

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

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

June 2023 version

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Published for:

**PRO
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WEEK**

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

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This booklet is published annually for 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.

Gratitude is expressed to everyone who supported the production of the Guide, whether by contributing information or their advice.

This is a pilot revision in June 2023, which following feedback has been expanded to include wider sources of advice and support. Feedback is encouraged to improve the next edition to be published in November 2023. **Please email your comments, additions or corrections to guide@probonoweek.org.uk.**

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About this Guide

Who is this Guide for? MPs, 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, and usually only national rather than local services. Some of these charities provide UK wide support. It is hoped that Scotland and Northern Ireland will be addressed in the future with sister versions of this 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 should therefore only be seen as complementary to, rather than a replacement for, a properly funded and fully functioning **legal aid** system. But:
 - Funding cuts following LASPO Act 2012 substantially reduced the availability of legal assistance supported by legal aid;
 - There are now significant shortages of legal aid providers in a number of areas of law, and geographical gaps in provision;
 - This has created legal aid deserts, as explained in the reports at lawsociety.org.uk/legal-aid-deserts and bit.ly/LexisNexisReport
- In addition to the need to fund 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 page 12 below).

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, they may be able to refer to specialist 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 in 2016 of London MPs' surgeries concluded that **not all MPs' surgeries have the resources or knowhow** to be able to identify when legal advice is required and when legal aid might be available. A second survey will report in mid-2023 and its findings will be available at tinyurl.com/mindthegap2023
- 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 (homelessness and possession, disrepair, housing allocation, and security of tenure).
 - Mental health casework.
 - Community care casework.
 - Anti-social behaviour.
 - Special education needs.
 - Employment law.
 - Civil and criminal legal aid.

Training sessions are run both online and in-person. For more details contact the House of Commons Learning and Development team.

- The [House of Commons Library](#) also has some casework guidance.

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 advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk & adviceuk.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, and offer guidance to individuals representing themselves. See pages 17 to 20, including:

- [advicelocal.uk](https://www.advicelocal.uk)
- [advicenow.org.uk](https://www.advicenow.org.uk) (including [guides](#) to self representation)
- [citizensadvice.org.uk](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

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](https://www.solicitors.lawsociety.org.uk)

A public access barrister: the Bar Council [directaccessportal.co.uk](https://www.directaccessportal.co.uk)

Visit [legalchoices.org.uk](https://www.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. See page 14.

6. 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
- advice.local.uk

You can specifically locate Citizens Advice and Law Centres at:

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

7. Specialist charities

There are many specialist charities helping particular categories of people or those with specific problems. See from page 35 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).

8. Housing duty court schemes

At some courts, emergency advice and advocacy may be available for certain hearings, in particular housing possession (page 16).

9. Pro bono clinics and charities

Free legal assistance may be available through pro bono clinics, such as through the LawWorks Clinics Network, law schools, or through other charities such as Advocate. See pages 23 to 34.

Note: 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.

Wales: devolved law



It is important to note that a number of areas of public law are devolved in Wales, including but not limited to:

- Housing
- Education and training
- Healthcare and social services law.

This Guide cannot advise about the differences between Welsh and English law, instead see law.gov.wales. However, the Guide can highlight that as far as possible, Welsh clients should be signposted or referred to Welsh organisations or branches, which will be equipped to understand devolved law, and whether/how the law differs to England. Help may also be available in the Welsh language.

However, this is not to say that clients should not be signposted to English organisations where no Welsh equivalent exists. A number of organisations featured in this Guide offer their services across England & Wales, and may have a Welsh specific arm (for example Age Cymru). If possible, when making a referral it is advisable to make clear that the matter is based in Wales.

Some key Welsh specific helplines and websites are:

- **Age Cymru:** ageuk.org.uk/cymru 0300 303 44 98.
- **Advicelink Cymru:** 0800 702 2020 (Welsh Government funded Citizens Advice service offering advice on welfare benefits, debt, employment, education, housing, immigration and discrimination)
- **Citizens Advice Cymru:** citizensadvice.org.uk/wales
- **Cost of living resources:** gov.wales/help-cost-living
- **Dewis Cymru:** a directory of local and national services of various types of support in Wales www.dewis.wales
- **Shelter Cymru:** sheltercymru.org.uk 08000 495 495

The Pro Bono Committee for Wales has a mapping project ongoing of Welsh specific services, which will produce additional information to supplement this Guide, especially for use by Welsh MPs, MSs and Welsh agencies.

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”.

To be 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. 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. Further, the means test will change (and be removed in some areas) following the Government [response](#) to the Legal Aid Means Test Review, but the timing and full detail is to be announced. Check the current rules in full at gov.uk/legal-aid and the below links.

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

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

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, save for certain minor offences. Free 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)

- To check eligibility for a person/case: 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 0345 345 4 345.

Civil means test: many people will not be financially eligible, even though they cannot afford legal help. In very simplified terms (note that the rules are more complicated), the client’s means are assessed combined with any partner:

- Income test: earn no more than £2,657 per month before tax, whilst having no more than £733 per month of disposable income (the test may be passed by receiving certain “passporting” benefits); and
- Capital test: have 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 (£200,000 for mortgage repossession claims). Also note the pensioner's (60<) capital disregard.

The means test is disapplied in some cases (e.g. care proceedings, child abduction, mental health tribunal). Income/capital caps are waived for domestic violence or forced marriage protection, but a contribution may be required.

See the full current means test: gov.uk/guidance/civil-legal-aid-means-testing

In scope civil cases may include (check at lawsociety.org.uk/legal-costs-help and 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 may 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 court duty schemes

Housing Possession Court Duty Schemes (HPCDS)

Funded by the Legal Aid Agency, HPCDS is a duty solicitor service at the local County Court, to prevent avoidable home loss. This free service is not means-tested: all renters at risk of being evicted and all mortgage holders facing repossession can get help.

People who have been served with a 'notice seeking possession' of their property and receive letters requiring them to show up at the court can arrive and ask the court staff to see the duty solicitor.

The duty solicitor will hear them out and will defend them in court. They will try to get the eviction dropped, or to get more time from the judge for sorting out the problems that led to the brink of eviction.

Shelter have more information about how the scheme works at: england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/eviction/free_legal_help_from_a_county_court_duty_scheme

Housing Loss Prevention Advice Services (HLPAS)

From August 2023, the duty desk service is being renamed and expanded. Help will still be available at court on the day.

However, once the scheme commences, help will also be available earlier: as soon as a person is served with a 'notice seeking possession', they can contact the firm or charity operating the local duty desk and get legal advice on the issues that have put their home at risk, such as housing, debt or benefits problems. This, too, is free and not means-tested.

For more information and to find a local HLPAS provider visit: gov.uk/guidance/legal-aid-for-possession-proceedings

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](https://www.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.

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
- 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 and money
- Consumer
- Housing
- Family
- Law and courts
- Immigration
- Health

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 line:

- Adviceline (England): 0800 144 8848
- Advicelink (Wales): 0800 702 2020

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

- England: 0800 144 8 444
- Scotland: 0800 023 2581
- Wales: 08000 241 220

Money or debt problems: 0800 240 4420

Consumer helpline: 0808 223 1133 (Welsh: 0808 223 1144)

3. Get help from your nearest Citizens Advice agency, find it at 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 rcjadvice.org.uk.

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 provide legal advice and representation in social welfare law, covering some or all of the following areas:

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

Other areas of work might include:

- Public law
- Mental health
- Family law
- Education rights
- Young people and children's rights

Local services and areas of law offered will vary among Law Centres and nearly all are legal aid providers.

How to get help

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

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 contact the Law Centres Network through the links above.

AdviceUK is the largest network of advice organisations with 650 members across England, Scotland and Wales.

The 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 Advice UK 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 Advice UK. 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 are members of LawWorks and of their umbrella charity the Clinical Legal Education Organisation (CLEO).

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.

How to get help

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

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>	<p>Across England and Wales.</p> <p>In addition to a national helpline, locations at Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Chelmsford, Exeter, Leeds, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Newcastle, Newport, Nottingham, Sheffield, Southend.</p> <p>For locations see supportthroughcourt.org/locations</p>
<i>Type of help provided</i>	<p>Our volunteers provide practical, procedural and emotional support in many areas of Civil and Family court processes. They can:</p> <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.• They do not give legal advice.• Provide details of specialist advice agencies where possible; help find if clients can get free legal advice.
<i>Areas of law</i>	<p>Family and civil.</p>
<i>Eligibility</i>	<p>Anyone without representation in the civil & family courts.</p>
<i>In person?</i>	<p>For locations, visit supportthroughcourt.org/locations</p>
<i>Online/remote help?</i>	<p>All our regional services also provide remote support. We have a National Helpline (below) and we're developing a fully remote national service.</p>
<i>Pro bono?</i>	<p>We signpost to pro bono organisations.</p>
<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>	<p>supportthroughcourt.org</p>

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.

To be 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, or be referred by an MP, lawyer, or advice agency. It is helpful for those referring to help applicants write a summary and collate documents. 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 7092 3960 (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 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 will also assist with winding-up petitions (for the winding-up list in London see COIN on page 31).

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)



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.

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

Contact: s.kitson@trinitychambers.co.uk

Bristol & South West CLIPS

Overview: South West CLIPS scheme will launch shortly 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: Once launched, 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 will launch in September 2023, providing 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.

How to get help: details will be added to the Guide once the scheme launches.

Contact: leedsbpc@weareadvocate.org.uk

Further commercial pro bono schemes

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. The scheme is operated by the Chancery Bar Association and Advocate.

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

Company Insolvency Pro Bono Scheme (COIN)

Overview: litigants appearing in the winding-up court can obtain free legal advice and representation from volunteer barristers, with the assistance of students from City University of London (which operates the scheme).

Location: Winding-up Court, the Rolls Building (the High Court), London.

How to get help: attend Room 17 at the Rolls Building 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 and 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 (pages 54-55) 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 51 below.

Appeals in employment and social security cases

See ELAAS and FRU on the following page.

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 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 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, which include (in addition those listed above such as Advocate and LawWorks):

- ELIPS: an online advice clinic for Employment Tribunal claims (page 70).
- ELAAS: representation at preliminary hearings in the Employment Appeal Tribunal (page 71).
- Domestic Abuse Response Alliance: representation to domestic abuse victims via National Centre for Domestic Violence (page 61).
- Free Representation Unit: representation in tribunals for social security and employment cases (page 40).
- KIND UK: legal advice and representation to undocumented children on immigration and nationality issues (page 45).
- Ukraine Advice Project UK: immigration advice for Ukraine war refugees (page 86).

In addition, many charities utilise pro bono assistance from volunteer lawyers alongside specialist lawyers and other staff employed in house by the charity.

These include Law Centres (page 21 above), other front line advice agencies, law schools and specialist charities. Many are part of the LawWorks Clinics Network (page 23). In the next section of this Guide, full page entries for certain charities include information about how they use pro bono. Various charities listed with brief details also utilise pro bono lawyers.

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.



TrustLaw trust.org/trustlaw is the Thomson Reuters Foundation's global pro bono legal network. Working with leading law firms and corporate legal teams, TrustLaw facilitate free legal support, groundbreaking research and resources for NGOs and social enterprises in more than 180 countries, including the UK. The network has over 6,000 members, including more than 1,000 law firms and in-house legal teams.

Additional 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:

- Access to Justice Foundation
- 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, Bristol, Greater Manchester, the North East, Wales (and shortly Yorkshire), together with Liverpool Law Society's access to justice committee
- 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 page 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.
- 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](https://www.advicelocal.uk/welfare-benefits)
- Advicenow: [advicenow.org.uk/benefits](https://www.advicenow.org.uk/benefits)
- Citizens Advice: [citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits](https://www.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](https://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits) and [moneyhelper.org.uk/en/benefits](https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/benefits)
- Benefits calculators: [gov.uk/benefits-calculators](https://www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators)
- Regarding mandatory reconsideration & appeals processes: [gov.uk/mandatory-reconsideration](https://www.gov.uk/mandatory-reconsideration)

In addition to the below national charities, many local agencies will advise on benefits issues, including Citizens Advice, Law Centres, 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](https://www.advicelocal.uk) and [advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk](https://www.advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk).

Legal aid may be available to challenge decisions of the Social Security Tribunal on points of law. See page 14 above or [gov.uk/check-legal-aid](https://www.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 40.
- **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
- rightsnet.org.uk from Lasa Charity UK has [resources](#) linking to benefit calculators and various websites, and summarises the [current benefit rates](#).

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.)
- **Pro Bono Community** offer a remote clinic to assist with welfare benefits appeals. They accept referrals from frontline advice agencies: probonocommunity.org.uk/services/psc-appeals-clinic

Charities whose service includes benefits advice

- Remember, as stated in the above box, local help on benefits can be obtained from **Citizens Advice**, **Law Centres** and other 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**: some Local Minds provide benefits advice and advocacy services for those with mental health issues mind.org.uk/news-campaigns/campaigns/benefits/where-you-can-find-help
- **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 (Zacchaeus 2000 Trust)



Z2K provides welfare benefits advice to Londoners experiencing complex benefits and/or 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 Our Pro Bono Project supports low-income Londoners with free advice and representation to challenge DWP decisions at the First-Tier Social Security Tribunal.

We train and work with eleven 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.
- Immediate crisis relief for our clients.

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

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 14 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 EDUCATION, FAMILY and DISABILITY sections.

General advice/support

- **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 & investigation [service](https://childcomwales.org.uk/service) 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.
- **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) who don't know where to find help. Online [information](#) is available and phone support 0808 808 4994.
- **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 41471.
- **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
- **Stop It Now!** stopitnow.org.uk support adults who are worried someone might be abusing a child. 0808 1000 900 and live [chat](#).

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 and the Care Advice Line 0800 023 2033 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 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: 0151 649 8700 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, Colchester and Leeds. 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">• 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 English 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 immigration 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.
<i>Application route</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child Law Advice Service (family law): 0300 330 5480.• Education law advice: 0300 330 5485.• Education law casework: call Legal Aid Agency (page 14).• British Citizenship applications: see KIND UK (page 45).• 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.
- **Education:** our education lawyers can provide advice and representation for children excluded from school or if the school is not giving the support needed.
- **Community care:** our community care lawyers can help with access to social services support and provide representation in care proceedings.
- **Housing:** we provide advice and assistance for young people on a range of issues relating to housing.
- **Immigration:** our immigration caseworker supports young people on a range of complex issues relating to their legal status.

Key criteria: Children and young people up to aged 25.

Other, non-legal help: Just for Kids Law provides holistic help from a youth advocate, lawyer or youth opportunities worker, who will try to help with all problems faced by the young person. If they can't help they will try to try to find someone who can.

In person? Remote and in person services available.

Online help? See guidance for professionals and Advice Line at [YJLC.UK](https://www.justforkidslaw.org/yjlc)

Pro bono? Some of our school exclusion services are provided by pro bono support from corporate law firms.

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>	<p>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.</p> <p>We also provide resources and training for Local Authorities, social workers and other professionals.</p>
<i>Areas of law:</i>	Immigration, nationality, citizenship.
<i>Criteria/eligibility to get help:</i>	<p>We take on cases of:</p> <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. <p>Asylum cases not usually covered (as they can be covered by legal aid).</p>
<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 14.

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 (see page 25).
- Some clinics on the **LawWorks Clinics Network** may be able to assist regarding civil claims (see page 23).
- **Advocate** may be able to find a pro bono barrister to help with a civil matter (see page 27).
- Also see the other **civil/business pro bono** schemes on pages 29 to 32.

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

- **RCJ Advice** rcjadvise.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:
rcjadvise.org.uk/housing/civil-legal-advice

COMMUNITY / SOCIAL CARE

NB devolved in Wales

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 14 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 Law Centre, and Just for Kids Law), 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.
- **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales** ombudsman.wales can investigate complaints about public services and independent care providers in Wales.
- **The Advocacy Project** advocacyproject.org.uk offer advocacy services in London (NHS, care, mental health, mental capacity).

Access Social Care



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. 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. ASC have an online chatbot product providing free legal information and supporting 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>Extent to which 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 the chatbot for members of the public here: accesscharity.org.uk/resources
<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.
- **International Consumer Centre (UKICC)** ukecc.net provides advice to UK consumers who have experienced problems when buying abroad. Web [form](#) or ukicc@tsi.org.uk.
- **Ombudsman** may be able to impartially resolve consumer complaints (but might not themselves provide independent advice):
 - Advertising Standards asa.org.uk
 - Energy and Communications ombudsman-services.org
 - Financial financial-ombudsman.org.uk
 - Furniture & Home Improvement fhio.org
 - Gambling ibas-uk.com
 - Legal legalombudsman.org.uk
 - Motor themotorombudsman.org
 - Rail railombudsman.org
- **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](https://www.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 14 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](https://www.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](https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/public/for-public-visitors/common-legal-issues/criminal-law)
- For appeals, see also **Advocate** (page 27) and **APPEAL** (page 51). Also university innocence projects e.g. [Cardiff](#), [London](#), [Manchester](#).
- **Post Office** convictions: [citizensadvicenorthumberland.org.uk/post-office](https://www.citizensadvicenorthumberland.org.uk/post-office)

Victims:

- **ASB Help** [asbhelp.co.uk](https://www.asbhelp.co.uk) provides information, advice and signposting for victims of anti-social behaviour. A [directory](#) is provided of local authority contacts for the Community Trigger.
- **FRU** [thefru.org.uk](https://www.thefru.org.uk) criminal injury compensation hearings (page 40).
- **Victim Support** [victimsupport.org.uk](https://www.victimsupport.org.uk) provides support to victims of crime and traumatic incidents in England & Wales: 0808 1689 11.

Police complaints/claims:

- **Legal aid** or no-win no fee may be available, see pages 10 and 14.
- **Liberty** [libertyhumanrights.org.uk](https://www.libertyhumanrights.org.uk) see page 83 below.
- **Independent Office for Police Conduct** [policeconduct.gov.uk](https://www.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 and unfair sentences who cannot afford to pay for a lawyer themselves.

<i>Geographical remit?</i>	England/Wales.
<i>Type of legal help provided</i>	Advice and representation.
<i>Areas of law?</i>	Criminal appeals.
<i>Criteria/eligibility to get help</i>	appeal.org.uk/contact/case-related
<i>In person service, if so where/when?</i>	Written applications.
<i>Online help, or remote services?</i>	N/A
<i>Extent to which services use pro bono lawyers?</i>	Pro bono lawyers involved with screening all the way up to representation at CACD.
<i>Application route</i>	By email to mail@appeal.org.uk
<i>Website</i>	appeal.org.uk
<i>Email address</i>	mail@appeal.org.uk

DEATHS; WILLS; INQUESTS; 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
- 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

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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Grief Encounter** griefencounter.org.uk provides support to bereaved children and young people: 0808 802 0111, webchat and grieffalk@griefencounter.org.uk.
- **SAMM National** samm.org.uk supports people bereaved by murder and manslaughter. Helpline: 0121 472 2912. info@samm.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 October.
- **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 91.

Inquests: legal advice and representation

- **Legal aid:** gov.uk/government/publications/exceptional-case-funding-for-representation-at-inquests/exceptional-case-funding-for-representation-at-inquests
- **Advocate** may be able to find a pro bono barrister (see page 27).
- **Action against Medical Accidents:** see page 78.
- **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.

Accidents

- **Brake** brake.org.uk support people bereaved & seriously injured by road crashes. Online [guidance](#) and support National Road Victim Service 0808 8000 401 help@brake.org.uk. Advice about choosing a solicitor for fatal injury cases, including free initial consultations: brake.org.uk/how-we-help/get-help-if-a-crash-victim/legal-support
- **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 online [guides](#)), advocacy and 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 14 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. Shelter's local clinics might assist on housing related debts (see page 81). You can locate various local debt help at advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk and advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk and [Money Helper](https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk).

For related issues see the BENEFITS section above.

- **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 0800 328 0006.
- **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](https://debtfreeadvice.com), 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](https://businessdebtline.org) 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.
- **Moneyhelper** (formerly the **Money Advice Service**) moneyhelper.org.uk. Advice from Money and Pensions Service. 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 (pg 31). Referrals via National Debtline & Business Debtline (above).
- **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 93.
- 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.

Complaints etc:

- **Financial Ombudsman Service** financial-ombudsman.org.uk
- **Pensions Ombudsman** pensions-ombudsman.org.uk
- **The Adjudicator's Office** reviews complaints against HMRC or the VOA gov.uk/government/organisations/the-adjudicator-s-office

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 14 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 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
- **Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman:** lgo.org.uk.
- **Mencap** provide information on various topics. They offer help and advice through the Learning Disability Helpline: 0808 808 1111 helpline@mencap.org.uk. They also offer a [Wills and Trusts](#) service 0207 696 6925 or willsandtrusts@mencap.org.uk.
- **Scope** 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 support deaf people re psychological therapy; domestic violence; and social care. info@signhealth.org.uk Text message details are on their website.
- **SNAP Cymru** 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 advise disabled people regarding issues accessing transport. Helpline: 020 7737 2339.

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.

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

- One off advice (all areas of law): Free.
- Legal aid Casework: Must relate to community care or housing (currently, see notes below) and the individual and issue must meet the Legal Aid Agency 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

Email: See above.

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. We are hoping to expand our legal aid work in discrimination (goods & services) and public law, and are constantly fundraising, so see our website to check any new service offerings.

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 14 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).

Discrimination issues are also addressed in other sections of the Guide, e.g. DISABILITY, DOMESTIC ABUSE, EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, FAMILY, HUMAN RIGHTS, IMMIGRATION.

- **Community Security Trust** cst.org.uk/contact is a charity that protects British Jews from antisemitism & related threats, including providing support upon reports of antisemitism. Emergencies (24 hr): 0800 032 3263. Non-emergencies: 0208 457 9999.
- **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/webchat](mailto:email@equalityadvisoryservice.com) & [BSL](https://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.
- **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](mailto:info@stonewall.org.uk).
- **The Monitoring Group** tmg-uk.org/about-us/race-advocacy-work 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
<i>Other important information</i>	We are currently experiencing high demand, and there may be delays in helping new clients.

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 63 below). You can also find various services at advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk.

See also other sections: CHILDREN, 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 64 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 **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, webchat & SMS also available.

- **Legal assistance in obtaining injunctions e.g. non-molestation orders:**
 - **Advicenow** [advicenow.org.uk/injunction](https://www.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 0800 195 8699 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 63 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.

Sexual assault or 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, by SMS and [live chat](#).

Stalking

- **Suzy 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 fmf@fcdof.gov.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.

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.
- **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. 0208 571 9595 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 and men who are victims of sexual abuse 020 3598 3898, also by webchat and SMS. 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.



FLOWS (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.

FLOWS 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.

FLOWS 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-information

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

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 14 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 regarding special education needs: 0808 808 3555 helpline@contact.org.uk.
- **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 43 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 67.

- **Just for Kid’s Law** justforkidslaw.org (see page 44 above) provides legal advice on children education issues.
- **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.
- **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales** ombudsman.wales can investigate complaints regarding various education bodies in Wales.
- **Refugee Education UK** reuk.org supports refugee children and young people access education from primary school to university. hello@reuk.org.
- **SNAP Cymru** snapcymru.org offers free information, advice and support to help get the right education for children and young people in Wales with all kinds of special educational needs. Helpline: 0808 801 0608. enquiries@snapcymru.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: 0208 538 3731 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](https://www.ipsea.org.uk/Pages/Category/get-support)
 - Information Service, to be signposted to guides and resources on website [ipsea.org.uk/information-service](https://www.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: <https://www.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](https://www.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](https://www.ipsea.org.uk/tribunal-support-service)
 - Call-in Helpline: 0300 222 5899, read about it at: <https://www.ipsea.org.uk/call-in-helpline>

Other help Training, see: [ipsea.org.uk/pages/category/training](https://www.ipsea.org.uk/pages/category/training)

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

Website [ipsea.org.uk](https://www.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 about employment issues is available from:

- Advicelocal: advicelocal.uk/employment
- Advicenow: advicenow.org.uk/topics/employment
- Citizens Advice: citizensadvice.org.uk/work
- The 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 organisations that may help on employment issues: FAMILY (maternity/paternity rights), DISABILITY, DISCRIMINATION (e.g. EASS), IMMIGRATION (immigrant/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 40 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 and 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 64 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 Their **DRAW Mediation** service may be free for those who live or work in London drawmediation.org.uk 020 3701 7535.

(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 londoneat@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

Legal aid may be available regarding nuisance caused by environmental pollution - see page 14 above or 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).
<i>Notes</i>	We are exceptionally busy and sometimes there are delays.

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 14 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 43 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. familytriage@rcjadvic.org.uk 0203 475 4373.
- **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 64 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](#) and advice by email on rights in pregnancy and childbirth info@birthrights.org.uk.
- **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 rights at work and benefits by [email](#) or 0808 802 0029 (national, except London); 0808 802 0057 (London residents).
- **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. Family Line: 0808 802 6666 familyline@family-action.org.uk.
- **Family Lives** (previously known as **Parentline**) familylives.org.uk offers a free helpline service for families in England and Wales 0808 800 2222 askus@familylives.org.uk.
- **Family Rights Group** frg.org.uk advises families whose children are involved with or needs children's services because of welfare needs or concerns 0808 801 0366 office@frg.org.uk.

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 matchmothers 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. Online [advice](#) is available. Advice line: 0300 123 7015.

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** from Coram Children's Legal Centre childrenslegalcentre.com/get-legal-advice/child-and-family provides advice on parental disputes about child arrangements, child protection and attending court. 020 7520 0300.
- **Intercountry Adoption Centre** icacentre.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

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](https://www.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).

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); OLDER PEOPLE (e.g. Age UK).

- **Action against Medical Accidents** – see page 78 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](https://www.cqc.org.uk) is the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England 03000 616161.
- **Healthwatch** [healthwatch.co.uk](https://www.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.
- **The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales** ombudsman.wales can look into complaints against the NHS in Wales and various other health institutions/providers.
- Various health charities, too numerous to list here, offer advice and support for patients, e.g. [Macmillan](https://www.macmillan.org.uk) for cancer support.

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

HSIB Maternity investigations and/or NHS Res. Early Notification Scheme (ENS): avma.org.uk/help-advice/brain-injuries/ens-hsib-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

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

- advice.local.gov.uk/housing
- advice.now.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 14 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 advice.local.gov.uk. Shelter also have local branches (see page 81 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](#). Amongst other services, they can 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 57 above).
- **Housing Possession Court Duty Schemes**: emergency advice and representation at court on the day to anyone facing possession proceedings (see page 16 above).
- **Just for Kids Law** justforkidslaw.org assist young people on a range of issues relating to housing (see page 44 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.
- **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales** ombudsman.wales can investigate complaints about social landlords in Wales.
- **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



English and Welsh's Governments' free service for the provision of free initial advice on the law of residential long leasehold and park homes.

<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 longer than 21 years) and park homes law. We also advise on fire 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 and park homes law.
<i>Criteria/eligibility</i>	Exclusively for long leasehold, 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>	<p>Only through our outreach service to groups of leaseholders/park home owners:</p> <p>tinyurl.com/leasebookevent</p>
<i>Online / remote?</i>	Online and remote.
<i>Pro bono?</i>	Advice staff are public service workers and are paid.
<i>Application route</i>	<p>Telephone session booking or to submit a written enquiry:</p> <p>clients.lease-advice.org</p>
<i>Email address</i>	info@lease-advice.org
<i>Phone number</i>	020 7832 2500
<i>Other important information</i>	<p>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.</p>

HUMAN RIGHTS / PUBLIC LAW

Legal aid may be available to challenge a decision against an individual by the government/public body, see page 14 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 through [written enquiries](#) submitted through 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 office@pilc.org.uk 0203 877 0867.
- **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). enquiries@publiclawproject.org.uk

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 14 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](https://www.lawsociety.org.uk) 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:

- advicelocal.uk/resources/asylum-immigration
- 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 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 942.
- **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.
office@asaproject.org.uk

- **CCLC's Migrant Children's Project** childrenslegalcentre.com/get-legal-advice/immigration-asylum-nationality offers online [resources](#), and email legal advice on issues affecting children subject to immigration control mcpadvice@coramclc.org.uk. The Children's Pro Bono Legal [Service](#) provides free legal services to children entitled to British citizenship cpbls@coramclc.org.uk. 020 7520 0300.
- **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 020 7553 7470 is for those in the UK without status. Those detained in Yarl's Wood IRC or in prison can contact 020 7251 8708.
- **Just for Kids Law** justforkidslaw.org (see page 44 above) offers immigration advice and representation for ages 10-25.
- **KIND UK** kidsinneedofdefense.org.uk (see page 45 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 and Plymouth: 029 2000 3050 info@migrantlegalproject.com.
- **Praxis** praxis.org.uk provide free immigration advice to migrants and refugees by phone on 020 7749 7608 or 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/our-work 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. coordinator.uk@refugeelegalsupport.org.

- **Rights of Women** rightsofwomen.org.uk (see page 64 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 Schemeukraineadvice@settled.org.uk.
- **Ukraine Advice Project** 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 advice-ukraine.co.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. adviceteam@covrefugee.org 02476 227 254.
- **Hackney Migrant Centre** hackneymigrantcentre.org.uk runs an advice service providing immigration and housing advice alongside wellbeing support 07856632796 or 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 975 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** provides support including for Moroccan and Arabic speaking women and girls experiencing domestic abuse: al-hasaniya.org.uk/domesticviolence
- **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, and has a support line in 200 languages: 0808 196 3651.
- **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 independent advice to asylum seekers in the UK 0808 8010 503; support and accommodation for victims of slavery and human trafficking 01304 203977; support for Hong Kong British Nationals 0808 8010 503; and advice on the EU Settlement Scheme. 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 in London and Birmingham: [web form](#) and 020 7922 7811.
- **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 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

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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

The following entities, in addition to some of the above, provide assistance regarding the Windrush compensation scheme and immigration issues:

- citizensadvice.org.uk/immigration/prove-your-right-to-live-in-the-uk
- **Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants**: free legal advice <https://www.jcwi.org.uk/news/new-free-legal-advice-for-windrush-victims>
- **Refugee & Migrant Centre**: rmcentre.org.uk/windrush-support
- Windrush charity: **Windrush Legal Angels** windrushlegalangels.co.uk
- Advocacy/support network: **Windrush Lives** windrushlives.com
- **United Legal Access** (also provide paid help): unitedlegalaccess.com
- Some other **LawWorks clinics** may help (see page 23 above).

The Adjudicator's Office reviews Home Office Windrush 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/get-advice 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: 0300 330 20 46; (b) means tested email advice; and (c) take complex case referrals from charities for 1-2-1 casework support.
- **New Europeans** 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 64 above.
- **Settled** settled.org.uk helps EU citizens in the UK including those late applying to the EU Settlement Scheme. Advice line: 0330 223 5336.

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
- NHS guidance: nhs.uk/mental-health/social-care-and-your-rights/mental-health-and-the-law/mental-health-act
- See also guidance from [Mind](#) and [Rethink](#) 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](#).

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 advicfinder.turn2us.org.uk.

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

- **The Hub of Hope** hubofhope.co.uk is a national directory of local and national mental health support and services, provided by Chasing the

Stigma charity.

- **Mind** mind.org.uk provides support & information to those experiencing a mental health problem, and signposts to other support. Infoline 0300 123 3393 info@mind.org.uk. See next page for legal information & general advice through Mind's Legal Line.
- **Mental Health & Money Advice** mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org online guidance for people with mental health and money issues.
- **My Living Will** mylivingwill.org.uk offers online information and a web service to produce an Advance Decision and Advance Statement.
- **National Youth Advocacy Service** offers mental health advocacy to young people & vulnerable adults. Helpline: help@nyas.net 0808 8081011 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. The website also links to various online mental health [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.
<i>Areas of law</i>	Mental health related law.
<i>Criteria/eligibility to get help</i>	Everyone is welcome, there are no eligibility criteria. <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 telephone 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
<i>Phone number</i>	0300 466 6463

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 14 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** (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. wearehourglass.org 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 55). 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 72.
- **Planning Aid England** rtpi.org.uk/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 300 volunteers. General enquiries: 020 7929 8338 info@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk. Requests for planning advice by email 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.
- **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 / EX-OFFENDERS

Legal aid may be available to prisoners depending on the issues, see page 14 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 WrapAround 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 0207 482 4148.
- **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.
- **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) 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 on Immigration Law.

Geographical England and Wales.

Areas of law Prison law; human rights. Also for women: family and immigration.

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 (before we can discuss matters with their family).
- **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 education in prisons across England & Wales.
- **Information sheets and self-help toolkits** prisonersadvice.org.uk/about/what-we-do

Pro bono? Our work is supported by pro bono help through a number of law firms.

Application route Prisoners can contact PAS on the Advice Line, by letter, or face-to-face at their regular Outreach Clinic.

Website prisonersadvice.org.uk

Email advice@prisonersadvice.org.uk

Important notes We always have high demand for our services.

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.

Geographical England and Wales.

Areas of law Prison and public law.

Type of help Advice, advocacy, representation, referring and signposting.

Legal help provided 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.

Key criteria for help Children and young people aged 21 or under in prison custody.

Other services 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.

Pro bono? Yes. Some of our casework is funded by legal aid.

Application route 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 see: howardleague.org/legal-work/advice-line

Website howardleague.org

Email info@howardleague.org

Telephone 020 7249 7373 (option 1).

Important notes 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/support-and-advice

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.

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Please help us improve this Guide: email your comments, additions or corrections to guide@probonoweek.org.uk.