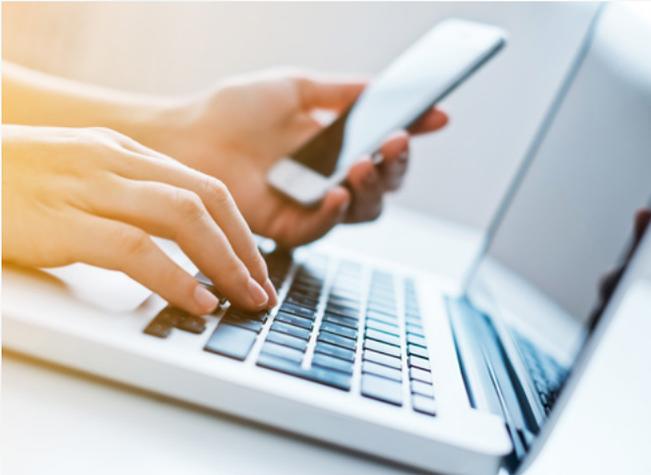


Solicitors:

Legal Aid is going digital



What will LAMS do?

LAMS is a digital case management system that will enable online applications, requests and correspondence, and provide real-time visibility of case status.

It will speed up processing times, reduce form-filling and use of paper, eliminate postage costs and provision of duplicate information, and improve data accuracy. It will allow more frequent payments to solicitors.

LAMS will be accessible on various electronic devices.

More information about LAMS and what you need to do to get ready, is available on our web site at www.justice-ni.gov.uk/topics/legal-aid/digitisation-legal-aid

Solicitors:

Legal Aid is going digital

The Legal Services Agency Northern Ireland is introducing a new digital Legal Aid Management System (**LAMS**) in **April 2019**.

When **LAMS** comes into operation the Agency will:

- **Only accept** online applications and requests in relation to all live and new cases
- **No longer accept** paper applications and payment requests.

What do you need to do?

To continue to access legal aid after April 2019 you will need to take the following steps:

1. Create an nidirect account

Solicitors must create an nidirect account for identity assurance and then visit one of a number of locations across Northern Ireland to present identification. This is a NI Government requirement to ensure that your privacy is protected and your data secure.

You should do this now so that you are ready for Step 2 in January. Follow the instructions.

2. Create a digital account on LAMS

You must then create a digital account on LAMS. You will be able to do this from **January 2019**.

3. Begin using LAMS

You will then be ready to start using LAMS from **April 2019**.



How to create an nidirect account

To gain access to LAMS from January 2019, **solicitors** first need to create an nidirect account. You can do this now by taking the following steps:

1. Go to www.nidirect.gov.uk/nidirect-legal-aid and 'create an account'. Enter the requested personal information, create a memorable word, and an authentication code will be sent to your email address. For most people the address you supply should be your home address as this will be the address most likely to be supported by your identification documents. *Note that data provided for nidirect accounts is held in a secure encrypted database and is used solely for the purposes of assuring an individual's identity.*
2. Within 5 calendar days, **bring your authentication code and three items of ID** to one of 13 verification centres across Northern Ireland.* At least one item of ID must be photographic. For most people, a passport or driving licence, and a bank statement and utility bill will be sufficient. These should match the address used to create your account. Remember to keep a note of the email address used to create the account, your password and memorable word: you will need these in January.

* Go to www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/identity-assurance for a full list of verification centres, a full list of acceptable ID documents, and full instructions.

Note: an appointment is required for the verification centre in Belfast (Goodwood House). While you are encouraged to take these steps now at your own convenience, **a number of bespoke verification days have been arranged for solicitors in Goodwood House, at which an appointment will not be needed. These are on 4th, 6th, 11th, 13th, 18th and 20th December** - but remember you must have already created your online account and generated your authentication code before arrival.

