What is the specialist support project?

London Advice Services Alliance runs the London Welfare Benefits Specialist Support Project. This is a pilot project funded by the Legal Services Commission to provide expert social security legal advice, mentoring and support to advisers from eligible organisations.

Specialist Support Pilot

One day training courses for all Legal Service Commission general civil contract holders and organisations with the CLS Specialist Help Quality Mark and organisations with the General Help with Casework Quality Mark in Welfare Benefits.

This year we will be running courses on:
- Overpayments
- Tax Credits: April 2004 Update
- Benefits for People Subject to Immigration Control
- Pension Credits

How to Book

1. Choose a course
   Courses are available to anyone who works in an organisation that holds a Legal Services Commission General Civil Contract in any subject area, or a CLS Specialist Help Quality Mark in any subject area, or a General Help with Casework Quality Mark in Welfare Benefits.
   If you would like further information about a particular course, please call us on 020 7247 8638 or email us on ssp@lasa.org.uk.

2. Return the booking form
   - Complete the booking form below
   - Use a separate booking form for each course and participant
   - Return the completed booking form to lasa
   - You can also book online at: www.lasa.org.uk/representation/ssptrg.shtml

3. Confirmation and joining instructions
   Bookings are made on a first come, first served basis. Confirmation, with venue details, will be sent to you upon receipt of the booking form. We will invoice you as soon as we have confirmed availability on the course. If the course is fully booked we will contact you and see if we can book you on the course on another date.

4. Cancellations and alterations
   Please note that the fee is only refundable if:
   - we cancel the course
   - the course is oversubscribed

5. Venue
   We try to ensure that our venues have good access. If you have any specific requirements could you please indicate them on the booking form. Courses start at 9.45 am and will aim to finish by 4.30 pm.

6. Price
   All courses cost £50.00 + £8.75 VAT.

Contact Details

Lasa
Universal House
89-94 Wentworth Street
London E1 7SA
Phone: 020 7247 8638
Fax: 020 7247 9924
Email: ssp@lasa.org.uk

Ask for Jean French, Essie Rashidschi or Ken Butler.

Remember, you can book online at: www.lasa.org.uk/representation/ssptrg.shtml
What is lasa?
Lasa is a London-based development and resource agency for advice and information providers. We focus on welfare benefits advice and supporting agencies in their use of IT systems.

Our work includes:
• training in welfare benefits
• a tribunal representation unit
• the righttounit at www.righttounit.org.uk
• multikulti our multilingual advice website at www.multikulti.org.uk
• support for agencies to get the best out of their IT systems
• AIMS case management software
• publications including Review and Computanews...and more.

Who can use the specialist support project’s services?
To use our services your organisation needs to be based in London and:
• have a CLS General Help with Casework Quality Mark in Welfare Benefits.
• a CLS Specialist Quality Mark in any subject area, or
• the General Help with Casework Quality Mark in Welfare Benefits.

What services do we provide?
Advice line
Our advice line number is 020 7247 8935
Monday and Tuesday – 1.30pm-4.00pm
Thursday – 10 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.

On the advice line we can provide advice on using and interpreting social security legislation and case law, discussing tactics on how to progress your client’s cases or clarify procedure for you.

Casework Support
We can also provide in-depth welfare benefits supported casework on individual cases. This might include:
• doing some research and contacting you again with, for example, legislation that will strengthen your case
• you sending us the papers related to your case – we will then look at the papers and contact you with, for example, tactical advice on how to take your case further
• arranging a meeting to work with you to identify the merits of your client’s case, or draft letters or submissions.

During such supported casework we can call us on 020 7247 8638 or email us on ssp@lasa.org.uk to discuss on-going cases.

Direct casework
When you have a complex case we will normally work on it with you through supported casework. However, occasionally we may agree to take on the case ourselves.

Training
LASA has extensive experience in the design and delivery of high-quality training courses for advisers. Our courses are designed to offer practical frameworks for dealing with social security issues and problems.

In 2003/2004 we are delivering a number of Law Society accredited training courses that are available to contract holders at reduced rates. Trainees eligible for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) hours can claim 5 hours for any one-day course.

Overpayments
Are you unsure about what overpayments are recoverable? Would you like to be clearer about the meaning of failure to disclose and misrepresentation of a material fact? Do you need an update on case law relating to overpayments?

Then this is the course for you. We will use a range of practical exercises to increase your skills throughout the day.

This course is suitable for:
• all advisers, especially those giving advice on Welfare Benefits and Debt.

Aims:
• to clarify the current law on overpayments
• to develop participants’ tactical skills in dealing with overpayments

Objectives:
• By the end of the course participants should be able to:
  • identify which overpayments are recoverable and on what grounds
  • understand the meaning of failure to disclose and misrepresentation of a material fact
  • identify useful case law to support a case

31 October 2003
13 November 2003
16 January 2004

Tax Credits: April 2004 Update

Seen the adverts, read the blurb – still confused?
April 2003 saw the introduction of working tax credit and child tax credit – support for people on low incomes in work or responsible for children (whether working or not).

From April 2004 the child tax credit will replace income support payments for children. This course covers eligibility, the calculation and the administration of the tax credits.

This course is suitable for:
• all advisers, especially those giving advice on Welfare Benefits and Debt.

Aims:
• to clarify how the system works
• to provide updated information on the new system

Objectives:
• By the end of the course participants should be able to:
  • understand the structure of the tax credits
  • identify who is eligible
  • calculate basic entitlement
  • advise on the claiming procedure

6 March 2004

Benefits for People Subject to Immigration Control

This course examines which people “subject to immigration control” can still access welfare benefits in the light of the rules in force since April 2000 as a result of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1999, subsequent case law and other developments.

This course is suitable for:
• advising people “subject to immigration control”, especially those giving advice on Welfare Benefits, Debt, Immigration and Community Care.

Aims:
• to improve advisers’ confidence and ability to advise and support people “subject to immigration control”

Objectives:
• By the end of the course participants should be able to:
  • who is “subject to immigration control” for benefit purposes
  • relevant regulations and case law
  • advise on the claiming procedure

17 February 2004