

Changes being introduced to assist reducing Rejects for Applications for Criminal Legal Aid 2018

- 1.1 Amending the 'Help Text' Button – The current version of the eForms system includes a 'Help Text' button within the CRM14 and CRM15 forms. This appears as a symbol at the end of some of the questions within the application form. The changes being introduced will amend the existing information to tailor it to address the common errors which lead to submissions being rejected or receiving requests for further information from the Criminal Application Team.
- 1.2 Adding 'Help Text' Buttons – Additional Help Text buttons will be added to questions where common mistakes are made. This will be included on fields such as the 'Case Type', 'National Insurance Number' and the 'Other Names' fields, for example. This added feature is designed to help you see which field should be selected (if the question is mandatory) and when information is required (when the field is not mandatory).
- 1.3 Insertion of new fields – Adding additional fields to help ensure accurate decisions are made surrounding a client's income. Examples include questions such as 'Have you ceased employment within the last 3 months?' 'Have you lost your job because of being in custody?' and 'When did this occur?'
- 1.4 Adding in check boxes to support income/no income options – Changes include adding tickboxes to cover common explanations for these scenarios. The changes include adding checkboxes to cover options such as 'Student Grant', 'Money from Friends and Family' and 'Rental Income' as explanations for other income, whilst 'Sleeping on a friend's sofa', 'Staying with family' and 'Living on the streets/homeless' will be added to explain a nil income.
- 1.5 Adding free text boxes where applicable – In some instances further clarification is needed if it is not clear how the client is supporting themselves. For instance, if a client's outgoings exceed the client's income we will need to check how the client is managing this. The change introduces a free text box so you can explain the client's financial situation.
- 1.6 Pop up reminders – Pop up reminders will be added to certain questions to ensure that the information being declared on the eForm is consistent across the form. For instance, a prompt will pop up to remind you to double check the case type if charges which are usually heard in the Crown Court are declared, but 'Summary Case' has been selected as the case type previously.
- 1.7 Removal of frequency options – The fields relating to the frequency at which benefits are paid are being altered. The option to select '2 weekly' will be removed to stop you accidentally selecting this option (2 weekly does not align with DWP benefit payments). Removing incorrect dropdowns minimises confusion surrounding income and reduces the likelihood of the application being rejected for clarification.
- 1.8 Making 'Job Type' a mandatory field – Briefly explaining the type of work your client is undertaking will help us determine what type of evidence is required to support the application. This will help us assess an application accurately and reduce the need to reject the forms for further clarification.

