

## Legal Services Commission Circular 06/09

18 September 2006

### Selection of External Lawyers to support Delegated Authority Arrangements for Civil Legal Aid – LSC 06/06 Refers

1. The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission will introduce new arrangements for the delegated authorities for civil legal aid for all applications for civil legal aid received after 1 November 2006. These arrangements are described in the Legal Services Commission Circular 06/06 which is available on the Commission's Website at [www.nilsc.org.uk](http://www.nilsc.org.uk).
2. The Commission wishes to engage External Lawyers on the Advisory, Appeal and Review Panels that will be established as part of the revised delegated authority for civil legal aid. The External Lawyers will be independent contractors providing a service to the Commission and will be recruited specifically for their independence from the Commission and their practical experience.
3. The Terms of Reference for the Advisory, Appeal and Review Panels are described in Appendix 1 to this Circular.
4. The Commission invites applications from solicitors and barristers who meet the criteria set out for membership of each panel described in the Appendix 2 to this Circular.
5. An application pack containing fuller information together with an application can be obtained from

Mrs Paula Gibson  
Human Resources Manager  
The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission  
Waterfront Plaza  
8 Laganbank Road  
Mays Meadow  
Belfast BT1 3BN

6. The Commission will only accept hard copy signed applications. The closing date for the submission of applications is 12.00 noon on Friday 29 September 2006. The Commission reserves the right to apply the desirable Post Qualifying Experience as described in Appendix 2 to this Circular in order to manage the shortlisting and selection process.

7. The interviews in relation to this selection exercise will take place in the week beginning 09 October 2006. Training for the successful applicants is likely to take place in late October 2006. The Commission anticipates that the panels will be operational in early November 2006.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gerry Crossan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

**Gerry Crossan**  
**Chief Executive**

**Encl. Appendix 1 and 2**

The Commission is seeking to appoint External Lawyers on the advisory, appeal and review panels that will be established to support the revised Delegated Authority Arrangements for Civil Legal Aid.

The External lawyers will be independent contractors providing a service to the Commission and be recruited specifically for their independence from the Commission and their practical experience.

The Commission invites applications from Solicitors and Barristers who meet the criteria set out for membership of each panel as follows:

### **A Civil Legal Services Advisory Panel**

#### **It is essential that applicants have at the time of application:**

- In respect of Solicitors, hold a full current practising certificate
- In respect of Counsel, be in current practice at the Bar of Northern Ireland
- Experience of delivering publicly-funded legal services in civil litigation and family law and the law relating to children

#### **An advantage maybe gained by applicants who have:**

- More than 5 years post qualification experience

### **B Civil Legal Services Appeal Panel**

#### **It is essential that applicants have at the time of application:**

- In respect of Solicitors, hold a full current practising certificate
- In respect of Counsel, be in current practice at the Bar of Northern Ireland
- Experience of delivering publicly-funded legal services in civil litigation and family law and the law relating to children

#### **An advantage maybe gained by applicants who have:**

- More than 7 years post qualification experience

### **C Civil Legal Services Review Panel**

#### **It is essential that applicants have at the time of application:**

- In respect of Solicitors, hold a full current practising certificate and must be at partner level
- In respect of Counsel, be in current practice at the Bar of Northern Ireland and must be Senior or Senior Junior
- Experience of delivering publicly-funded legal services in civil litigation and family law and the law relating to children

#### **An advantage maybe gained by applicants who have:**

- More than 10 years post qualification experience.

Remuneration Rates per session (half day) are as follows:

External Lawyer on Advisory Panel - £132.00

External Lawyer on Appeal Panel - £132.00

External Lawyer on Review Panel - £157.00

For Application forms and information pack please write to

**Human Resources Section  
The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Waterfront Plaza  
8 Laganbank Road  
Mays Meadow  
Belfast  
BT1 3BN**

Alternatively applicants may obtain the information and application forms from the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission's web site [www.nilsc.org.uk](http://www.nilsc.org.uk)

Completed application forms must reach the above address **not later than 12 noon on Friday 29 September 2006**. Completed application forms will not be accepted by FAX. C.V.'s will not be accepted. The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission reserves the right to shortlist and interview only those candidates who appear from the information provided on the application form, to be the most suitable for the post. It is essential therefore that all applicants indicate how and to what extent their qualifications, experience and qualities are relevant to the post for which they have applied.

***The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission is an equal opportunity employer***

## Appendix 2

### The Civil Legal Services Advisory, Appeal and Review Panels

The table below sets out the composition of the Panels that the Commission will establish under Paragraph 4(3) of Schedule 4 of the Access to Justice (NI) Order 2003

Appendix 2	Civil Legal Services Advisory Panel	Civil Legal Services Appeal Panel	Civil Legal Services Review Panel
<b>Composition</b>	<p><u>External members:</u> A pool of up to 15 external lawyers with</p> <p>(a) in respect of Solicitors, current practising certificate;</p> <p>(b) in respect of Counsel in current practice at the Bar of Northern Ireland;</p> <p>(c) experience of delivering publicly-funded legal services in civil litigation and family and child care</p> <p>(d) desirably, more than 5 years Post Qualification Experience (PQE)</p> <p>External Lawyers will be appointed to Panels on a rotating basis from the pool selected by the Commission</p>	<p><u>NILSC:</u> 1 NILSC Senior Legal Officer with more than 5 years PQE and current practising certificate.</p> <p>2 Members of NILSC Top Management Team/Business Managers' Group (Chair will be Senior Legal Officer or member of NILSC Top Management Team)</p> <p><u>External members:</u></p> <p>A pool of up to 15 external lawyers with</p> <p>(a) in respect of Solicitors, current practising certificate;</p> <p>(b) in respect of Counsel in current practice at the Bar of Northern Ireland;</p> <p>(c) experience of delivering publicly-funded legal services in civil litigation and family and child care as required; and</p> <p>(d) desirably, more than 7 years PQE;</p> <p>Up to 3 external lawyers (depending on availability) will be appointed to Panels on a rotating basis from the pool selected by the Commission.</p>	<p><u>NILSC:</u> 2 Commission members from current Board</p> <p><u>External members:</u> A pool of up to 3 external lawyers with</p> <p>(a) in respect of Solicitors, current practising certificate;</p> <p>(b) in respect of Counsel in current practice at the Bar of Northern Ireland;</p> <p>(c) Solicitor must be at partner level;</p> <p>(c) Counsel must be Senior or Senior Junior;</p> <p>(d) desirably, more than 10 years PQE.</p> <p>One external lawyer will be appointed to Panels on a rotating basis from the pool selected by the Commission.</p>
<b>Quorum</b>	Maximum 5 members – quorum 3 (including 1 barrister and 1 solicitor)	Maximum 6 members – quorum 4 (including 1 external lawyer)	Maximum 3 members – quorum 3 (including 1 external lawyer)

<b>Appendix 2</b>	<b>Civil Legal Services Advisory Panel</b>	<b>Civil Legal Services Appeal Panel</b>	<b>Civil Legal Services Review Panel</b>
<b>Secretariat</b>	NILSC Appeal and Review Administration Team	NILSC Appeal and Review Administration Team	NILSC Appeal and Review Administration Team and Secretary to the Review Panel will be the Business Manager – Civil Legal Services
<b>Remit</b>	To consider applications for civil legal aid from the adjudication staff and CLS Appeal Panels and to provide advice on the granting or refusal of legal aid and the reasons for this advice	To consider all requests for appeal  To consider requests for audience or representation in person at CLS Appeal Panel	To consider all requests for review of CLS Appeal Panel decision  To consider all requests for audience or representation in person at CLS Review Panel
<b>Delegated decision making authority</b>	No delegated authority	Grant or refusal of civil legal aid on appeal  Grant or refusal of civil legal aid on remittal of an application from the CLS Review Panel  Grant or refusal of reassessment of assessed fees for civil legal aid work  Revocation of civil legal aid certificates  Discharge of civil legal aid certificates  Grant or Refusal of unusually large expense	Confirm that a decision which has been subject to appeal has been properly made  Remit an application for civil legal aid to a CLS Appeal Panel