



Ministry  
of Justice

The Right Honourable  
**David Lammy MP**  
Deputy Prime Minister, Lord  
Chancellor & Secretary of  
State for Justice

The Rt Hon. Lord Foster of Bath  
Chair of the Justice and Home Affairs Committee  
House of Lords  
London  
SW1A 0PW

23 February 2025

Dear the Rt. Hon. Lord Foster of Bath,

### **CONCLUSION OF THE CONCORDAT PROCESS FY26/27**

I am writing to update the Justice and Home Affairs Committee on the successful conclusion of the Concordat process for the upcoming financial year. I am pleased to report that we have reached a landmark agreement with the Lady Chief Justice and the Senior President of Tribunals for the allocation of sitting days and capital funding. Throughout this process, my officials have worked in a spirit of transparency and close collaboration with the Judicial Office and HMCTS.

Moreover, this settlement gives the system an unprecedented ability to plan. While this agreement formally governs the upcoming 2026/27 financial year (and Concordat processes will happen in coming years) we have established firm commitments through to 2028/29. By providing this three-year horizon, we are enabling HMCTS to plan more effectively, recruit with confidence, and address open caseloads with the efficiency that only long-term funding can provide.

Focusing on the next financial year, I am pleased to confirm several landmark achievements within this settlement that will fundamentally improve the administration of justice:

- I have uncapped next year's sitting day allocation for the Crown Court, removing any financial constraint on the rate at which HMCTS operates. This will allow the Crown Court to sit at record-high levels, hearing as many cases as possible, getting swifter justice for victims and tackling the Crown Court backlog. Combined with our ambitious court reform plans, I anticipate that over the coming years this will start to turn the tide on the outstanding caseload, enabling the system to begin to move to a more sustainable footing.
- I am funding 125,800 sitting days in the Magistrates' courts next year, an increase from 114,000 sitting days in the last financial year.
- I am increasing capital investment by 46% compared to FY 25/26, to fund major projects, estates maintenance, digital requirements and funding to prepare the courts for the IRCC reforms. This investment is vital for

maintaining a modern, safe, and functional justice system that can accommodate the increased volume of hearings facilitated by this agreement.

For the subsequent years of the agreement, the agreed funding levels and sitting-day allocation are set out below, with upwards trends across many jurisdictions over the Spending Review (SR) period. These allocations will remain at the level set out in this proposal or higher, barring exceptional circumstances. For magistrates' courts, a ring-fenced amount (see table 2) that allows for an increase to 140,000 sitting days is available which could be released if recruitment and capacity progress as planned.

Beyond sitting days, I am also pleased to fund the following priorities over the SR period. I am prioritising investment to digitise the County Court (a key recommendation in the Justice Committee's recent inquiry into the Work of the County Court) and replacing CE-File (the legacy online filing system used across our globally renowned Business & Property Court, Kings Bench Division of the High Court, Court of Appeal (Civil Division) and a selection of Chambers of the Upper Tribunal). This will remove paper from key processes, cut administrative burdens, speed up case handling and deliver a modern resilient digital service that better meets the needs of court users.

I will continue the expansion of Pathfinder courts in 26/27, and I will provide further details in due course of our plans to improve the court experience and outcomes for children and parents involved in family law proceedings, including those who have experience of domestic abuse.

**Table 1 – Investment for the complete Spending Review Period**

| Financial Year | Fiscal Resource funding commitment (RDEL) | Capital funding commitment (CDEL) |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2026/27        | £2,498m                                   | £287m                             |
| 2027/28        | £2,588m                                   | £281m                             |
| 2028/29        | £2,664m                                   | £425m                             |

**Table 2 - Sitting day allocations for the complete Spending Review Period**

*Funding at this level is expected to amount to the sitting-day volumes set out below.*

| Jurisdiction        | 2026/27 Allocation | Expected 2027/28 Allocation | Expected 2028/29 Allocation                            |
|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Crown               | Uncapped           | 113,500                     | 117,000                                                |
| Magistrates (Crime) | 125,800            | 128,400                     | 131,000 <i>(with the opportunity to fund 140,000)*</i> |
| Civil               | 80,200             | 79,200                      | 80,600                                                 |

|                                      |                                            |        |        |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------|--------|
| Family                               | 96,100                                     | 95,400 | 93,100 |
| Immigration and Asylum Chamber**     | 24,100 (expected number) 26,000 (ambition) | 29,100 | 29,700 |
| Social Security and Child Support*** | 21,740                                     | 23,050 | 23,210 |
| Employment                           | 32,590                                     | 34,010 | 35,970 |
| Mental Health                        | 17,000                                     | 17,000 | 17,000 |

\* Additional sitting days (up to 140,000) contingent on recruitment and capability increasing as planned.

\*\* The IAC will be funded to sit a maximum of 26,000 days in 2026/27, from a combination of Home Office and Ministry of Justice budgets. Every effort is being made to sit at maximum capacity.

\*\*\* This figure includes days funded from both Ministry of Justice and Department for Work and Pensions budgets.

Building on the significant investment of last year, this settlement constitutes the highest ever level of resource funding for the justice system. We will be operating at or close to maximum judicial capacity in almost every jurisdiction.

This record investment demonstrates this Government's unwavering commitment to the justice system. I am using every lever available to provide a dependable service for victims, witnesses, and legal professionals. I have written in similar terms to the Chairs of the Justice Select Committee and the Lords Constitution Committee.

Yours sincerely,

**RT HON DAVID LAMMY MP**



**Deputy Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice**