



Andy Slaughter MP
Chair
Justice Select Committee

MoJ ref: SUB131127

By email only

22 January 2026

Dear Andy,

WRITTEN MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: RESPONSE TO LEGAL AID AGENCY CYBER-ATTACK

I am writing to let you know that I have today laid a Written Ministerial Statement to update all Members on the Legal Aid Agency's (LAA) response to the criminal cyber-attack on LAA systems. Please find the full text of my statement below.

Ministry of Justice update: response to Legal Aid Agency cyber-attack

In my written statement to the House of 26 June 2025, I updated Members on the emergency operational changes put in place at the Legal Aid Agency (LAA) in response to the criminal cyber-attack on LAA systems. Our priority throughout has been maintaining uninterrupted access to legal aid for those who need it. As I reported previously, in response to this incident we put in place contingency measures to ensure continued access to justice and maintain cashflow to providers and those in need of legal aid while services were offline. This update sets out the progress we have made in restoring LAA systems since the attack.

Since I last updated the House in June, significant effort has been made to ensure that LAA systems could be restored as quickly and safely as possible. Platforms supporting crime applications and most crime billing have now been restored. The same is true for the main civil legal aid system and all legal aid providers have been onboarded to the LAA's digital portal via a new identity management system. This means that the LAA has been able to close down most of the business continuity measures put in place in 2025. We will continue to assess the remaining contingencies as we restore outstanding internal processes and systems.

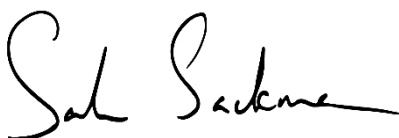
I am pleased that this progress has also allowed us to deliver significant fee uplifts to support the sustainability of the legal aid sector. Most fee increases for solicitors relating to police stations, magistrates' courts, prisons and some appeals work, announced as part of the around £92 million per year of additional funding for solicitors, are now in effect for new cases. Uplifts to controlled immigration and housing legal aid fees – primarily early legal advice and some legal representation - were implemented in December and represent the first uplift to civil legal aid fees since 1996.

I am grateful to legal aid providers for their support and patience over this period of stress and strain across the system and as we continue to recover from the criminal cyber-attack. I recognise there is more to do to overcome the challenges the cyber-attack has created and that is why, in parallel to recovery, I have asked officials to consider options to accelerate our transformation programme to replace restored systems with modern, resilient, and flexible technology.

I will continue to update the House regularly on this matter.

I am grateful for the letter you sent to me on 15 January regarding the cyber-attack. My officials are carefully considering this letter, and I will respond in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Sackman', with a fluid, cursive style.

SARAH SACKMAN KC MP
Minister Of State