

Lawyer for child remuneration rates increase

Yesterday we received [confirmation](#) from the Ministry of Justice on the increase in remuneration rates for lawyer for child. The letter confirms the amount of increase for each year beginning 1 July 2020 and also confirms that the increase only relates to lawyer for child remuneration and not to other court-appointed counsel.

While we see any increase as a positive step, it is disappointing the increase is so low, given the absence of any regular review; the fact the rates have not increased for since 1996 (over 24 years) and; the increase is not extended to other court-appointed counsel. You will see from the letter that members are asked to invoice any work on current appointments up to, and including, 30 June 2020. You may also want to consider, if appropriate, filing a request for an extension to cover any shortfall in previous estimates at the same time. Any work carried out on or after 1 July 2020 should be invoiced at the new amount.

Members are reminded about the [court circular](#) of 20 March 2009 in respect of “superior skills” requirements. Where there are two or more of the characteristics present in a case, the appointment of lawyer for child should be at the Level 3 remuneration rate. This is not limited to COCA proceedings but is available for all lawyer for child, including OT appointments. The circular is also on the members’ area of the FLS website under the area of practice for “lawyer for child”.

The letter does not confirm any regular review of the rates, so we will be writing again to the Ministry asking for confirmation about a regular review for all court-appointed remuneration rates (not just lawyer for child).

Caroline Hickman
FLS Chair