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Tender

Procurement of Criminal Defence Direct Services from 4 May 2026

Legal Aid Agency

UK4: Tender notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-040454

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-052132 ([view related notices](#))

Published 16 July 2025, 11:24am

Scope

Description

The Legal Aid Agency (LAA) has launched the procurement process for the 2026 Criminal Defence Direct (CDD) Contracts. These contracts will provide 24/7 telephone-based legal advice to individuals detained at police stations across England and Wales for non-indictable offences.

Two contracts will be awarded, with services commencing on 4 May 2026, following an implementation period and a 28-day dual operation phase.

Total value (estimated)

- £2,360,000 excluding VAT
- £2,900,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 February 2026 to 31 May 2031
- 5 years, 4 months

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 79100000 - Legal services

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

**Lot Criminal Defence Direct (CDD) Service Procurement
Exercise - Contract 1. Criminal Defence Direct (CDD) Service
Procurement Exercise - Contract 1**

Description

Criminal Defence Direct (CDD) Service Procurement Exercise - Contract 1

The Legal Aid Agency (LAA), on behalf of the Lord Chancellor, will run a procurement exercise to award contracts for two providers to deliver the CDD Service from on or around 1 March 2026.

Key Details:

- Service: 24/7 non means tested telephone-based legal advice for individuals detained at police stations for non-indictable offences.
- Contract Award: Two providers will each manage 50% of the caseload (with possible variations).
- Duration: 1 March 2026 - 31 May 2031.

Procurement Process Updates:

From 24 February 2025, all suppliers must use the Cabinet Office Central Digital Platform to share their organisation's information with Contracting Authorities by providing a share code during the procurement process.

If suppliers are still unable to create a share code after getting assistance from the Cabinet Office, please email contact: Crime.Contracts@justice.gov.uk.

Key Service Changes:

The LAA, as part of this procurement, will introduce the following key changes to the CDD Service that align with the move to enhanced flexibility and reducing barriers to support providers in successfully delivering the CDD contract and ensure consistency across similar services.

For the new CDD Contract the LAA are:

- allowing Applicants to choose the arrangements most suitable for their delivery models and are not specifying the office requirements;
- removing supervisor-to-advisor ratios;
- removing the requirement for supervisors to be on-site 35 hours/week; and

- introducing a new KPI to track client engagement and timeliness of advice

Lot value (estimated)

- £1,180,000 excluding VAT
- £1,450,000 including VAT

Same for all lots

CPV classifications, contract locations and contract dates are shown in the Scope section, because they are the same for all lots.

Lot Criminal Defence Direct (CDD) Service Procurement - Contract 2. Criminal Defence Direct (CDD) Service Procurement Exercise - Contract 2

Description

Criminal Defence Direct (CDD) Service Procurement Exercise - Contract 2

The Legal Aid Agency (LAA), on behalf of the Lord Chancellor, will run a procurement exercise to award contracts for two providers to deliver the CDD Service from on or around 1 March 2026.

Key Details:

- Service: 24/7 non means tested telephone-based legal advice for individuals detained at police stations for non-indictable offences.
- Contract Award: Two providers will each manage 50% of the caseload (with possible variations).

- Duration: 1 March 2026 - 31 May 2031.

Procurement Process Updates:

From 24 February 2025, all suppliers must use the Cabinet Office Central Digital Platform to share their organisation's information with Contracting Authorities by providing a share code during the procurement process.

If suppliers are still unable to create a share code after getting assistance from the Cabinet Office, please email contact: Crime.Contracts@justice.gov.uk.

Key Service Changes:

The LAA, as part of this procurement, will introduce the following key changes to the CDD Service that align with the move to enhanced flexibility and reducing barriers to support providers in successfully delivering the CDD contract and ensure consistency across similar services.

For the new CDD Contract the LAA are:

- allowing Applicants to choose the arrangements most suitable for their delivery models and are not specifying the office requirements;
- removing supervisor-to-advisor ratios;
- removing the requirement for supervisors to be on-site 35 hours/week; and
- introducing a new KPI to track client engagement and timeliness of advice

Lot value (estimated)

- £1,180,000 excluding VAT
- £1,450,000 including VAT

Same for all lots

CPV classifications, contract locations and contract dates are shown in the Scope section,

because they are the same for all lots.

Submission

Enquiry deadline

30 July 2025, 5:00pm

Tender submission deadline

28 August 2025, 5:00pm

Submission address and any special instructions

<https://legalaidsolution.co.uk/web/login.shtml>

Tenders may be submitted electronically

Yes

Languages that may be used for submission

- Welsh
- English

Award decision date (estimated)

30 January 2026

Award criteria

Name	Description	Type	Weighting
Price	Case Fee	Price	60%
Quality	<p>The Quality sub criteria are:</p> <p>1.1 - Skills and experience of staff delivering specialist legal advice</p> <p>1.2 - Staff Recruitment and Succession Planning</p> <p>1.3 - Supervision of staff delivering specialist legal advice</p> <p>2.1 - Management of the CDD Service</p> <p>2.2 - Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery plan (BCDR)</p> <p>2.3 - Contract resourcing and forecasting</p> <p>3.1 - Implementation Plan</p> <p>4.1 - Social Value Question</p>	Quality	40%

Other information

Payment terms

N/A

Description of risks to contract performance

A/A

Applicable trade agreements

- Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

Conflicts assessment prepared/revised

Yes

Procedure

Procedure type

Open procedure

Special regime

Light touch

Contracting authority

Legal Aid Agency

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PNZC-2236-JJJZ

102 Petty France

London

SW1H 9AJ

United Kingdom

Contact name: crime.contracts@justice.gov.uk

Email: crime.contracts@justice.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/legal-aid-agency>

Region: UKI32 - Westminster

Organisation type: Public authority - central government