



## LEGAL AID ONLINE - HOW TO SEND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

The Legal Aid Online system allows you to send us supporting documentation (for example, statements) as attachments to applications and accounts both electronically and by post. This guidance is intended to help you send supporting documentation using the most effective methods.

You can add attachments at the following stages:

- when you submit an application
- in response to any requests for further information
- if we ask for information through the 'View Case' function.

You have the option to attach either electronic or paper attachments.

### ELECTRONIC ATTACHMENTS

You can send us documents electronically through Legal Aid Online that:

- you have already created and stored on your system or
- you have scanned and stored electronically on your system.

### PAPER ATTACHMENTS

If you do not want to send documents electronically, Legal Aid Online has a facility to let you print a barcode, which you can attach to the paper documents and send to us. We can then match them electronically to the appropriate application or account. You are not required to attach a covering letter to the documents.

**We cannot start assessing your case until we receive all attachments. Please wait until you have gathered all the paper documents before you send them with a bar code. Only one bar code is required per batch of papers.**

### IMPORTANT- CIVIL LEGAL AID ONLY

When you submit the initial application, the system will give you the option to add electronic attachments. You should add the electronic attachments and then submit the application. Once we have checked your submission and attachments, you will receive an online message (within, at the most, 1 hour) which will notify you of the legal aid reference number and either: confirm receipt of your application or notify you that the application is still pending, and give you a link to an electronic copy of a letter explaining why. You then have the option to either:

- select 'Generate Barcode' and print a bar code to attach to any paper supporting documents, or
- add electronic attachments.

**TECHNICAL GUIDANCE ON SCANNING DOCUMENTS** (you may need to speak to your technical support to assist with this)

When you are scanning documents:

- If possible save them as .pdf or failing that .tif files (most scanners will scan to pdf).
- Set your scanner to scan in black and white and to a maximum of 300 dpi - this will save you time when you upload them to Legal Aid Online.
- Where possible have your scanner set up to scan to file rather than scan to email. This will allow you to scan and save the file to an area on your pc/systems which is quicker to retrieve and attach online than from an email.
- Scanners with a document feeder option are preferable as they allow you to scan batches of documents rather than individual pages.

**ATTACHMENTS DO'S AND DON'TS**

✓ DO	X DON'T
Where possible, scan documents and send them to us electronically as this is where you will gain the most benefits.	Send any paper attachments without a bar code.
Select the correct 'form' type when adding attachments or generating a bar code from 'Search Case' - this means the documents will be correctly matched.	Telephone to ask if we have received the attachments - you can view a list of attachments in the 'View Case' screen. However, please call if you have any difficulties viewing the attachments.
Scan your documents the correct way up and in the right order.	Send us a message confirming you have sent documents either as electronic attachments or using the bar code.
Check scanned documents to ensure they are legible.	Send scanned documents that have no valid file extension.
Save your scanned documents with meaningful filenames so that you don't attach duplicate documents.	Use a highlighter pen on any documents you are going to scan as the scanning process will show this as blacked-out text and we will not be able to read it.
Only use the printed barcode for the case the supporting documents are relevant to and only use it once. You can print a new barcode using 'View Case'.	Fax supporting documents to us.
Where possible, scan each document batch individually and enter their individual descriptions in the attachment screen. For example, 'Copy complaint' or 'Applicant's statement'. However, where you send us financial verification documents, (for example, the applicant's bank statements or benefit award letter) you can scan these as one document and enter their description as 'Financial Verification'.	Send documents with embedded files (such as emails with Word or PDF attachments). Save the attachment first and send that as a separate document.
Ensure you attach the barcode sheet to the front of the documents if you are posting them.	Send original documents, send copies only.
To make an application, use Legal Aid Online, not a paper form. Do not use the attachment facility to scan or send a paper application as this will be returned.	Directly scan documents with dark backgrounds, such as brown manila wage slip envelopes. These should be photocopied and lightened prior to scanning.