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NORTHERN IRELAND  
**Legal Services  
Commission**  
The Office of Chairman  
and Chief Executive

## Legal Services Commission Circular 01/10

29 January 2010

Dear Practitioner

### Limit for Legal Advice and Assistance under PACE

1. As you are aware, under current procedures, practitioners undertaking PACE work are required to request further authority from the Commission when they are approaching the current upper cost limit of £200. I note that the Green Form Section routinely grants such requests and, when granted, the authority is unlimited.
2. I have considered this practice and concluded that this practice is unnecessary and ineffectual.
3. I have, therefore, concluded that, with effect from **1st February 2010**, the upper limit shall be raised from £200 to £1000. Put simply, practitioners will no longer be required to seek authority from the Commission until they calculate that they have exceeded the upper cost limit of £1000. Practitioners should be aware, however, that the 7 day limit for the submission of requests for authority still remains. If an extension is required, practitioners should continue to use the form 'GFER' which may be faxed to 02890 408993. The 'GFER' (and all other LAA forms) can be found under the 'Members' area at [www.nilsc.org.uk](http://www.nilsc.org.uk)
4. The effect of this change should be to significantly reduce the instances where practitioners are required to seek prior authority.
5. The increased limit of £1,000.00 includes the 1/3rd uplift of standard rates for travel and waiting and attendance during unsocial hours. Unsocial hours are defined as between 7.00pm and 9.00am on any weekday, or on a Saturday, Sunday or Public Holiday.
6. There is no change to the prospective upper costs limits for Immigration/Political Asylum matters which remain at £300.00 and £88.00 respectively for all other points of Northern Ireland law.

Yours sincerely

**Paul Andrews**  
Interim Chief Executive

