

Riel Karmy-Jones KC
Chair of the Criminal Bar Association

MoJ ref: Sub 135995

15 July 2026

Dear Riel,

CRIMINAL LEGAL AID ADVOCATE FEES CONSULTATION LAUNCH

In December 2025, we announced our intention to invest an additional up to £34 million per year (inclusive of VAT) in criminal legal aid advocate fees in steady state, once the proposals are fully implemented, subject to consultation.

As discussed, £3.5m has already been allocated. This comprises a permanent uplift in the fixed fee for additional preparation; application of this fee to guilty pleas; and the extension of eligibility for wasted preparation fees.

I am grateful for the sustained and constructive engagement of the profession, and am pleased to inform you that we are launching the consultation today. The consultation will help us gather valuable feedback and perspectives from stakeholders to inform our final decisions.

The specific consultation proposals are:

- a 6% uplift across all AGFS fees, excluding Daily Attendance Fees;
- amending the 'guilty plea to trial brief fee ratio' from 50:100 to 65:100;
- increasing the basic fees for particular offences;
- uplifting the Plea and Trial Preparation Hearing (PTPH) fee by 25%;
- increasing fees for appeals from magistrates' courts and appeals to the Court of Appeal by 10%;
- increasing committal for sentence hearing fee by 25%;
- uplifting fees for post-Crown Court trial sentencing hearings by 20%;
- targeted uplifts of some pre-trial hearings; and
- widening criteria for bands 1.2 and 1.3 to include cases where the victim or defendant is aged 17 years.

The proposed fee scheme changes will apply to new cases only, to cases that begin only after the fee uplifts come into force, and they will not be applied retrospectively.

The proposals set out in the consultation are designed to: to support the sustainability of the criminal advocate sector; support the Government's wider reform objectives for the criminal courts and to recognise the changing nature of criminal advocacy; and to help ensure that fees more accurately represent the complexity, skill, and preparation required in criminal proceedings.

The consultation will run for six weeks. We will publish a response to the consultation as soon as possible this year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sarah Sackman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sarah" and the last name "Sackman" clearly distinguishable.

SARAH SACKMAN KC MP
Minister Of State