline: 0800 023 4567.

- **Financial Regulators Complaints Commissioner** frccommissioner.org.uk independently reviews complaints about the (in)actions of the UK's current financial services regulators. 020 4599 8333 info@frccommissioner.org.uk.
- **Pensions Ombudsman** pensions-ombudsman.org.uk can help sort out complaints or disputes about personal and occupational pension schemes. It can also help about complaints about decisions made by the Pension Protection Fund or the Financial Assistance Scheme. 0800 917 4487 enquiries@pensions-ombudsman.org.uk

DISABILITY

Advicelocal signposts to online guidance about disability & social care, and to local agencies: advicelocal.uk/disability-social-care

Legal aid may be available re poor quality care received due to a disability, see page 13 above or gov.uk/check-legal-aid

Local charities can be located using advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk

See also the organisations listed in other sections: BENEFITS, CHILDREN, COMMUNITY CARE, EDUCATION, HEALTH RIGHTS, OLDER PEOPLE.

- **Disability Justice** disabilityjustice.org.uk signposts to legal support.
- **Disability Law Service** – see page 67 below.
- **Disability Rights UK** has factsheets and guides including about benefits disabilityrightsuk.org. Helplines regarding: disabled students 0330 995 0414 students@disabilityrightsuk.org; personal budgets 0330 995 0404 personalbudgets@disabilityrightsuk.org.
- **Contact** (formerly **Contact a Family**) contact.org.uk has online [guides](#) on various topics, and a [helpline](#) for parents and carers with disabled children up to 25: 0808 808 3555 helpline@contact.org.uk. The helpline can also be accessed by [online chat](#).
- **Hearing Link** hearinglink.org is part of Hearing Dogs for Deaf People and provides personalised hearing support services that provide emotional and practical help for people, whatever their hearing level. The Helpdesk provides answers and support for those with hearing loss: 01844 348111 helpdesk@hearinglink.org.
- **Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman** lgo.org.uk can investigate individual complaints about councils, all adult social care providers (including care homes and home care agencies) and some other public service organisations. 0300 061 0614.

- **Mencap** [mencap.org.uk/advice-and-support](https://www.mencap.org.uk/advice-and-support) provide information on various topics. They offer help and advice through the [Learning Disability Helpline](https://www.mencap.org.uk/learning-disability-helpline): 0808 808 1111 helpline@mencap.org.uk. They also offer a [Wills and Trusts](https://www.mencap.org.uk/wills-and-trusts) service 0207 696 6925 or willsandtrusts@mencap.org.uk.
- **Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)** [rnib.org.uk](https://www.rnib.org.uk) offers information and support to blind and partially sighted people. Helpline: 0303 123 9999 helpline@rnib.org.uk.
- **Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)** [rnid.org.uk](https://www.rnid.org.uk) provide information and support to those who are deaf or have hearing loss or tinnitus. 0808 808 0123 and other forms of [contact](https://www.rnid.org.uk/contact).
- **Scope** [scope.org.uk/advice-and-support](https://www.scope.org.uk/advice-and-support) provide advice & support for disabled people. Helpline 0808 800 3333 helpline@scope.org.uk
- **SignHealth** (previously **Deaf Hope**) [signhealth.org.uk](https://www.signhealth.org.uk) support deaf people re psychological therapy; domestic violence; and social care. info@signhealth.org.uk. For text message contact details see [signhealth.org.uk/contact](https://www.signhealth.org.uk/contact)
- **SNAP Cymru** [snapcymru.org](https://www.snapcymru.org) offer information, advice & support to help get the right education for children/young people in Wales with special educational needs. Helpline: 0808 801 0608.
- **Transport for All** [transportforall.org.uk](https://www.transportforall.org.uk) advise disabled people regarding issues accessing transport. Support line: 0800 368 6102. contactus@transportforall.org.uk.
- For other charity helplines see [helplines.org/helplines](https://www.helplines.org/helplines)

Disability Law Service (DLS) provides free legal advice for disabled people and their carers.

Geographical: England & Wales.

Type of legal help provided: We can provide initial advice by telephone, email and in writing. We can do more detailed casework on some areas of legal aid funded work.

Areas of law:

- Employment (including discrimination at work)
- Welfare benefits
- Community care
- Housing
- Public law
- Discrimination.

Key criteria to get help: For the people we can support, we can give:

- One off advice (all areas of law): free (see notes below).
- Legal aid Casework: must relate to community care, housing, public law or discrimination. Individual's issues must be within the scope of legal aid and they must meet the financial eligibility criteria.

Use pro bono lawyers? We sometimes supplement our paid staff with support from pro bono lawyers from commercial law firms.

How to access advice

See dls.org.uk/our-services

- **Employment and discrimination at work:**
020 7791 9800 or email employment@dls.org.uk
- **Welfare benefits advice:** 020 7791 9800 or benefits@dls.org.uk.
- **Multiple Sclerosis Legal Advice Line:** 020 7791 9800 msadvice@dls.org.uk.
- **Community care and/or housing:**
Helpline: 020 7791 9809 or email helpline@dls.org.uk
Legal Aid Casework: 020 7791 9820 or legalaid@dls.org.uk.

Website: dls.org.uk

Notes: As the only national legal advisory service focusing on disability, we find our services highly in demand and have to take measures to help us use our resources carefully and support as many people as possible. See our website for service times. Note that casework is subject to capacity.

DISCRIMINATION; HATE CRIMES

Advicenow links to various websites about discrimination:

advicenow.org.uk/tags/discrimination

Legal aid may be available regarding unlawful discrimination, see page 13 above or gov.uk/check-legal-aid

Local agencies including Citizens Advice and Law Centres may be able to assist, including under legal aid contracts (see GENERAL section). Advocate may be able to find a pro bono barrister (page 27).

Charities that can help with discrimination issues are also listed in other sections of the Guide: DISABILITY (e.g. Disability Law Service), DOMESTIC ABUSE (e.g. Rights of Women), EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, FAMILY, HUMAN RIGHTS, IMMIGRATION.

For hate crimes also see the CRIME section above (e.g. Victim Support).

- **Community Security Trust** cst.org.uk is a charity that protects British Jews from antisemitism & related threats, including providing support upon reports of antisemitism. Emergencies (24 hr): 0800 032 3263. CST psychological support helpline: 0800 032 8477. Non-emergencies: 0208 457 9999. Antisemitic incidents can also be reported online at cst.org.uk/report-incident and by email at incidents@cst.org.uk.
- **Equality Advisory Support Service** equalityadvisoryservice.com provides online guidance on various areas of discrimination. Their Helpline provides informal advice, guidance & support on 0808 800 0082, and on their website by [email](mailto:email@equalityadvisoryservice.com) & [BSL](https://bsl.equalityadvisoryservice.com).
- **Equality and Human Rights Commission** equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance provide online guidance about discrimination for individuals, businesses, employers and the public sector.

- **Friends, Families & Travellers** gypsy-traveller.org work to end discrimination against Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people, with online advice and links to local services. Helpline: 01273 234 777 fft@gypsy-traveller.org.
- **Islamophobia Response Unit** – see overleaf.
- **Race Equality First** raceequalityfirst.org are based in Cardiff and provide UK support and advice for people who face discrimination, harassment, hate crime and disadvantage, including discrimination and hate casework. 029 2048 6207.
- **Stonewall** stonewall.org.uk/contact-stonewall's-information-service offer an information service to provide information and signposting support to the LGBTQ+ community on various issues including discrimination at work. Info@stonewall.org.uk.
- **TellMAMA** tellmamauk.org supports victims of anti-Muslim hate and is a public service which also measures and monitors anti-Muslim incidents: 0800 456 1226 info@tellmamauk.org.
- **The Monitoring Group** tmg-uk.org provide advice and an advocacy service to victims of racism.

Islamophobia Response Unit

Islamophobia Response Unit is a charity dedicated to supporting people affected by Islamophobic incidents in England & Wales. We are a platform for victims of Islamophobia to confidentially report their experiences. Our purpose is to provide access to justice, legal guidance to clients and ensure their voices are heard.

<i>Geographical remit</i>	England and Wales.
<i>Type of legal help provided</i>	Legal advice, support for litigants in persons, referrals to partner organisations for legal representation at the stage of litigation.
<i>Areas of law?</i>	Hate crime, discrimination, employment, public law.
<i>Criteria/eligibility to get help</i>	No criteria – we determine whether each report has sufficient evidence to prove Islamophobia. Individuals can apply or can be referred by other organisations.
<i>Other help?</i>	Emotional support, referral services, data monitoring.
<i>In person service?</i>	N/A
<i>Online / remote?</i>	Yes (telephone helpline and email service).
<i>Extent to which use pro bono lawyers?</i>	30 volunteer lawyers providing pro bono support; 8 partner law firms and chambers.
<i>Explain application route</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Cases are reported to the IRU in four ways:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Helplineb. Online reportc. Emaild. Referral organisations.2. We aim to acknowledge the report within seven working days and arrange an initial phone call with each client.3. Following the phone call, we try to gather any missing information and determine our remit of assistance within 10 working days.
<i>Website</i>	theiru.org.uk
<i>Email address</i>	info@theiru.org.uk
<i>Phone number</i>	020 3904 6555

DOMESTIC ABUSE / VIOLENCE; sexual assault; other women's and men's support

Citizen's Advice has webpages about gender violence at:
citizensadvice.org.uk/family/gender-violence

Legal aid may be available for domestic abuse/violence or forced marriage. See gov.uk/legal-aid/domestic-abuse-or-violence or Advicenow's guidance at advicenow.org.uk/know-hows/how-get-legal-aid-family-law-problem

To find a local charity or solicitor visit flows.org.uk (page 76 below). You can also find various services at advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk.

See also other sections: CHILDREN, CRIME, FAMILY, IMMIGRATION.

Domestic abuse and violence support/advice

- **Centre for Women's Justice** centreforwomensjustice.org.uk provides legal advice to support workers at frontline women's organisations.
- **Refuge: National Domestic Abuse Helpline** nationalDAhelpline.org.uk provides online guidance and a helpline for those experiencing domestic abuse, including those who may want to access specialist refuge accommodation. Helpline 0808 2000 247, also webchat and online [form](#).
- **Rights of Women** rightsofwomen.org.uk – see page 77 below.
- **Women's Aid** womensaid.org.uk provides advice and support for victims of domestic and sexual violence in England, and those seeking to support them helpline@womensaid.org.uk. A [directory](#) signposts local and national services.
- **Welsh Women's Aid** welshwomensaid.org.uk provides information and support on domestic abuse in Wales. Their 24/7 **Live Fear Free Helpline** funded by the Welsh Government gov.wales/live-fear-free

can provide help and advice regarding domestic abuse: 0808 80 10 800 info@livefearfreehelpline.wales. Live 24/7 webchat & SMS also available, see gov.wales/live-fear-free/contact-live-fear-free

- **Legal assistance in obtaining protective injunctions (e.g. non-molestation orders):**
 - **Advicenow** advicenow.org.uk/injunction offers guidance on “getting help to get an injunction”.
 - **Court NAV** injunction.courtnav.org.uk is a digital service provided by RCJ Advice that helps put together an application for a non-molestation order and/or occupation order.
 - **Domestic Violence Assist** dvassist.org.uk is a charity specialising in arranging non-molestation orders, prohibited steps orders & occupation orders, including by directing to legal aid solicitors 03000 04 03 75 support@dvassist.org.uk.
 - **FLAWS** flows.org.uk is an independent legal support service to help protect women against domestic abuse in England and Wales (see page 76 below).
 - **National Centre for Domestic Violence** ncdv.org.uk offers a free, fast emergency injunction service to survivors of domestic abuse and violence regardless of their financial circumstances, race, gender or sexual orientation. 0800 970 2070 or text NCDV to 60777 to be called back.

Economic abuse

- **Surviving Economic Abuse** survivingeconomicabuse.org offers online information for those suffering from economic abuse or those supporting them.
- **The Financial Support Line for Victims of Domestic Abuse** moneyadviceplus.org.uk/fsl is run by Money Advice Plus in partnership with Surviving Economic Abuse. It offers specialist advice to anyone experiencing domestic abuse who is in financial difficulty: 0808 196 8845.

Sexual assault and rape

- **Rape Crisis** rapecrisis.org.uk provides online [guidance](#) about sexual assaults and abuse, and a support line 0808 500 2222 and [live chat](#). They coordinate the network of 39 Rape Crisis [Centres](#) across England & Wales.
- **The Survivors Trust** thesurvivorstrust.org is an umbrella agency for 120 specialist rape and sexual abuse agencies in the UK. They provide information, advice and support on the helpline 08088 010 818 and helpline@thesurvivorstrust.org.
- See also sexualabusesupport.campaign.gov.uk.

Stalking

- **Suzu Lamplugh Trust** suzylamplugh.org provides online [guidance](#) and runs the **National Stalking Helpline**, offering information, support and advice for victims of stalking and those supporting them: 0808 802 0300 and a [web form](#).

Forced marriage / “honour” based abuse

- **Ashiana** ashiana.org.uk provides advice (including immigration), support & advocacy for women and girls experiencing violence inc. forced marriage, “honour” based violence, and forced genital mutilation. 020 8539 0427 info@ashiana.org.uk
- **The Forced Marriage Unit** gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage runs a helpline to provide advice and support to victims of forced marriage, and professionals dealing with cases 020 7008 0151 fm@fcd.gov.uk.
- **IKWRO** ikwro.org.uk provides advice and support to Middle Eastern, North African and Afghan women and girls living in the UK, who have experienced, or are at risk of all forms of “honour” based abuse, including; forced marriage, child marriage and female genital mutilation, or domestic abuse. 0207 920 6460 info@ikwro.org.uk.
- **Karma Nirvana** karmanirvana.org.uk provides online guidance and a helpline for those experiencing “honour” based abuse or facing a forced marriage 0800 5999 247.
- **The Sharan Project** sharan.org.uk supports South Asian women in

the UK who are affected (including by being estranged from their families) by forced marriage, domestic violence or “honour” abuse. info@sharan.org.uk or 0844 504 3231.

Ethnic minorities and non-English languages

- **IMECE Women’s Centre** imece.org.uk offers guidance, advice and advocacy on the rights of Turkish Kurdish and Cypriot Turkish women and Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee women. Information line 020 7354 1359 and info@imece.org.uk.
- **Imkaan** imkaan.org.uk/get-help signposts to Black and Minoritised ending VAWG (violence against women and girls) agencies across the UK.
- **Southall Black Sisters** southallblacksisters.org.uk provides information, advice and other support to women experiencing domestic and other gender-related violence, mainly women from West London although they take enquiries from across the UK. English, Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati and Urdu. 020 8571 0800 info@southallblacksisters.co.uk.

Specifically for men

- **ManKind Initiative** mankind.org.uk supports male victims of domestic abuse and domestic violence across the UK, and their friends/family. Helpline: 01823 334244. They also have a [directory](#) of local services. admin@mankind.org.uk.
- **Respect’s Men’s Advice Line** mensadviceline.org.uk for men affected by domestic abuse 0808 801 0327 info@mensadviceline.org.uk.
- **Survivors UK** survivorsuk.org offers support to boys, men and non-binary people who are victims of sexual abuse. Helpline: 020 3598 3898, by SMS on 020 3322 1860, [webchat](#) and help@survivorsuk.org.

LGBT+

- **Galop** galop.org.uk supports LGBT+ people experiencing domestic abuse, hate crime, sexual violence and other abuse. 0800 999 5428 help@galop.org.uk.

- **Switchboard** switchboard.lgbt provides an information and support LGBT+ helpline to discuss sexuality, gender identity, sexual health and emotional well-being: 0800 0119 100, hello@switchboard.lgbt and web [chat](#).

Sexual health services / HIV

- **National Sexual Health Helpline** nhs.uk/live-well/sexual-health 0300 123 7123 provides sexual health advice from the Department of Health and Social Care.
- **Terrence Higgins Trust** tth.org.uk supports those living in the UK with HIV and also regarding other STIs. The THT Direct helpline offers support, advice and information on 0808 802 1221, by email info@tth.org.uk and live [chat](#).

FLAWS (Finding Legal Options for Women Survivors) is an independent legal support service which is designed to help protect women against domestic abuse, anywhere in England and Wales.

FLAWS do this by supporting women to protect themselves from abuse, getting court orders, accessing legal aid and navigating the court process which may be challenging.

FLAWS delivers legal-advice resources for front-line professionals in Women's Refuges, Women's Aid organisations and organisations that provide safe environments to disclose abuse.

The organisation helps you to consider the available options, online, on the phone, or sitting down with an expert in your local area. It's an entirely confidential and fully independent service.

How to get help

- The Find Local Help map searches and connects with an expert who may be able to support you at flows.org.uk/local-services
- Call FLOWS on 0203 745 7707.
- If you are unable to call, you can also fill in a short online form at self-referral.flows.org.uk and FLOWS will get back to you. This form is secure and completely confidential.
- Alternatively, if you would prefer to email, you can contact FLOWS at flows@rcjadvice.org.uk.

Website: flows.org.uk

In addition, supportnav.org.uk is an online service from RCJ Advice to help survivors understand their options and best choices to overcome their problems on matters related to domestic abuse.

Rights of Women



Rights of Women is a legal rights organisation which specialises in supporting women who are (or are at risk of) experiencing all forms of violence against women and girls including domestic and sexual violence.

Geography England and Wales.

Areas of law [Family](#) [Criminal](#) [Immigration law](#) [Sexual harassment at work](#)

Type of legal help provided **Telephone advice lines** offering free and confidential advice to women. For opening days/hours see rightsofwomen.org.uk/get-advice

- Family law advice line: 020 7251 6577 (national), 020 7608 1137 (London).
- Criminal law advice line: 020 7251 8887.
- EU settlement scheme line: 020 7118 0267.
- Immigration & asylum law line: 020 7490 7689.
- Sexual harassment at work: 020 7490 0152.
- Professional's immigration advice line: 020 8138 8028 (for non-legal professionals and OISC registered advisers supporting vulnerable migrant women).

Online legal guides and information to help women through the law: rightsofwomen.org.uk/get-advice/read-our-legal-guides

Criteria to get help Our services are for women (including trans women). There may be further eligibility criteria depending on the area of law & the type of service required. Click on above links for further information.

In person? No

Pro bono? Solicitors, barristers, CILEx volunteer on our legal advice lines.

Website rightsofwomen.org.uk

Email info@row.org.uk

Phone Administration only: 020 7251 6575 (no legal advice on number).

Other important information Women who call our advice lines can request the assistance of an interpreter. Demand on advice lines is high so callers may need to call a few times before they are able to get through to an advisor.

EDUCATION

NB devolved in Wales – see page 122

Citizens Advice has online guidance on education issues, including discrimination, disability, school problems and school costs:
citizensadvice.org.uk/family/education

Advicenow have links to both adult and children education issues:
advicenow.org.uk/topics/education-and-training

Legal aid may be available in particular regarding special education needs, see page 13 above or gov.uk/civil-legal-advice

In addition to the below charities, local agencies may be able to help including some Law Centres, some clinics on the LawWorks Clinics Network and some law school clinics (see GENERAL section above).

Advocate may be able to find a pro bono barrister (see page 27).

See also the CHILDREN and DISABILITY sections above.

- **Contact** contact.org.uk amongst other services provide online [guidance](#) about various children education issues. Helpline: 0808 808 3555 helpline@contact.org.uk and by [online chat](#).
- **Coram’s Child Law Advice** childlawadvice.org.uk/education has online legal guidance on various children education issues.
- **Coram’s Children Legal Centre** childrenslegalcentre.com (see page 48 above) provides legal advice on children education issues.
- **Education Otherwise** educationotherwise.org supports parents educating their children outside school. Helpline 0300 1245690. enquiries@educationotherwise.org.

- **Independent Provider of Special Education Advice:** see page 80 below.
- **Office of the Independent Adjudicator** oiahe.org.uk is an independent body set up to review student complaints about higher education providers in England and Wales. Casework Support Team: 0118 959 9813 enquiries@oiahe.org.uk.
- **Refugee Education UK** reuk.org supports refugee children and young people access education from primary school to university. hello@reuk.org.
- **SOS! Special Education Needs** sossen.org.uk help parents secure the right educational support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. Helpline: 020 4592 3254 and email form.

Independent Provider of Special Education Advice



IPSEA

Independent Provider of Special Education Advice (known as IPSEA) is the leading organisation providing free legally-based independent information, advice and casework support to help get the right education for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Geo. area England.

Legal help Telephone advice, casework support, online guides/resources.

Area Education.

Key criteria to get help Our phone lines are for parents, carers and family members of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and for young people with SEND who would like our support. If you are receiving ongoing support from a solicitor or other advocate, regrettably IPSEA is unable to advise you.

How to get help

- Online legal guides, resources & template letters at: ipsea.org.uk/Pages/Category/get-support
- Information Service, to be signposted to guides and resources on website ipsea.org.uk/information-service
- Advice Line for telephone advice on any educational issue that is a result of a child or young person's SEND. Book an appointment at: ipsea.org.uk/advice-line
- Tribunal Helpline: next step advice on appeals and disability discrimination claims to the SEND Tribunal. Book an appointment at: ipsea.org.uk/tribunal-helpline
- Tribunal Support Service: casework support for individual families, by referral after booking an appointment on the Tribunal Helpline: ipsea.org.uk/tribunal-support-service
- Call-in Helpline: 0300 222 5899, read about it at: ipsea.org.uk/call-in-helpline

Other help Training, see: ipsea.org.uk/pages/category/training

Uses pro bono? Volunteering opportunities across all IPSEA's advice and support services.

Website ipsea.org.uk

Email office@ipsea.org.uk (admin support only, use helplines for legal advice)

Note: Demand for our helplines is very high.

EMPLOYMENT

Online guidance or links about employment issues is available from:

- Advicelocal: advicelocal.uk/employment
- Advicenow: advicenow.org.uk/topics/employment with explanations about rights at work at advicenow.org.uk/help-problems-work
- Citizens Advice: citizensadvice.org.uk/work
- [Employment Lawyers Association](https://www.employmentlawyersassociation.org/)
- TUC: tuc.org.uk/workplace-guidance

Local agencies that might advise on employment issues include Citizens Advice, Law Centres, other front line advice agencies, some clinics on the LawWorks Clinics Network and some law school clinics. See GENERAL section above, and you can find various local agencies using advicelocal.uk.

Advocate may be able to find a pro bono barrister (see page 27).

For London, the GLA also has a directory of advice centres providing employment advice, listed by borough: london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/business-and-economy/employment-rights-hub/find-advice-near-you

Other sections of this Guide contain charities that help on employment issues: FAMILY (maternity/paternity rights), DISABILITY, DISCRIMINATION (e.g. EASS), IMMIGRATION (inc. refugee rights).

- **ACAS (the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)** acas.org.uk gives employees & employers free advice on workplace rights, rules and best practice at acas.org.uk/advice and helpline 0300 123 1100. ACAS also provides dispute resolution services, inc. early conciliation acas.org.uk/early-conciliation 0300 123 1122.
- **Employment Law for London** swllc.org/about-us/elf-london provides free legal advice about employment from [BPP University Law School](https://www.bpp.ac.uk/law-school) and South West London Law Centres: 0207 633 4534 elfhelp@my.bpp.com.

- **Employment Legal Advice Network (ELAN)** is a network of 60+ organisations working to help people in London with precarious, low-paid jobs understand more about their employment rights. A list of the organisations is at [Trust for London's](#) website.
- **Free Representation Unit** thefru.org.uk provides representation for Employment Tribunal hearings (see page 44 above).
- **Gangmasters & Labour Abuse Authority** gla.gov.uk Report Problems line: 0800 432 0804.
- **Health & Safety Executive** hse.gov.uk/contact/index.htm to report health and safety issues at work.
- **HMRC Statutory Payment Dispute Team** 0300 322 9422 gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs/contact/statutory-payment-dispute-team
- **Macmillan Cancer Support** macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/get-help/financial-and-work provides online guidance & telephone advice for those with cancer about employment rights and advice about talking with their employer. 0808 808 00 00.
- **Protect** protect-advice.org.uk provides an advice line about whistleblowing at work: 020 3117 2520 and a web [email form](#).
- **Rights of Women** rightsofwomen.org.uk (page 77 above) helpline with free employment legal advice to women experiencing sexual harassment at work: 020 7490 0152. Plus an online [handbook](#).
- **Sports Resolutions** sportresolutions.com/about/pro-bono-service Pro Bono Panel provides representation to sports persons who are unrepresented before certain sport tribunals.
- **Work Rights Centre** workrightscentre.org offer advice clinics in London and Manchester re employment rights and other support.
- **YESS** yesslaw.org.uk is a charity that offers affordable employment law advice. Free calls can be booked at yesslaw.org.uk/contact-us

(Employment Tribunal Litigants in Person Support Scheme)

An online advice clinic for litigants in person with an Employment Tribunal claim funded and supported by the Employment Lawyers Association (ELA).

<i>Geographical locations</i>	Select Employment Tribunals in England and Wales (London Central, Bristol, Cardiff, Midlands West, Leeds, Newcastle & Manchester).
<i>Type of legal help provided</i>	Advice in relation to any aspect of an Employment Tribunal claim (other than an appeal against an Employment Tribunal decision).
<i>Areas of law</i>	Employment.
<i>Criteria/eligibility to get help</i>	The litigant must have an existing claim at one of the Tribunals listed above and must have a hearing, case management order with which to comply or a judicial mediation within 2 weeks of the clinic date.
<i>In person service?</i>	No, online.
<i>Extent to which services use pro bono lawyers?</i>	The services are provided completely by pro bono employment lawyers (other than the administration of the clinic which is undertaken by an employee of ELA).
<i>Explain application route</i>	Litigants need to email elips@elaweb.org.uk .
<i>Website</i>	elaweb.org.uk/pro-bono/elips-litigants
<i>Email address</i>	elips@elaweb.org.uk
<i>Other important information</i>	The clinic operates twice a month on a Thursday and we offer up to 18 appointments at each clinic. Appointments last up to 40 minutes.

ELAAS (Employment Law Appeal Advice Scheme)

ELAAS, the Employment Law Appeal Advice Scheme, provides pro bono representation at preliminary hearings in the Employment Appeal Tribunal (EAT), a specialised appellate tribunal that hears appeals relating to employment law.

The scheme is a collaborative effort between the EAT and the Employment Law Bar Association (ELBA), an association of barristers practising in employment law.

ELAAS is coordinated and managed by the EAT, with input from the ELBA Committee on behalf of ELAAS representatives (barristers and solicitors) who volunteer their services.

<i>Location</i>	Employment Appeal Tribunal, London.
<i>Type of legal help</i>	Representation at preliminary hearings.
<i>Areas of law</i>	Employment.
<i>Key criteria to get help</i>	Appellants (employee or employer) who do not have representation.
<i>In person or remote?</i>	In person (unless the EAT is sitting remotely).
<i>Uses pro bono lawyers?</i>	The representation is provided pro bono by lawyers.
<i>Explain application route</i>	<p>The EAT contacts Appellants directly about their eligibility for the ELAAS scheme. ELBA is not involved in this process. Any queries about participating in the ELAAS scheme should be directed to the EAT.</p> <p>Appellants are advised to return the application slip they are sent by the EAT well in advance of their appeal hearing.</p>
<i>Website</i>	elba.org.uk/elaas
<i>Contact</i>	The EAT can be contacted at londonat@justice.gov.uk 020 7273 1041.
<i>Other important information</i>	Note that assistance cannot be guaranteed.

ENVIRONMENT

Advicenow links: [advicenow.org.uk/topics/environment-and-countryside](https://www.advicenow.org.uk/topics/environment-and-countryside)

Legal aid may be available regarding nuisance caused by environmental pollution: see page 13 above or [gov.uk/check-legal-aid](https://www.gov.uk/check-legal-aid)

Some clinics on the LawWorks Clinics Network may advise on environmental issues (page 23).

Environmental Law Foundation Environmental Law Foundation

We help the voice of ordinary people and communities to be heard on matters affecting the environment in which they live. We do this by providing legal assistance to some of the most disadvantaged communities in the country through: (a) free information and guidance in-house on environmental issues; (b) our university-based law clinics; and (c) our network of specialist environmental lawyers and technical experts.

<i>Geographical</i>	UK.
<i>Type of legal help</i>	Advice and referral.
<i>Areas of law</i>	Environment: elflaw.org/areas-in-which-we-can-help
<i>Key criteria to get help</i>	We help individuals and communities facing environmental threats and opportunities of a public nature. We cannot help if: you are a business or local authority; or you are a private individual and the issue affects only you and is essentially personal (e.g. a boundary dispute).
<i>Uses pro bono lawyers?</i>	Our member lawyers, our technical experts, and our university clinics help free of charge.
<i>Explain application route</i>	Complete enquiry form at elflaw.org/get-help Or email or phone (below).
<i>Website</i>	elflaw.org
<i>Email</i>	info17@elflaw.org
<i>Helpline</i>	0330 123 0169 (Irwin Mitchell 24-7 call centre).

FAMILY

Advicenow has online guides on various family law issues, including child arrangements, divorce and financial orders, together with survival guides about going to a family court or mediation:

advicenow.org.uk/family-court

Citizens Advice also has online guidance: citizensadvice.org.uk/family

Legal aid may be available for certain family legal issues, such as for family mediation; where the child may be taken into care; where the individual or their family are at risk of abuse or serious harm (e.g. child abuse, domestic violence or forced marriage). See page 13 above or visit gov.uk/check-legal-aid See also Advicenow's guide at advicenow.org.uk/know-hows/how-get-legal-aid-family-law-problem

Local agencies able to help may include Citizens Advice, Law Centres, various clinics on the LawWorks Clinics Network and various law school clinics (see the GENERAL section).

Advocate may be able to find a pro bono barrister (see page 27).

See also the CHILDREN and DOMESTIC ABUSE sections above.

Family legal advice

- **Coram's Child Law Advice Service** childlawadvice.org.uk/family (see page 48 above) provides legal advice and information on child and family issues.
- **RCJ Advice's Family Legal Service** rcjadvic.org.uk/family offers appointments by phone/zoom/in person to those with queries about a family matter which is likely to come to, or is already in court. Appointments can be booked on the [website](#). General enquires: admin@rcjadvic.org.uk.
- **Not Beyond Redemption** notbeyondredemption.co.uk is a charity that provides free family law advice and representation to mothers

in prison to help them maintain and re-establish contact with their children. Helpline 020 7409 1133 and by email info@notbeyondredemption.co.uk.

- **Rights of Women** rightsofwomen.org.uk/get-advice/family-law (page 77 above) offers free family law advice to women. National line: 020 7251 6577. London line: 020 7608 1137.

Maternity & paternity

- **Birthrights** birthrights.org.uk offer online [resources](#) about rights in pregnancy and childbirth. Advice can be requested at birthrights.org.uk/advice-factsheets/request-advice
- **Maternity Action** maternityaction.org.uk offers advice to pregnant women, new mothers and their families regarding employment, social security and health care. Online [guidance](#) is available. Free legal advice on maternity rights at work and benefits by [email](#) or 0808 802 0029. For advice and representation to mothers who may or have been charged for NHS maternity care, use the [online form](#). For the migrant's women's rights service: 020 7251 6189 and [email](#).
- **Pregnant Then Screwed** pregnantthenscrewed.com support pregnant women and mothers with HR/employment advice, and mental health support, both via 0161 222 9879. Employment advice also by email at pregnantthenscrewed.com/email-advice
- **Working Families** workingfamilies.org.uk provides online [guidance](#) for parents and carers including about maternity and paternity leave and discrimination. Helpline for parents & carers: 0300 012 0312. Advice can also be obtained using the web [form](#).

Parents guidance/support

- **Family Action** family-action.org.uk provides support for parents and carers who are experiencing poverty, disadvantage and social isolation. In addition to [online resources](#), they offer support via the Family Line, by phone 0808 802 6666, text 07537 404 282, [online chat](#) and email familyline@family-action.org.uk.
- **Family Lives** (previously known as **Parentline**) familylives.org.uk provides [online guidance](#) on all aspects of family life from bonding with your new baby to communicating with teens, through to

divorce and separation. The [helpline](#) is on 0808 800 2222, [webchat](#) and askus@familylives.org.uk.

- **Family Rights Group** frg.org.uk provides support to families to understand the law and child welfare processes when social workers or courts are making decisions about their children. In addition to [online guides](#), they offer an advice line by phone 0808 801 0366 and [webchat](#).

Mother focussed

- **Match Mothers** matchmothers.org offers non-legal support to mothers apart from their children in a wide variety of circumstances. Telephone line staffed by volunteer match mothers 0800 689 4104.

Father focussed

- **Both Parents Matter Cymru** bpmuk.org assists parents after separation, especially in respect of non-resident parents with difficulties over child arrangements. 0333 050 6815.
- **Dad's House** dadshouse.org.uk hold a weekly family law clinic in London offering practical and free legal advice, enquire via [webform](#). Other services include life coaching, buddy services. info@dadshouse.org.uk.
- **Families Need Fathers** fnf.org.uk offers online guidance and a helpline, particularly with problems of maintaining a child's relationship with both parents during and after family breakdown 0300 0300 363 admin@fnf.org.uk.

Single parents

- **Gingerbread** (formerly **One Parent Families**) gingerbread.org.uk provides free [information](#) and support for single parents on issues including maintenance, tax credits, benefits, work, education, legal rights, childcare and holidays. Helpline 0808 802 0925.

Grandparents

- **Kinship** (formerly **Grandparents Plus**) kinship.org.uk is a national charity dedicated to supporting kinship carers – grandparents and other relatives raising children who aren't able to live with their

parents. In addition to online [advice](#), the advice line is on 0300 123 7015 and by [webform](#).

Other relationship support

- **Relate** [relate.org.uk](#) offer [online resources](#) including self-help tools for common relationship issues. They also have a network of [Relate centres](#) across the UK, offering low-cost counselling and mediation. See also the [map](#) to find free services to help you, your partner or co-parent, and your family.

Regarding children/young people

- See the CHILDREN section above.
- **Cafcass (Children and Family Court Advisory Service)** [cafcass.gov.uk](#) has online information for young people and parents involved in family proceedings. 0300 456 4000
- **Child Law Advice Service** [childlawadvice.org.uk](#) from Coram Children's Legal Centre provides advice on parental disputes about child arrangements, child protection and attending court. In addition to online guides, advice is available via the Family Line: 0300 330 5480, Education Line: 0300 330 5485, and by [webform and online chat](#).
- **Coram Intercountry Adoption Centre** [coramiac.org.uk](#) offers an information and advice line for those thinking of adopting from abroad: 020 8447 4753 and email [form](#).

HEALTH RIGHTS

NB devolved in Wales – see page 124

For health advice see [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) (England) and 111.wales.nhs.uk (Wales).

Advicenow has links regarding health rights:

[advicenow.org.uk/topics/health-and-social-care](https://www.advicenow.org.uk/topics/health-and-social-care)

Citizens Advice explains how to complain about a health service:

citizensadvice.org.uk/health/get-advice-about-health-services

Legal aid may be available in limited circumstances (e.g. a child has suffered a brain injury during pregnancy, birth or in the first 8 weeks of life), see [gov.uk/check-legal-aid](https://www.gov.uk/check-legal-aid)

Legal assistance for clinical negligence or personal injury claims may be available from solicitors on a no-win no-fee basis (see page 10 above). As explained in AvMA's guidance on "[How to approach a lawyer for the first time](#)", ideally advice should be sought from a solicitor who is accredited with specialist expertise in clinical negligence by AvMA at [avma.org.uk/find-a-solicitor](https://www.avma.org.uk/find-a-solicitor) or by the [Law Society](#).

Local agencies might advise on health rights e.g. Citizens Advice and other agencies (see the GENERAL section above).

See also MENTAL HEALTH section below.

Additional relevant charities, some of which offer NHS advocacy, may be found in other sections: COMMUNITY CARE (e.g. Access Social Care); DISABILITY (e.g. Disability Law Service); FAMILY (birth and maternity rights); INQUESTS; OLDER PEOPLE (e.g. Age UK).

- **Action against Medical Accidents** – see page 92 below.
- **Alzheimer's Society** [alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/legal-financial](https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/legal-financial) offer online guides to various legal and financial issues for those with dementia, and can offer general information including on benefits and care packages via their Support Line 0333 150 3456.

- **CareQuality Commission** cqc.org.uk is the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England 03000 616161.
- **Covid-19** support groups: see covid19.public-inquiry.uk/support
- **General Medical Council** gmc-uk.org/concerns has information and advice for those with concerns about UK based doctors.
- **Healthwatch** healthwatch.co.uk is an independent consumer champion and is a statutory committee of the CQC.
- **Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)** offers advice and support for patients and families at local hospitals nhs.uk/nhs-services/hospitals/what-is-pals-patient-advice-and-liaison-service/
- **The Patients Association** patients-association.org.uk offer online guides and a helpline 0800 345 7115 helpline@patients-association.org.uk.
- **The Parliamentary & Health Services Ombudsman** provides information about and can resolve complaints against the NHS in England ombudsman.org.uk.
- **PohWER** pohwer.net offers free information, advice, support and advocacy services (including regarding NHS complaints) for those in England who find it difficult to express their views or get the support they need. Helphub: 0300 456 2370 pohwer@pohwer.net.
- Various health charities, too numerous to list here, offer advice and support for patients, e.g. [British Hearth Foundation](#), [Macmillan](#) for cancer support, and the [Stroke Association](#). The Helplines Partnership offers a directory of helplines at helplines.org/helplines

Action against Medical Accidents (AvMA)



AvMA is the charity for patient safety and justice, we provide free, independent, specialist advice and support to patients and families who have been affected by avoidable harm in any kind of healthcare.

We advise on adverse medical outcomes, rights and remedies in healthcare including clinical negligence, inquests and coronial law, judicial review, professional regulation, and complaints processes. Where appropriate we signpost and refer to AvMA accredited solicitors.

Location/remit UK wide.

Legal help available **Written advice & information:** avma.org.uk/help-advice
Helpline: 0345 123 2352 avma.org.uk/help-advice/helpline

Inquest service: We help where a loved one has died because of healthcare treatment provided or omitted. Representation at inquest may be arranged.
avma.org.uk/help-advice/inquests

Criteria to get help See above links for each service.

Other, non-legal help? NHS and private complaints process; SIR/PSIRF advice; professional regulation.

Uses pro bono? The helpline uses pro bono lawyers. Barristers can provide representation at some healthcare inquests.

Explain application route Maternity and Newborn Safety Investigations (MSNI) and/or NHS Res. Early Notification Scheme (ENS):
avma.org.uk/help-advice/brain-injuries/ens-mnsi-new-client-form

Advice & Information: Most other areas of adverse medical outcome avma.org.uk/help-advice/new-client-form
Inquest Service: avma.org.uk/help-advice/inquests/inquest-form

Email advice@avma.org.uk

Note Demand for our inquest help is very high.

HOUSING / HOMELESSNESS

NB devolved in Wales – see page 120

Online guidance is available about housing issues, including homelessness and problems about privately rented property:

- advicelocal.uk/housing
- advicenow.org.uk/topics/housing-and-homelessness
- citizensadvice.org.uk/housing
- gov.uk/browse/housing-local-services
- shelter.org.uk/housing_advice (England)
sheltercymru.org.uk/housing-advice (Wales)

For homeless support from the local authority: gov.uk/find-local-council or see shelter.org.uk which has contact details for local housing offices.

Legal aid may be available eg where there is a risk of homelessness, or the home is in serious disrepair. See page 13 above or visit gov.uk/check-legal-aid and see also [Shelter's guidance](#).

Local agencies may be able to help with housing or homelessness: Citizens Advice, Law Centres, other front line agencies, various clinics on the LawWorks Clinics Network and various law school clinics. See GENERAL section above, or locate various agencies at advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk and advicelocal.uk. Shelter also have local branches (see page 95 below).

Advocate may be able to find a pro bono barrister (see page 27).

See also other charities listed in:

- The DEBT section above for debt issues related to housing.
- The DOMESTIC ABUSE section above re homelessness or emergency housing related to domestic abuse.
- The IMMIGRATION & ASYLUM section below for housing or homeless problems faced by refugees.
- Charities listed elsewhere may be able to help on housing related issues, for example Scope in the DISABILITY section above.

- **Advice for Renters** adviceforrenters.org provides advice to renters in London, including money advice; legal advice under a legal aid contract; pro bono lawyers helping get deposits returned. 0207 624 4327 and web [form](#).
- **Centrepoint** centrepoint.org.uk supports young (16-25) homeless people in London, Sunderland, Manchester, Bradford and Barnsley. Helpline: 0808 800 0661 and website [form](#). They can also facilitate legal advice for young people on a range of issues.
- **Depaul UK** depaul.org.uk support young people who are, or at risk of being, homeless, including with emergency accommodation.
- **Disability Law Service** dls.org.uk provide housing advice to disabled people (see page 67 above).
- **Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service** gov.uk/get-housing-loss-advice provides advice and representation to anyone facing possession proceedings (see page 16 above).
- **National Homelessness Advice Service** nhas.org.uk/about provides expert advice including by phone to eligible English organisations that provide housing or homelessness advice.
- **Safer Renting** ch1889.org/safer-renting from Cambridge House has online advice for tenants about safer renting.
- **St Mungo's** mungos.org offers services to homeless people.

Complaints etc

- **Housing Ombudsman** housing-ombudsman.org.uk looks at complaints with social landlords (housing associations and local authorities) in England.
- **The Property Ombudsman** tpos.co.uk resolves disputes between consumers and property agents. The website also has online guides.
- **Tenancy deposit schemes** gov.uk/tenancy-deposit-protection may be able to resolve disputes about deposits.

Shelter helps people struggling with bad housing or homelessness through their advice, support and legal services. Shelter supports people in need by offering: face-to-face services; online advice; a national helpline; legal support.

Geographical England, Scotland, Wales.

Type of help Advice.

Areas of law Housing; debt (housing related).

How to get help

- **Online housing advice** (including template letters):
england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice
scotland.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice
sheltercymru.org.uk/housing-advice

- **Hotlines for emergency/urgent advice:**

- England & Scotland: 0808 800 444
- London: 0344 515 1540
- Wales: 08000 495 495

- **Webchat advice:**

- england.shelter.org.uk/get_help
scotland.shelter.org.uk/about_us/contact_us
sheltercymru.org.uk/gethelp

- **Local Shelter advice centres** across the UK.
To locate, see above “get help” and “contact us” links.

- **Specialist debt advice for professionals** (local Citizens Advice, local authorities, housing associations, free advice agencies/law centres): 03300 580 404
england.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/debt_advice

Uses pro bono? Shelter has its own legal team who advise and represent people on legal aid, but does sometimes call upon pro bono assistance.

Website shelter.org.uk

Contact See above links. Head office (NB no housing advice given): 0344 515 2000 info@shelter.org.uk.

Important notes Shelter's local services are facing extremely high levels of need and may not have capacity to take on new cases.

LEASE: The Leasehold Advisory Service



LEASE provides free initial advice on Leasehold (including Shared Ownership), Park Homes and Fire Safety/Building Safety law (funded by English and Welsh Governments).

<i>Geographical</i>	England and Wales only.
<i>Type of legal help provided</i>	<p>We can provide initial advice and guidance on residential long leasehold (that is, a flat or house with a lease originally granted for a term longer than 21 years) and park homes law. We also advise on fire safety/building safety law.</p> <p>The advice we provide is outline, summary, legal advice enabling you to make an informed decision as to what appropriate action you may need to take next.</p>
<i>Areas of law</i>	Residential long leasehold fire safety/building safety and park homes law.
<i>Criteria/eligibility</i>	Exclusively for long leaseholders, shared owners and park home owners.
<i>Other, non-legal help?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online guides, tips and FAQs: lease-advice.org• E-learning for Directors of Resident management Companies: tinyurl.com/leaselearn
<i>In person service?</i>	Only through our outreach service to groups of leaseholders/park home owners: tinyurl.com/leasebookevent
<i>Online / remote?</i>	Online and remote.
<i>Pro bono?</i>	Advice staff are public service workers and are paid.
<i>Application route</i>	Telephone session booking or to submit a written enquiry: clients.lease-advice.org
<i>Email address</i>	info@lease-advice.org
<i>Phone number</i>	020 7832 2500
<i>Other important information</i>	We cannot advise on short term renting (e.g. leases <21 years and where rent is paid weekly or monthly) nor advise on commercial leases (e.g. a shop or other business). We do not undertake case work – we cannot represent you in a legal situation, but we will advise you of your rights and obligations under the relevant leasehold or park homes law. If we cannot help with your immediate issue, at the least, we will recommend where you may be able to find the help you require.

HUMAN RIGHTS / PUBLIC LAW

Legal aid may be available to challenge a decision against an individual by the government/public body, see page 13 above or visit gov.uk/check-legal-aid

Legal aid may also be available where human rights are at risk, under exceptional case funding: gov.uk/legal-aid/funding-for-exceptional-cases

Some Law Centres may be able to assist on public law issues (page 21).

Organisations listed elsewhere provide advice on human rights and public law issues, for example see the sections on CRIME, DISABILITY, DISCRIMINATION, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, EMPLOYMENT, ENVIRONMENT, FAMILY, IMMIGRATION, PRISONERS, VETERANS.

- **JUSTICE** justice.org.uk the law reform and human rights charity do not directly assist individuals but their work includes intervening in human rights cases brought in the UK courts. They also brief Parliamentarians on proposed legislation and develop policy solutions issues within the justice system. admin@justice.org.uk
- **Liberty** libertyhumanrights.org.uk provides online [guidance](#) on various human rights topics, and can provide legal and practical advice on human rights in England & Wales through its Advice Line 0800 988 8177 or [written enquiries](#) via their website.
- **Public Interest Law Centre** pilc.org.uk is a law centre specialising in legal challenges to public bodies, litigating on behalf of individuals, grassroots groups and NGOs. 0203 559 6342 office@pilc.org.uk.
- **Public Law Project** publiclawproject.org.uk provides public law advice to frontline advice providers and charities. Their legal casework team represents individuals and charities in their [priority areas](#) including with strategic litigation (NB outside those areas they do not routinely accept public enquiries).

IMMIGRATION & ASYLUM; trafficking

Online guidance about immigration and asylum:

- Citizens Advice citizensadvice.org.uk/immigration
- Advicenow links advicenow.org.uk/topics/immigration-and-nationality

For MPs, see the House of Commons Library guidance:

commonslibrary.parliament.uk/dealing-with-immigration-casework

Legal aid may be available to those who are seeking asylum or victims of trafficking: see page 13 above or gov.uk/check-legal-aid
Some of the organisations listed below may have legal aid contracts.

See also the [Law Society's website](#) for guidance on claiming asylum, which includes information about finding a solicitor and information for Afghan refugees.

In addition to immigration solicitors and barristers, immigration advisers regulated by the OISC are listed at: gov.uk/find-an-immigration-adviser

In addition to the below charities, local agencies may be available to advise on immigration issues (NB a regulated area): Citizens Advice, Law Centres, other front line agencies, various clinics on the LawWorks Clinics, and various law school clinics. See GENERAL section above or locate various agencies at:

- advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk
- advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk
- ASAP also has a list of refugee/asylum support charities by city & county: asaproject.org/resources/organisations-who-can-help

Advocate may also be able to find a pro bono barrister (see page 27).

Legal advice including for asylum seekers/refugees (including Ukraine)

- **Asylum Aid** asylumaid.org.uk provides legal representation to the most vulnerable people seeking asylum: unaccompanied children,

people who have experienced torture and gender based violence, and people who have been trafficked and those who are stateless. 020 7354 9631 advice@asylumaid.org.uk.

- **Asylum Justice** asylumjustice.org.uk provides free specialist immigration advice and representation in Wales, up to and including court level, to asylum seekers, refugees, and vulnerable migrants. New clients submit the web [form](#) or phone 029 2049 9421.
- **Asylum Support Appeals Project (ASAP)** asaproject.org provides free legal advice and representation to asylum seekers at the Asylum Support Tribunal. [Advice Line](#) 020 3716 0283.
- **Coram Children’s Legal Centre** childrenslegalcentre.com/get-legal-advice/immigration-asylum-nationality offers online [resources](#) and [email legal advice](#) on issues affecting children subject to immigration control. The Children’s Pro Bono Legal Service provides free legal services to children entitled to British citizenship as part of [KIND UK](#) – see page 50.
- **Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants** jcw.org.uk provides online [guides](#) and offers legal advice on asylum and immigration law, and represents clients during the legal process. The helpline providing legal advice to irregular migrants in the UK without status is 0800 160 1004. Those detained in Yarl’s Wood IRC or Harmondsworth IRC, or in prison contact 020 7251 8708.
- **KIND UK** kidsinneedofdefense.org.uk (see page 50 above) gives free legal help to undocumented children, young people and families.
- **Manuel Bravo Project** manuelbravo.org.uk provides free legal representation to asylum seekers and refugees who cannot get legal aid. To apply or refer visit manuelbravo.org.uk/get-help
- **Migrant Legal Project** migrantlegalproject.com provides not-for-profit legal advice and representation throughout Wales, the west and southwest of England. Bristol 0117 911 3393; Cardiff 029 2000 3050; Plymouth 01752 547 134. info@migrantlegalproject.com.
- **Praxis** praxis.org.uk provide free immigration advice to migrants and refugees by phone on 020 7749 7605, and holds a drop-in clinic

in Bethnal Green: see praxis.org.uk/get-help

- **Project for the Registration of Children as British Citizens** prcbc.org provides free (including pro bono) legal advice and casework for young people who are destitute or low household income, with their complex citizenship matters. advice@prcbc.net.
- **Refugee Legal Support** refugeelegalsupport.org provides free legal support to those seeking sanctuary or reunification with family members in the UK or elsewhere in Europe. For those in the UK: coordinator.uk@refugeelegalsupport.org. For those in Greece: coordinator@refugeelegalsupport.org.
- **Rights of Women** rightsofwomen.org.uk (see page 77 above): immigration and asylum law line: 020 7490 7689.
- **Safe Passage** safepassage.org.uk/how-we-work works to safely reunite child refugees with their families in the UK; supports Afghan refugees at risk; and support refugees fleeing Ukraine.
- **Settled** settled.org.uk/ukraine advises on the Ukraine Family Scheme & Homes for Ukraine. For advice in Ukrainian or English: ukraineadvice@settled.org.uk.
- **Ukraine Advice Project** advice-ukraine.co.uk is a pro bono project where volunteer UK lawyers give free support and legal information to those fleeing the war in Ukraine wanting to come to the UK.

Various local charities provide legal advice, see box above. For example:

- **Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre** covrefugee.org offers advice on immigration and asylum law matters in person in Coventry. info@covrefugee.org 02476 227 254.
- **Hackney Migrant Centre** hackneymigrantcentre.org.uk runs an advice service providing immigration and housing advice alongside wellbeing support, contact using the web [form](#).
- **Haringey Migrant Support Centre** haringeymsc.org provides free advice and casework to migrants (especially in Haringey and other London boroughs) on immigration, welfare, housing and community care. 020 4566 7412 info@haringeymsc.org.

- **Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit** gmiau.org provides immigration advice and representation in Manchester and Liverpool 0161 740 7722 info@gmiau.org.

Detained immigrants

- **Bail for Immigration Detainees (BID)** biduk.org provides free online [information](#), legal advice and representation to people detained under immigration powers in a prison or removal centre across the UK. Advice Line: 020 7456 9750 and casework@biduk.org.
- **Detention Action** detentionaction.org.uk provides practical support for people in immigration detention in Colnbrook and Harmondsworth detention centres and people held under immigration powers in prisons. They can help communicate with a solicitor or signpost to specialist organisations. 0800 587 2096.
- **Jesuit Refugee Service UK** jrsuk.net/get-help offers casework advice and other support to people in immigration detention near Heathrow and destitute asylum seekers across Greater London who are 'Appeals Rights Exhausted' and who are not eligible for, and do not receive asylum support, Section 4 support, or assistance from social services. 020 7488 7310.

Support/advice for particular communities or languages

- **Al-Hasaniya Moroccan Women's Centre** al-hasaniya.org.uk provides support including for Moroccan and Arabic speaking women and girls experiencing domestic abuse. 020 3048 4488 contact@al-hasaniya.org.uk.
- **Chinese Information and Advice Centre** ciac.co.uk provides information, advice and support to disadvantaged Chinese people in the UK including [immigration](#) advice, a Home Office surgery, voluntary return workshop, with [support](#) for asylum/refugee seekers. 0300 201 1868 info@ciac.co.uk.
- **Kanlungan Filipino Consortium** kanlungan.org.uk provides employment advice and referral to immigration advice for Filipino migrants working and living in the UK info@kanlungan.org.uk 020 3893 1871.

- **LAWRS** lawrs.org.uk provides support for Latin American women including advice in Spanish and Portuguese: those facing gender violence; on welfare benefits, housing and employment rights; and initial immigration advice in collaboration with law firms and organisations. Helpline 0808 145 4909 info@lawrs.org.uk.
- **Tamil Welfare Association Newham UK** twan.org.uk provides free legal advice and representation to the Tamil speaking community, including immigration and asylum 0208 478 0577 twan@twan.org.uk.
- **Turkish Cypriot Women's Project** tcwp.org.uk supports Turkish Cypriot, Turkish and Kurdish women including with benefits advice.

Other refugee/migrant support

- **British Red Cross** redcross.org.uk/get-help/get-help-as-a-refugee provides practical help to refugees and asylum seekers, including via local services. General enquiries 0344 871 11 11 and [webform](#).
- **Freedom from Torture** freedomfromtorture.org specialist psychological therapy to help asylum seekers and refugees in the UK. Services are available in the UK, from centres in London, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle and Glasgow. 020 7697 7777.
- **Migrant Help** migranthehelpuk.org provides advice to asylum seekers in the UK. Asylum helpline on 0808 8010 503 and by online [chat and webform](#). Support and accommodation for victims of slavery and human trafficking: 01304 203977. info@migranthehelpuk.org.
- **Migrants Organise** migrantsorganise.org provides advice on immigration, asylum support, welfare benefits, housing and community care. info@migrantsorganise.org 020 8964 4815.
- **Rainbow Migration** rainbowmigration.org.uk provides online guides, and advice to LGBTQI+ asylum seekers and migrants – apply using the [web form](#). 0203 752 5801.
- **Refugee Council** refugeecouncil.org.uk has online [guides](#) for refugees and those supporting them, and offers a range of services, including an Infoline with a signposting service 0808 196 7272 info@refugeecouncil.org.uk.

- **Refugee Women Connect** refugeewomenconnect.org.uk provides support to women refugees primarily through drop-ins across Merseyside info@refugeewomenconnect.org.uk 0151 305 1070.
- **Right to Remain** righttoremain.org.uk provides information (e.g. a [Toolkit](#)) & assistance to help people to establish their right to remain.
- **Project 17** project17.org.uk provides advice for migrant families facing homelessness and extreme poverty because they are unable to claim welfare benefits (no recourse to public funds): 07963 509044. A [toolkit](#) and telephone advice is also offered to advisers helping people with NRPF on 07701 330 016. info@project17.org.uk.

Trafficking & modern slavery victims

- **Anti Trafficking and Labour Exploitation Unit** atleu.org.uk provides legal advice and representation to victims of trafficking and labour exploitation referrals@atleu.org.uk. Advice is also offered to lawyers and support providers working with victims advice@atleu.org.uk. 020 7700 7311.
- **Helen Bamber Foundation** helenbamber.org provides care to survivors of trafficking, torture and extreme human cruelty. Specialist teams of professionals provide therapy, medical advice, legal protection, housing and welfare, counter trafficking and help with integration into the community. reception@helenbamber.org 0203 058 2020.
- **Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline** modernslaveryhelpline.org is provided by Unseen, a UK charity with its head office in Bristol, which provides safehouses and support in the community for survivors of trafficking and modern slavery. Helpline: 08000 121 700.
- Other charities in this section may support trafficking victims, for **Migrant Help** (see page above).

Domestic workers

- **Kalayaan** kalayaan.org.uk provides online [guides](#) and offers immigration advice and basic employment advice to migrant domestic workers in the UK info@kalayaan.org.uk 0207 243 2942.

Windrush

In addition to some of the above charities, the following entities provide assistance regarding (a) Windrush immigration status issues, and/or (b) the Windrush compensation scheme:

- citizensadvice.org.uk/immigration/prove-your-right-to-live-in-the-uk
- **Windrush Justice Clinic** is a partnership of community organisations, law centres and universities that are helping individuals with compensation claims: windrushjc.org
- **GMIAU Windrush Legal Initiative** provides advice and support for people to apply to the Windrush Compensation Scheme, in partnership with law firms acting pro bono: gmiau.org/windrush-legal-initiative-how-to-get-free-help-to-apply-under-the-windrush-compensation-scheme Email: windrush@gmiau.org
- **Refugee & Migrant Centre**: rmcentre.org.uk/windrush-support
- **Windrush Lives** advocacy/support network: windrushlives.com
- **United Legal Access** (also provide paid help): unitedlegalaccess.com
- Some other **LawWorks clinics** may help (see page 23 above).
- For other organisations providing advice and assistance to Windrush victims making compensation claims, see the detailed list on pages 43 to 60 of the [University of Westminster report](#).

The Adjudicator's Office reviews Home Office compensation decisions gov.uk/guidance/ask-the-adjudicators-office-to-review-a-windrush-compensation-scheme-decision

Legal advice re EEA/EU citizen rights

- **AIRE Centre** (Advice on Individual Rights in Europe) airecentre.org provides free legal advice and representation before immigration and social security tribunals, particularly to EEA nationals and their family on free movement rights. 020 7831 4276 info@airecentre.org.
- **Here For Good** hereforgoodlaw.org is a charity who supports European nationals to secure their status in the UK. They provide (a) free telephone advice on the EU Settlement Scheme; (b) means

tested email advice; and (c) take complex case referrals from charities for 1-2-1 casework support. NB: as of 16 October 2024, they had paused provision of all direct advice services.

- **New Europeans** [neweuropeans.uk](https://www.neweuropeans.uk) provides help to individuals applying under the EU Settlement Scheme help@neweuropeans.uk.
- **Rights of Women's** EU settlement scheme line, see page 77 above.
- **Settled** [settled.org.uk](https://www.settled.org.uk) helps EU citizens in the UK including those late applying to the EU Settlement Scheme. Advice line: 0330 223 5336.

INQUESTS / CORONERS

For support and links regarding deaths more generally, see the DEATHS section above.

Legal aid may be available for inquests to support bereaved families with legal advice and representation, under Exceptional Case Funding, see:

- [gov.uk/government/publications/exceptional-case-funding-for-representation-at-inquests/exceptional-case-funding-for-representation-at-inquests](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exceptional-case-funding-for-representation-at-inquests/exceptional-case-funding-for-representation-at-inquests)
- Note, as highlighted on page 13 above, the change to [means testing](#) for inquest legal help from September 2023.
- INQUEST's factsheet "How to I pay for legal representation" inquest.org.uk/faqs/how-do-i-pay-for-legal-representation

- **Action against Medical Accidents** offer support where a loved one has died due to healthcare, including potentially representation at inquests, see page 92. They offer a leaflet and links on a range of issues regarding inquest at avma.org.uk/help-advice/inquests
- **Advocate** may be able to find a pro bono barrister (see page 27).
- **The Coroners' Courts Support Service** coronerscourtsupportservice.org.uk provides online help and via volunteers offers emotional support to families & witnesses attending at Coroner's Court. Helpline: 0300 111 2141 helpline@ccss.org.uk.
- **INQUEST** inquest.org.uk provides advice on the inquest process and related investigations following a death in state detention or care and in some other cases. 020 7263 1111 INQUEST@inquest.org.uk.

MENTAL HEALTH & MENTAL CAPACITY

NB health is devolved in Wales

Some individuals with legal problems may have mental health issues and/or mental capacity issues. This section therefore signposts to a mixture of legal, health and practical support or links. For additional links see advicenow.org.uk/tags/mental-health

For NHS mental health services see nhs.uk/mental-health (England) and 111.wales.nhs.uk/mentalhealth (Wales)

Regarding detention/sectioning under the Mental Health Act:

- **Legal aid may be available to challenge: gov.uk/check-legal-aid Legal aid is available without means testing to bring a case before the Mental Health Tribunal.**
- NHS guidance: nhs.uk/mental-health/social-care-and-your-rights/mental-health-and-the-law/mental-health-act
- See also guidance from [Mind](https://www.mind.org.uk) and [Rethink](https://www.rethink.org.uk) charities listed below.
- Appealing to Mental Health Tribunal: gov.uk/mental-health-tribunal
- The Law Society list of accredited lawyers: lawsociety.org.uk/career-advice/individual-accreditations/mental-health-accreditation

Regarding mental capacity:

- NHS Guidance: nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/making-decisions-for-someone-else/mental-capacity-act
- Government: gov.uk/browse/births-deaths-marriages/lasting-power-attorney Also guidance to making financial decisions for young people lacking capacity: tinyurl.com/capacitytoolkit
- See below guidance from Office of the Public Guardian and [Mind](https://www.mind.org.uk).

Local agencies may be able to advise on mental health or capacity legal issues e.g. Citizens Advice and Law Centres. See GENERAL section above, or locate using advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk.

See also charities in other sections above: BENEFITS, CHILDREN, COMMUNITY CARE, DISABILITY, FAMILY, HEALTH RIGHTS.

- **The Alzheimer’s Society** has [guidance and links](#) to templates to create an advance decision (living will) or lasting power of attorney.
- **The Hub of Hope** hubofhope.co.uk is a directory of local & national mental health support & services, provided by Chasing the Stigma.
- **Mind** mind.org.uk provides support & information for mental health problems. Support Line to talk about your mental health: 0300 102 1234. Infoline for other information: 0300 123 3393 info@mind.org.uk. [Side by Side](#) provides online peer support. For Legal Line see pg 109.
- **Mental Health & Money Advice** mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org online guidance for people with mental health and money issues.
- **National Youth Advocacy Service** offers mental health advocacy to young people & vulnerable adults. Helpline: help@nyas.net 0808 8081001 nyas.net/get-support/additional-support/mental-health-advocacy
- **Office of the Public Guardian** gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-public-guardian has guides to help people plan for someone to make decisions for them, such as a guardian, attorney or deputy, where they do not have mental capacity. 0300 456 0300 customerservices@publicguardian.gov.uk.
- **PohWER** pohwer.net offers free information, advice, support and advocacy services for those in England who find it difficult to express their views or get the support they need (including mental capacity advocacy, and mental health advocacy). Helphub: 0300 456 2370 pohwer@pohwer.net.
- **Together for Mental Wellbeing** together-uk.org provides a range of mental health services, including criminal justice services and a [directory](#) to find local services.
- **Rethink Mental Illness** rethink.org provides an advice and information service: 0808 801 0525 advice@rethink.org.
- **Samaritans** samaritans.org provides both online guidance and telephone support to those struggling to cope. Phone 116 123 (English) or 0808 164 0123 (Welsh). jo@samaritans.org.
- **Shout 85258** giveusashout.org provides support by text message to those struggling to cope: text SHOUT to 85258. Also website [resources](#).

Mind's Legal Line



Mind's Legal line provides legal information and general advice on mental health related law and related legal queries. It is open 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday (except for bank holidays).

<i>Geographical remit</i>	England and Wales.
<i>Type of legal help provided</i>	People can ask us about issues to do with: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being detained under the Mental Health Act (sectioning)• Mental capacity• Community care• Discrimination and equality• Housing.
<i>Areas of law</i>	Mental health related law.
<i>Criteria/eligibility to get help</i>	Legal line service available for those aged 18 & above <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We can provide an interpreter for other languages.• Relay assistance for hearing or speech impaired callers. (See website for more info.)• Phone calls from UK landlines are charged at local rates and mobile phone charges will depend on the phone contract.
<i>Remote service?</i>	The service is delivered either by phone or email.
<i>Pro bono lawyers?</i>	The service is provided by legally trained advisors, not lawyers, and they cannot give individual specialist legal advice. Advisors will recommend that people contact a solicitor where this seems necessary. Mind also has an information helpline which gives information about mental health and signposts people to other services.
<i>Website</i>	mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines
<i>Email address</i>	legal@mind.org.uk

OLDER PEOPLE

Advicenow has links at advicenow.org.uk/tags/older-people

Legal aid may be available, for example regarding poor quality of community care received due to age, or regarding age discrimination, see page 13 above or gov.uk/check-legal-aid

Organisations listed in the GENERAL section and elsewhere in this Guide may be able help with issues facing older people.

- **AgeUK** ageuk.org.uk offers online [guidance](#) including on various money and legal issues, and provide a telephone Advice Line for older people and their families/friends/carers/professionals: 0800 678 1602. Specialist advisers are also available at 120 local [centres](#).
- **Age Cymru** ageuk.org.uk/cymru similarly provides online [guidance](#) for older people in Wales and a helpline for information and advice queries on various issues: 0300 303 44 98 advice@agecymru.org.uk.
- **Hourglass** wearehourglass.org (formerly **Action on Elder Abuse**) runs a helpline providing information, advice and support to older victims and others who are concerned about or have witnessed abuse, neglect or financial exploitation of older people. 0808 808 8141 helpline@wearehourglass.org.
- **Independent Age** independentage.org offers free impartial advice for older people and their family on care and support, money and benefits, health and mobility. Helpline 0800 319 6789. charity@independentage.org.
- **Older People's Commissioner for Wales** olderpeople.wales can provide advice & support on 03442 640 670 ask@olderpeople.wales.
- **Tax Help for Older People** taxvol.org.uk provides free, independent

help & advice for older people (60 or over) on lower incomes (£20,000 gross a year or less) who cannot afford to pay for professional tax advice. It is the sister charity of TaxAid (page 63). Tax Help operates across the UK. 01308 488066 taxvol@taxvol.org.uk.

- **The Silver Line** www.thesilverline.org.uk provides a free telephone service for older people 0800 4 70 80 90 info@thesilverline.org.uk.

PLANNING / NEIGHBOUR DISPUTES

Planning: Advicenow links at advicenow.org.uk/tags/planning-and-building

Neighbour disputes: Citizens Advice has guidance and links at: citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/problems-where-you-live/complaining-about-your-neighbour

Advocate may be able to find a pro bono barrister to help on planning issues (see page 27).

- **Environmental Law Foundation** – see page 85.
- **Planning Aid England** rtpi.org.uk/need-planning-advice provides advice and support to help people engage with the planning system and get involved in planning their local area. Help is delivered by volunteers. General enquiries: 0370 774 9494 info@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk. Requests for planning advice are submitted via planningaid.co.uk.
- **Planning Aid Wales** planningaidwales.org.uk offers a free helpline service to assist eligible members of the public and community groups needing information, advice or support with a planning matter: 02920 625 000 rosa@planningaidwales.org.uk.
- **Planning Aid for London** planningaidforlondon.org.uk provides free support on town planning for people and communities in London who cannot afford professional support. 0300 772 9808.
- **Ombudsman** may be able to look into complaints against council decisions about planning (but note that councils have complaints and appeal processes that may need to be completed first):
 - England Local Government Ombudsman lgo.org.uk
 - Public Services Ombudsman for Wales ombudsman.wales

PRISONERS / FORMER-PRISONERS

Legal aid may be available to prisoners depending on the issues, see page 13 above or [gov.uk/check-legal-aid](https://www.gov.uk/check-legal-aid)

Advicenow has links at [advicenow.org.uk/tags/prisons-and-prisoners](https://www.advicenow.org.uk/tags/prisons-and-prisoners)

- **Advance** [advancecharity.org.uk](https://www.advancecharity.org.uk) provides criminal justice support to women and girls aged 15+ arrested or convicted in last 6 months in London and various other counties, including the London Minerva Wrap Around holistic service. admin@advancecharity.org.uk.
- **Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas** [irishchaplaincy.org.uk/irish-prisoners](https://www.irishchaplaincy.org.uk/irish-prisoners) supports Irish men and women in prison in England and Wales via 0207 482 4148. admin@irishchaplaincy.org.uk.
- **NACRO** [nacro.org.uk](https://www.nacro.org.uk) is a national social justice charity whose services including helping people in the justice system. Head office: 0300 123 1889. Their website has a local service [finder](#). A helpline is provided for ex-offenders including regarding criminal records 0300 123 1999 helpline@nacro.org.uk.
- **Not Beyond Redemption** [notbeyondredemption.co.uk](https://www.notbeyondredemption.co.uk) is a charity that provides free family law advice and representation to mothers in prison to help them maintain and re-establish contact with their children. Helpline 020 7409 1133 and by email on info@notbeyondredemption.co.uk.
- **Prisoners Abroad** [prisonersabroad.org.uk](https://www.prisonersabroad.org.uk) provides guidance and support regarding British prisoners held in foreign prisons 0808 172 0098 info@prisonersabroad.org.uk.
- **Prisons and Probation Ombudsman** [ppo.gov.uk](https://www.ppo.gov.uk) carries out independent investigations into complaints and deaths in custody. mail@ppo.gov.uk 020 7633 4100, 0845 010 7938.

- **Prisoner's Families Helpline** prisonersfamilies.org offers support for families who have a loved one in contact with the criminal justice system. Online guidance is offered and Helpline 0808 808 2003 and info@prisonersfamilies.org. It is operated by the **Prison Advice and Care Trust** prisonadvice.org.uk who provide other support for prisoners, people with convictions and their families, including for children and young people.
- **Prison Reform Trust** prisonreformtrust.org.uk offers information and advice including online [booklets](#) and a helpline for prisoners 0808 802 0060 advice@prisonreformtrust.org.uk.
- **Reprive** reprive.org.uk is a legal NGO that provides casework support for those facing the death penalty, those detained without charge, tortured people and those targeted by drone attacks: 020 7553 8140 info@reprive.org.uk.
- **Unlock** unlock.org.uk is a charity that provides information and advice to people with criminal records to help them understand their rights, get practical help and move on positively.
- **Women in Prison** womeninprison.org.uk supports women affected by the criminal justice system in prisons, in the community and through our Women's Centres.
- See the below pages about the **Prisoners' Advice Service** (adult prisoners) and the **Howard League for Penal Reform** (children and young people in custody).

Prisoners' Advice Service (PAS) is a charity that offers free legal advice and support to adult prisoners throughout England and Wales regarding their human and legal rights, conditions of imprisonment and the application of prison law and the prison rules. We can also advise women prisoners on matters of family law, and those prisoners with issues relating to detention or deportation.

Geographical England and Wales.

Areas of law Prison and public law.

Type of legal help provided

- **Telephone advice line:** 020 7253 3323. Run by caseworkers three days a week. Our number is globally cleared within all prisons. NB to assist a prisoner, we need to be contacted by them directly.
- **Women prisoners freephone** (one day a week) 0800 024 6205. Cleared within all women's prisons.
- **Letter Clinics** for written enquiries.
- For phone line days/hours, and the postal address, see: prisonersadvice.org.uk/about/how-we-do-it
- **Outreach clinics** with legal advice and information in prisons across England & Wales.
- **Information sheets and self-help toolkits** prisonersadvice.org.uk/about/what-we-do

Our services are delivered free of charge to prisoners.

Application route Prisoners can contact PAS in confidence on the Advice Line or by RULE 39 legal mail.

Website prisonersadvice.org.uk

Email advice@prisonersadvice.org.uk

Important notes The legal casework team is very small and demand for our services far outweighs our capacity. If we are unable to assist we will refer out to other law firms.

The Howard League for Penal Reform is a national charity working for less crime, safer communities, and fewer people in prison. Our legal team runs a free, confidential legal service for children & young people aged 21 or under in prison custody. We work to provide legal solutions for individuals, as well as wider policy changes to prevent the problems reoccurring for other young people.

<i>Geographical</i>	England and Wales.
<i>Areas of law</i>	Prison and public law.
<i>Type of help</i>	Advice, advocacy, representation, referring and signposting.
<i>Legal help provided</i>	We provide advice about a range of prison law issues including concerns around treatment in prison and accessing a lawful regime, accessing education and healthcare in prison, disciplinary hearings (adjudications), parole and recall. We also advise on matters relating to release from custody, including early release and accessing social care support.
<i>Key criteria for help</i>	Children and young people aged 21 or under in prison custody.
<i>Other services</i>	The Howard League is a membership organisation that combines litigation and legal work, research, campaigning, and policy work aimed at reducing crime, making communities safer, and with fewer people in prison.
<i>Pro bono?</i>	Yes. Some of our casework is funded by legal aid.
<i>Application route</i>	Children and young people can call our free advice line on 0808 801 0308. This number should already be on their approved list of numbers in prison. Family members or professionals can email or call our office number. For opening times: howardleague.org/legal-work/advice-line
<i>Website</i>	howardleague.org
<i>Email</i>	info@howardleague.org
<i>Telephone</i>	020 7249 7373 (option 1).
<i>Important notes</i>	We are a small team and cannot assist with every enquiry that we receive. If we are unable to assist we will try to refer or signpost to another law firm, charity or organisation who may be able to help. We are unable to advise on claims for compensation or people in other forms of state detention, for example hospital or immigration detention.

VETERANS / ARMED FORCES

Information and links regarding support services and charities for serving members of the UK armed forces, their families and veterans can be found at armedforcescovenant.gov.uk

In addition, the **Centre for Military Justice** centreformilitaryjustice.org.uk is a charity which provides independent legal advice to serving or former members of the Armed Forces or their bereaved families, regarding serious bullying, sexual harassment, gender-based violence, racial or other forms of discrimination: 0203 848 6821, or web [form](#) on the website.

Veterans Legal Link



The Veterans Legal Link is dedicated to veterans' free legal advice and specialist support services in the UK.

<i>Geographical remit?</i>	UK-wide.
<i>Type of legal help provided</i>	Free legal advice, signposting and case work.
<i>Areas of law?</i>	All areas
<i>Criteria/eligibility to get help</i>	Armed forces veterans, blue light services and their families.
<i>Other, non-legal help?</i>	Signposting and referrals.
<i>In person service?</i>	No.
<i>Online or remote services?</i>	Primarily via our bespoke case management system.
<i>Extent to which services use pro bono lawyers?</i>	30%
<i>Website</i>	veteranslegallink.org
<i>Email address</i>	help@veteranslegallink.org
<i>Phone number</i>	0333 090 5387 Text: 07868 775786 (24hr)
<i>Other important information</i>	We work with legal professionals through referral of cases falling under Reserved Legal Activities.

5. GUIDE TO PRO BONO & OTHER FREE LEGAL ADVICE IN WALES

This chapter gives an overview of the free legal advice landscape in Wales, providing a directory for MPs, MSs, agencies and others looking to signpost members of the public to sources of help.

For Wales and England wide help such as legal aid or various specialist charities, please see above in the England & Wales Guide.

Contents:

- Signposting to legal help in Wales (page 119)
- *Devolved law: Housing* (page 120)
- *Devolved law: Education* (page 122)
- *Devolved law: Health and social care* (page 124)
- Pro bono clinics (page 127)
- General sources of free advice (page 130)
- Citizens Advice (page 135)
- Other online resources (page 139)

Pwyllgor

Pro Bono

Cymru **Committee for Wales**

**PRO
BONO
WEEK**

I gael fersiwn Cymraeg o'r bennod hon,
ewch i probonocommittee.uk/guide

Nov. 2024

Signposting to legal help in Wales

- It is important to be aware that certain **areas of law are devolved** in Wales, including housing, education, and health & social care law (addressed in turn below). This is because the Senedd has powers to pass legislation in all areas not reserved by Westminster.
- As far as possible clients in Wales should be signposted or referred to **Welsh organisations**, who will be equipped to understand devolved law, and if the law relevant to a client differs to England.
- In the following pages, to help explain the need to signpost to a Welsh organisation or lawyer in devolved areas, a general indication of the differences to English law is provided, but the purpose is not to provide legal advice. Instead see law.gov.wales.
- Where a Welsh charity cannot assist, many charities based in **England provide services to those in Wales** (at least via remote services), but not all will have expertise in the Welsh legal context. See the above England & Wales Guide. It is advisable to make clear in any referral that the client is based in Wales.
- The **legal aid system is not devolved** and therefore the same rules apply in both Wales and England, see page 13 above of the England & Wales Guide.
- **Important:** providers may have no capacity to assist new clients; see page 5 above of the England & Wales Guide about service limitations. In addition to the factors to consider when signposting set out on pages 6-7 of the England & Wales Guide, also consider:
 - **Population distribution:** the vast majority of Wales' population is concentrated around major cities such as Cardiff, Swansea and Wrexham, which also has the effect of concentrating services in these areas.
 - **Geography and transport:** the rural geography of large parts of Wales places further constraints on people's ability to travel to access advice. In addition, some areas may have higher levels of digital exclusion or higher levels of deprivation.
 - **Welsh language:** although English is the majority language in Wales, many people prefer, and have a right, to communicate through the medium of Welsh. Therefore, it's important to be aware of which services are delivered in Welsh.



HOUSING (Wales)

One of the major areas of devolved legislation in Wales relates to housing and rental law. The Renting Homes Wales Act 2016 means that landlords, social landlords, and tenants in Wales have different obligations compared to England. For example, landlords will have different procedural steps and responsibilities that must be fulfilled before seeking to evict a tenant or in keeping their properties fit for human habitation.

Clients in Wales with issues relating to property law should therefore be signposted or referred to agencies within Wales which specialise in these areas.

There are very limited sources of housing advice in Wales; the largest providers are set out below. In addition, see below in the PRO BONO CLINICS section (page 127) and the CITIZENS ADVICE section (page 135), which may also provide housing advice.

- **AdviceLink Cymru** citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/our-work/advice-partnerships/advicelink-cymru is a Citizens Advice Cymru service funded by Welsh Government, offering advice on housing, as well as welfare benefits, debt, employment, education, immigration and discrimination. Contact:
 - General advice line 0800 702 2020.
 - Advice around private rent arrears: 0808 278 7920 (Both lines open 9am-5pm Mon to Fri).
- **Gypsies and Travellers Wales** gtwales.org.uk provides advice and support to Gypsies and Travellers about accommodation, homelessness, welfare benefits, planning reviews and appeals, health, social services and cases of discrimination. They operate an adviceline for all community members and service providers seeking assistance and information across Wales. Contact:
 - 029 20 214411

- info@gtwales.org.uk
- **Shelter Cymru** sheltercymru.org.uk offers information and advice on a range of housing topics from finding a place to live, to dealing with poor housing conditions, and eviction and homelessness. They also run 23 local face-to-face advice surgeries, see: sheltercymru.org.uk/housing-advice/advice-near-you Contact:
 - Helpline: 08000 495 495 (9am-4pm Mon-Fri).
 - Webchat: sheltercymru.org.uk/housing-advice/webchat
- **Travelling Ahead: Wales Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Advice and Advocacy Service** tGPCymru.org.uk/what-we-do/travelling-ahead-wales-gypsy-roma-and-traveller-advice-and-advocacy-service TGP Cymru offers advice, support and individual and community advocacy working alongside Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families on issues such as accommodation, sites, planning, rights and accessing services. Contact:
 - 0808 802 0025 / 01633 509 544
 - travellingahead@tGPCymru.org.uk
- **Local authority housing team** may be able to provide support to those who are, or about to become, homeless. Locate at: gov.wales/support-if-you-are-homeless-or-about-become-homeless
- **The Wallich** thewallich.com is Wales' largest homeless charity Legal advice on housing, benefits and family law is also available to Wallich service users via the **Cardiff Lawyers Care** scheme, a partnership with the University of South Wales Legal Advice Clinic and Cardiff & District Law Society. Contact:
 - 029 20668464
 - mail@thewallich.net.
- **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales** ombudsman.wales can investigate complaints about social landlords in Wales. Contact:
 - 0300 790 0203 (10am-12:30pm, 1:30pm-4pm)
 - ask@ombudsman.wales
- See also the HOUSING section in the England & Wales Guide on page 93 above for additional notes and links including about legal aid.

EDUCATION (Wales)

Education law is devolved in Wales. Clients in Wales who may have education-related legal issues should be signposted or referred to agencies or lawyers based in Wales or others who understand Welsh education law. This is because there are some significant differences in Wales compared to England, for example:

- Primary and secondary education in Wales is transitioning to the new curriculum. In addition, there are plans to overhaul tertiary education.
- Wales has its own system for (a) welfare benefits to support students/their parents at the different levels of education, and (b) supporting students with additional learning needs.
- At the higher education level, there are differences in student financing with a combination of loans and grants to help students with their living costs, in addition to a tuition fee loan.
- The Special Educational Needs (SEN) system has been overhauled in Wales. Children and young people with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) in Wales are subject to one system for all stages of education, as opposed to the multi-agency approach taken in England. Therefore, they have different rights and routes to challenge any decisions affecting their educational provision.
- Likewise, schools and local & educational authorities in Wales have different statutory obligations and procedural requirements to support those with ALN in Wales.

Education law advice providers in Wales:

- **SNAP Cymru** snapcymru.org offers free and independent information, advice and support to help get the right education for children and young people with all kinds of SEN / ALN and disabilities. They give advice and support on a range of issues

including assessments, individual education plans, statements of special educational needs, exclusion, health and social care provision and discrimination. They also provide advocacy, disagreement resolution, discrimination advice, and training for young people, parents and professionals. Contact:

- Helpline: 0808 801 0608 (9.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri).
- **TGP Cymru** tgpcymru.org.uk is a charity working with children and young people. TGP operates a variety of projects relating to children and education law. TGP is a registered provider of statutory advocacy services, in line with the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016, and provides statutory advocacy to three regions in Wales. Contacts:
 - *General*: 029 2039 6974 admin@tgpcymru.org.uk
 - *North Wales advocacy*
01286 238 007 / 0800 111 6880
NorthWalesAdvocacy@tgpcymru.org.uk
 - *Mid and West Wales advocacy*
01545 571 865 / 0808 168 2599
midandwestwales@tgpcymru.org.uk
 - *Cwm Taf Morgannwg advocacy*
01443 805 940 / 0800 470 3930
cwmtafmorgannwg@tgpcymru.org.uk
- **National Youth Advocacy Service Cymru** nyas.net For over twenty years, NYAS Cymru have been helping care-experienced children and young people across Wales. They champion their rights and work to make sure their voices are heard. Contact:
 - Helpline: 0808 808 1001
 - help@nyas.net.
- **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales** ombudsman.wales can investigate certain complaints regarding various education bodies in Wales. Contact:
 - 0300 790 0203.
- See also the EDUCATION section in the England & Wales Guide on page 78 above for notes and links, including Advocate and legal aid.

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE (Wales)

The final area of devolved law in this guide is health and social care. Clients in Wales with health or social care legal issues should be signposted or referred to agencies or lawyers in Wales, or to others who understand the devolved law. This is in light of the differences compared to England, for example:

- The structure of the health service in Wales is different, with NHS Wales delivering services through 7 local health boards and 3 NHS trusts.
- Regulation and inspection of NHS and independent healthcare services is different, and is led by Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW). HIW is also one element, along with the Welsh Government and Wales Audit Office, of the tripartite NHS Wales escalation and intervention arrangements which scrutinise the position of each health board and NHS trust.
- The NHS Wales has a Redress Scheme, also known as the “[Putting Things Right](#)” scheme. This is a method of handling and investigating complaints. As set out in the [guidance](#), when the scheme is engaged and a claim might expect compensation of ≤£25,000, the Health Board funds certain legal advice provided free of charge to patients by solicitors (who specialise in clinical negligence as accredited by the Law Society or the AvMA).
- Wales has its own legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, and of carers who need support. There are also some important contextual differences that affect local authorities' strategic functions.

Health and social care advice providers in Wales:

- **Advocacy Support Cymru** ascymru.org.uk is a charity specialising in the provision of professional, confidential and independent advocacy for individuals in contact with the Welsh healthcare

system. They offer advocacy services in the following areas:

- Home from Hospital Dementia Advocacy (Swansea Bay University Health Board (“UHB”).
 - Independent Mental Health Advocacy (Swansea Bay UHB, Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB, Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan UHB and Aneurin Bevan UHB areas).
 - Specialist Advocacy for People with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism (Swansea Bay UHB, Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB, Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan UHB and Aneurin Bevan UHB areas).
 - Community Advocacy for those receiving secondary mental healthcare (Swansea Bay UHB and Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan UHB areas).
 - Contact:
 - 02920540444
 - info@ascymru.org.uk.
-
- **Age Cymru** agecymru.org.uk delivers support through its multi-channel advice line and library of written resources. It is the key provider of information and advice for the over 50s in Wales, including via agecymru.org.uk/advice It is an advice provider and unable to provide emotional support. It is unable to accept third party referrals, so clients/constituents should contact them directly. Contact:
 - 0300 303 44 98 in Welsh & English (9am-4pm Mon– Fri)
 - advice@agecymru.org.uk
-
- **Age Cymru’s HOPE** (Helping others participate and engage) partnership delivers independent advocacy for older people (50+) and carers across Wales. Contact:
 - See emails and phone numbers on the [HOPE website](#).
-
- **Mencap Cymru** wales.mencap.org.uk is a charity devoted to supporting those with learning disabilities in Wales to understand their rights under healthcare law. Mencap Cymru operates a Learning Disability Helpline, available to everyone in Wales, and can provide legal information relating to the rights of people with a learning disability. Mencap Cymru can assist with supporting

individuals to obtain access to services or challenge decisions.

Contact:

- Wales Learning Disability Helpline: 0808 8000 300
 - Web [contact form](#).

- **Mind Cymru** mind.org.uk/about-us/mind-cymru operates in Wales as part of the national charity but is governed separately. Mind maintains a very useful guide to mental health rights, sectioning, community treatment orders, police and mental health and provides guidance on employment rights to those suffering discrimination at work due to their mental illness/disability. Additionally, Mind's Legal Line provides advice on detention under the Mental Health Act, discrimination, mental capacity and community care (see also page 109 above of the England & Wales Guide). Contact:
 - Infoline 0300 123 3393
 - info@mind.org.uk
 - Legal Line: 0300 466 6463
 - See [website](#) for details of the 16 local Minds in Wales.

- **Tenovus** tenovuscancercare.org.uk is a cancer charity operating in Wales. A cancer diagnosis can lead to unexpected costs, and Tenovus' team of benefits advisors can talk through patients or loved ones what financial support is available and guide them through the complex benefits system. Tenovus also operates a free wills service to those suffering with cancer in Wales. The service assists individuals in drafting or updating a will for free in partnership with a solicitor who can visit an individual at home, hospice or hospital, at short notice. Contact:
 - Support line 0808 808 1010.

- **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales** ombudsman.wales have powers to look into complaints about public services and independent care providers in Wales. Contact:
 - 0300 790 0203.

- See also the COMMUNITY CARE section in the England & Wales Guide on page 52 above and HEALTH RIGHTS section on page 90 for additional notes and links, including about legal aid.

PRO BONO CLINICS (Wales)

Below are details of some pro bono clinics on the LawWorks Clinics Network in Wales. Details of clinics are subject to change, and new clinics are being developed all the time, so this guide may go out of date quickly. Please use the LawWorks clinics search function at lawworks.org.uk/clinics to find out the latest details.

For more information on pro bono clinics in Wales, contact lawworkscymru@lawworks.org.uk.

- **Aberystwyth University Family Law Clinic** aber.ac.uk/en/lac/law-legalclinics provides advice on child arrangements and residency, property and financial disputes after separation, divorce and civil partnerships, grandparent and step-parent advice, domestic violence against men and women and prohibited steps orders and related issues, to those in Ceredigion. Contact:
 - famstaff@aber.ac.uk.
- **ACE - Action for Caerau and Ely clinics (Cardiff)** aceplace.org
ACE/Watkins & Gunn Solicitors Children Law Clinic advises those in Cardiff (Ely and Caerau) on issues in relation to private arrangements for their children, or related to social services involvement with their children. The clinic operates 12 to 2pm on the last Tuesday of the month.
 - 02920 003132
 - info@aceplace.org
- **Bangor University Law Clinic** bangor.ac.uk/law-clinic provides initial and written advice on areas including family, child, consumer, employment and housing law. Advice by appointment only.
 - 01248 388 411
 - bulac@bangor.ac.uk.
- **Cardiff University Law Clinic** cardiff.ac.uk/pro-bono works in partnership with Support Through Court to provide initial family and

housing advice to court users and others. Advice by appointment only. The Clinic is also by appointment via Support Through Court at the Cardiff Civil and Family Justice Centre (see page 133).

- lawclinic@cardiff.ac.uk.
- **Cardiff University Innocence Project** cardiff.ac.uk/pro-bono/cardiff-university-innocence-project The project reviews cases where people have been convicted of crimes for which they maintain innocence, with a view to making an out-of-time appeal or an application to the Criminal Cases Review Commission. It has a waiting list due to high demand. People can email with an outline of their case, setting out their claims of innocence, to be considered.
 - innocenceproject@cardiff.ac.uk
- **LGBTQ+ Law Clinic** lgbtqlawclinic.co.uk The Clinic can arrange advice and representation to members of the LGBTQ+ community in Wales and England. The Clinic provides support with, but not limited to, immigration, employment, housing, defamation, gender recognition and family law. Enquiries can be submitted through our email or the referral form on our website. Contact:
 - info@lgbtqlawclinic.co.uk
- **Swansea Law Clinic** swansea.ac.uk/law/lawclinic The clinic can provide advice on landlord & tenant disputes, freehold and leasehold disputes, relationship breakdown, employment issues, consumer issues, equality issues, benefits advice, contracts and immigration and asylum advice at OISC Level 1 to those in the local community. Appointment times vary - contact to arrange an appointment:
 - lawclinic@swansea.ac.uk
- **Cardiff University/Asylum Justice Fresh Claims Project (Pan Wales)**. The clinic, a partnership between Cardiff Law School's pro bono unit and Asylum Justice, provides specialist immigration advice to sanctuary seekers who have exhausted their appeal rights on the prospects of regularising their immigration status. Contact:
 - s.mcgarrrity@asylumjustice.org.uk
- **Redkite at the Table (Carmarthen)**. The clinic provides initial advice on family law matters and lifetime planning (e.g. wills, trusts, lasting

powers of attorney). The clinic takes place on the last Tuesday of the month between 10am and 1pm at the Table community centre on Merlin's Walk, Carmarthen SA31 3BN. No appointment is necessary but you can call the below number with any enquiries.

- 01437 771924
- charlotte.isaac@redkitelaw.co.uk.

- **University of South Wales Legal Advice Clinic (Treforest, Pontypridd).** The clinic can provide advice and some casework on family, housing, employment, business, probate, contract and consumer law issues for those in the local community. The clinic operates by appointment only, see the [webpage](#). Contact:
 - 01443 668600
 - uswlac@southwales.ac.uk

- **Veterans Legal Link Clinic** veteranslegallink.org. Operating from Aberystwyth University but UK-Wide, the clinic can provide advice and casework on family and children, domestic violence, crime, police station representation, employment, social justice, complaints and ombudsman, housing and homelessness, military injuries and services for the elderly. Contact:
 - Phone 0333 090 5387 or text 07868 775786
 - help@veteranslegallink.org

GENERAL SOURCES OF FREE ADVICE (Wales)

The additional organisations listed below provide or facilitate free legal advice in Wales across different areas of law, together with a range of other services.

See also the earlier sections of the England & Wales Guide which list help provided across Wales & England, namely the GENERAL section including legal aid (pages 12-25), PRO BONO HELP (pages 26-37) and HELP ON SPECIFIC ISSUES (pages 38-117).

- **Asylum Justice (immigration law)** asylumjustice.org.uk. Asylum Justice provides free legal advice and representation to asylum seekers and other migrants denied legal aid, up to OISC Level 3 and representation at the Immigration Tribunal. They provide services across Wales. Contact:
 - 02920 499421
 - info@asylumjustice.org.uk.
- **Advocate (all areas of law)** weareadvocate.org.uk. Advocate is the charity of the Bar of England and Wales. Advocate finds free legal help from volunteer barristers for people who need advice on a court case or help with a hearing, who cannot get public funding and who cannot afford to pay. Advocate operates across all areas of law and can help applicants in Wales find a pro bono barrister to help them with their legal problem. See pages 27-34 for further information on Advocate. Contact:
 - 020 4518 6141 (voicemail only)
 - enquiries@weareadvocate.org.uk.
- **Children’s Commissioner for Wales** childcomwales.org.uk. Advice and investigation service is free. The Commissioner is there to advise and support children and young people or those who care for them if they feel that a child has been treated unfairly. Contact:
 - 0808 801 1000

- post@childcomwales.org.uk.
- **Maggie's (wills)** maggies.org. Maggie's provides free specialist, expert support to people with cancer and their families in a purpose-built drop-in centre. This includes psychological, emotional, and financial support. Maggie's operates two centres in Wales (Cardiff and Swansea) and offers assistance in writing wills. Maggie's also offers online benefits advice, cancer support and psychology appointments alongside a select number of group support sessions. Contacts for centres in Wales:
 - Cardiff: 029 2240 8024 cardiff@maggies.org
 - Swansea: 01792 200 000 swansea@maggies.org
 - North Wales – [being built](#) in Bodelwyddan.
- **Meic** meiccymru.org is a helpline service for children and young people up to the age of 25 in Wales. Contact:
 - 080880 23456
 - For other forms of contact see meiccymru.org/getting-help
- **North Wales Community Law (housing law)** nwcl.cymru North Wales Community Law is an independent charity based in Llandudno Junction, Conwy. It currently provides free legal advice on housing matters. The organisation is based within a domestic abuse service and is developing a specialism in casework involving the intersection of domestic abuse and housing matters. The service is available to people based in any of the six local authority areas in North Wales. Client meetings are held in our offices, community spaces around the region and online depending on client need. Contact:
 - 01492 484818
 - info@nwcl.cymru
- **North and Mid Wales Law clinic** citizensadvice.org.uk/local/ynys-mon provides advice and assistance in family, employment and community care legal issues. They will identify secondary issues including but not limited to: debt, housing, energy, budgeting, mental health, and welfare benefits (advice and support is provided on these areas and/or will refer or signpost to a relevant organisation who can help when needed). Contact:

- 01407 762278
- AngleseyCA@gmail.com
- **Older People's Commissioner for Wales** olderpeople.wales The commissioner can provide advice & support via:
 - 03442 640 670
 - ask@olderpeople.wales
- **Planning Aid Wales (planning law)** planningaidwales.org.uk. Planning Aid Wales (PAW) offers a free Helpline service to assist eligible members of the public and community groups needing help with a planning matter. PAW stipulates that before they offer any advice, they invite callers to use resources available for free on their website to see if they can find an answer to their query. Contact:
 - Adviceline: 02920 625 000
 - info@planningaidwales.org.uk
- **Qualia Law Community Interest Company (court of protection law)** qualia-law.org A non-profit CIC providing free legal advice, training sessions, and Court of Protection Deputyship by solicitors. Qualia provides free advice on mental capacity and financial safeguarding issues; free training and awareness sessions for professionals in the social care, public and third sectors; and Court of Protection Deputyship. Contact:
 - 0333 3053057
 - info@qualia-law.org
- **Riverside Advice (welfare benefits, housing, debt and energy efficiency)** riverside-advice.co.uk. Riverside Advice provides free, independent and impartial legal advice in the areas of welfare benefits, housing, debt and energy law. Riverside Advice works with vulnerable individuals and those with poor mental health, who face a legal issue in relation to the areas previously listed. Riverside Advice operates across Cardiff but can assist with those based anywhere in Wales. Contact:
 - 02920 341577
 - all.info@riverside-advice.co.uk

- **Settled (Immigration, housing and welfare benefits)** settled.org.uk. A charity founded in 2019 and headquartered in Newport, which offers information, advice and support to EU citizens, including people who are late applying to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS), who have had their application refused, or are moving from pre-settled to settled status once eligible. The charity also provides help when people are struggling to prove their immigration status or to access rights and services. These can include the right to bring family members to join them in the UK, and to access welfare benefits, healthcare, etc. Contact:
 - Helpline 0330 223 5336 (different language options available).
 - advice@settled.org.uk (for general enquiries).
 - roma.advice@settled.org.uk (for Roma people).
 - ApplyEUSSWales@settled.org.uk (those living in Wales making an application for pre- settled or settled status).
- **Speakeasy Law Centre (employment, welfare benefits, debt, housing law)** speakeasy.cymru. The Speakeasy Law Centre is (currently) the only Law Centre in Wales. Located in Cardiff, it provides free legal advice and assistance in the areas of welfare benefits, debt and housing law. The Speakeasy also operates a pro bono employment clinic offering free one-off advice by local solicitors. To be eligible for their assistance an applicant must be located or live in South Wales. Contact:
 - 029 2045 3111
 - info@speakeasy.cymru.
- **Support Through Court (emotional and administrative support in civil court)** supportthroughcourt.org/locations/cardiff Please see page 25 above in the England & Wales Guide. STC operates one centre in Cardiff Civil and Family Justice Centre. If an individual is facing court without a lawyer in Cardiff, STC can help at all stages. It has volunteers who can support people remotely and appointments at the office in Cardiff. Should someone need technical support or access to IT facilities for a remote hearings, they can get in touch to find out how STC can help. Contact:
 - 0292 277 0348 (line does not receive calls from withheld numbers)
 - cardiff@supportthroughcourt.org

- **Welsh Refugee Council (immigration, housing, benefits)**
wrc.wales. The WRC supports sanctuary seekers and refugees at the most critical points of their lives. Their work enables people who have been forced to seek sanctuary to find their feet and begin building a life in Wales. The WRC can assist in helping sanctuary seekers and refugees find a place to stay, work to support themselves, access to English classes, legal advice, and community networks. The WRC operates a “Sanctuary Service” that helps Asylum Seekers understand their rights and gives support and free legal advice at crucial points on their journey. Contact:
 - 0808 196 7273
 - For details of the offices in Cardiff, Newport, Swansea and Wrexham visit wrc.wales/contact/our-offices

- **Welsh Women’s Aid (domestic abuse/violence)**
welshwomensaid.org.uk operates local domestic abuse and violence against women services across Wales. Offers a range of support to women (and children) suffering or having suffered domestic violence. They provide individual advocacy and support, counselling, support groups as well as access to refuge and other safe accommodation options. Many services run drop-in sessions which people can attend to talk about their situation and get some initial support and guidance. Contact:
 - Live Fear Free Helpline (24 hours): 0808 80 10 800
 - info@livefearfreehelpline.wales
 - To find specialist support services in each of the 22 local authority areas in Wales, visit welshwomensaid.org.uk/information-support/find-your-local-service

CITIZENS ADVICE (Wales)

Citizens Advice Cymru operates **Advicelink Cymru**, which is a service funded by the Welsh Government, and offers advice to those based in Wales on welfare benefits, debt, employment, education, housing, immigration and discrimination: 0800 702 2020.

Citizens Advice Cymru also offers the following helplines, which are also generally operated Monday to Friday:

- Consumer helpline: 0808 223 1133.
- Claim What's Yours (benefits entitlement): 0808 250 5700.
- Help to Claim (Universal Credit): 08000 241 220.
- Motor Neurone Disease helpline: 0808 801 0620.
- Private Rented Sector Debt helpline: 0808 278 7920.

Advice is also provided locally by Citizens Advice charities across Wales, which are listed below by area. Office locations are listed in brackets if different from the area name. The information about the scope of their services may be out of date or otherwise incorrect, so check directly. To find the local Citizens Advice by postcode or town visit

citizensadvice.org.uk/wales

- **Anglesey/Ynys Môn** citizensadvice.org.uk/local/ynys-mon Provides specialist advice and casework on: welfare benefits, employment, housing, money and debt, and advice on immigration and discrimination. Contact:
 - 0808 278 7932
- **Bridgend (Bridgend, Maesteg)** citizensadvice.org.uk/local/bridgend-county-borough Advice and information on a range of issues, including benefits and welfare rights, consumer issues, employment and housing rights, legal issues, money and debt. Casework on benefits. Representation at social security appeal tribunals. Contact:
 - 01656 762800.

- **Caerphilly (Bargoed, Caerphilly, other locations)** citizensadvicecbg.org.uk. Provides specialist casework on welfare benefits and debt; guidance on money issues; and information on employment, housing, immigration and discrimination. Contact:
 - 0800 702 2020.
- **Cardiff and Vale (Cardiff and Barry)** cacv.org.uk. Provides advice on benefits, employment, debt, immigration (OISC Level 1 only), consumer, family (including child maintenance) and housing. Contact:
 - Cardiff and Vale Advicelink service 0808 278 7925.
- **Carmarthenshire (Carmarthen)** carmarthenshire-ca.org.uk. Provides specialist support with welfare benefits and debt, as well as advice on energy efficiency, and support with claiming Universal Credit. Contact:
 - Generalist advice telephone service: 01269 592267, 01267 234488, 01554 759626
 - advice@carmarthenshire-ca.org.uk.
- **Ceredigion (Cardigan)** cabceredigion.org. Advice service that assists clients with a variety of queries including energy, consumer, debt and benefits (in work and welfare). They work remotely but also have outreach locations across the county and provide home visits with some of our projects. Contact:
 - Local advice line: 01239 621974, 01970 612817
 - enquiries@cabceredigion.org.
- **Conwy (Llandudno)**. Provides specialist casework in welfare benefits and debt; and advice on employment, housing, immigration, discrimination, and money. Contact:
 - 01745 828705
 - ask@cabceredigion.org or gofyn@cabceredigion.org.
- **Denbighshire (Ruthin)** cadenbighshire.co.uk. Provides specialist casework around welfare benefits, money advice, debt; advice and casework on employment and housing; and information on immigration and discrimination. Operates bilingually and can also offer support in limited community languages. Contact:

- 0808 278 7933, 0808 278 7933
- advice@dcab.co.uk
- **Flintshire (Mold)** flintshirecab.org.uk. Provides assistance regarding debt & money, benefits advice, energy advice, and work & discrimination, mental health, EU citizens advice. Contact:
 - 0808 278 7923.
- **Gwynedd (Caernarfon)** cabgwynedd.wales. Offers specialist casework on welfare benefits, money and debt; advice with casework on employment and housing; and advice on immigration and discrimination. Contact:
 - 0808 27 87 922 / 01286 424922.
- **Merthyr Tydfil** citizensadvicemt.org.uk. Provides specialist casework in welfare benefits and debt; and advice on employment, housing, immigration, discrimination and money. Contact:
 - See citizensadvicemt.org.uk/contact
- **Monmouthshire (Monmouth, Caldicot, Chepstow, Abergavenny)** citizensadvice.org.uk/local/monmouthshire-county Provides advice and casework on welfare benefits and debt; and advice on employment, housing, discrimination, immigration and money. Contact:
 - 03444 77 20 20
- **Newport** newportca.org.uk. Provides specialist advice on a wide variety of issues including benefits, debt, employment and discrimination. Contact:
 - 01633 222622.
- **Pembrokeshire (Pembroke Dock)** pembscab.org. Provides specialist casework in welfare benefits and debt; advice with casework in employment and discrimination and money; advice on housing; and information on immigration. Contact:
 - 01437 806070
 - advice@pembscab.org

- **Powys (Brecon)** powyscitizensadvice.org.uk. Provides specialist casework on welfare benefits, money and debt, advice with casework on employment; and advice on housing, immigration and discrimination. Advice is available bilingually (English and Welsh) and in several community languages. Contact:
 - 0345 601 8421.

- **Rhondda Cynon Taff (Pontypridd, Mountain Ash)** carct.org.uk Provides advice on employment, housing, discrimination, money, guidance on immigration, and specialist casework on debt and welfare benefits. Advice is available bilingually (English and Welsh) and in several community languages. Contact:
 - 01443 409284
 - enquiries@carct.org.uk.

- **Swansea Neath Port Talbot** citizensadviceSNPT.org.uk. Provides specialist casework on welfare benefits and debt; and advice on employment, housing, immigration, discrimination, and money. Contact:
 - 0808 278 7926.

- **Torfaen (Pontypool, Cwmbran)** catorfaen.org.uk. Provides advice and casework on welfare benefits, debt, consumer advice, employment, housing and money; and information on immigration. Offices in Pontypool, Cwmbran and at outreaches in Blaenavon and Trevechin. Contact:
 - 01633 876121
 - reception@catorfaen.org.uk

- **Wrexham** wrexhamcitizensadvice.com Citizens Advice Wrexham provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice on any issue brought to us. They have specialist advisers who provide guidance on more complex issues such as money problems, benefit queries, debt and energy inquiries. Contact:
 - 0808 278 7931.

OTHER ONLINE RESOURCES

Wales specific directories:

- dewis.wales is a Welsh Government-funded site aimed at bringing together information on wellbeing - including health, community, safety and security and more.
- en.infoengine.cymru is a site run by the Wales Council for Voluntary Action, which lists third sector services in Wales.
- adferiad.org/our-services Adferiad (formerly CAIS) brings together a number of services supporting people with complex needs such as mental health and substance use issues.
- ombudsman.wales/advice-advocates The Public Services Ombudsman maintains a list of organisations that provide advice and advocacy in Wales.

Online guidance:

- Welsh Government cost of living advice: gov.wales/help-cost-living
- Rent Smart Wales Resource Library: rentsmart.gov.wales/en/resource-library
- Children's Legal Centre Wales: childrenslegalcentre.wales/resources
- All Wales Safeguarding Procedure: safeguarding.wales
- Dangos dangos.wales is a project to help you show other people that there are a lot of ways, in Wales, to improve their financial situation, and how to ease their worries about claiming.

This Wales guide was compiled by members of the **Pro Bono Committee for Wales / Pwyllgor Pro Bono Cymru** probonocommittee.wales. The Committee is made up of representatives of the legal profession, charity advice sector, law schools and judiciary. It is dedicated to furthering a joined-up approach to pro bono in Wales. The Secretariat is jointly held by LawWorks Cymru and Advocate.

Disclaimers: please see page 4 above of the England & Wales guide.

Corrections / additions? Please send to guide@probonocommittee.uk.

