

ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Legal Aid Committee (LAC) Members are expected to be concerned and involved with the Committee and its activities. At the very least this means attending all full LAC meetings and as many sub-Committee meetings as possible where LAC Members have agreed to be members.
2. Whilst there is no statutory requirement to attend meetings, LAC Members have agreed the following:
*"any LAC Member who, without the consent of the Chairman or Vice Chairman has failed to attend meetings for a continuous period of six months, starting from the date of the first missed meeting, shall, on the expiry of that period **be deemed to have resigned** from their appointment as a LAC Member. The LAC Member will be deemed to have authorised the Chairman or Vice Chairman to submit notice of resignation to the Appointments Commission to revoke their Warrant of Appointment from the date of effective resignation."*
"where a LAC Member has sent an apology to the Secretary of the LAC Committee before a meeting which he/she does not propose to attend, the minutes of the meeting shall record the Chairman's consent or otherwise to their absence and a copy of the Minutes shall be sent to the LAC Member concerned at their normal place of residence. If the LAC Member feels aggrieved at the decision of the Chairman not to give consent, he/she shall within 7 days of receipt of the notification, either by virtue of being sent a copy of the minutes or being informed in some other manner, have the right to request in writing the LAC to review that decision at their next meeting."
3. Regular and consistent attendance by members at LAC meetings and Committees ensures that all meetings are quorate and therefore are able to make decisions. Also a variety of views can be expressed which in turn facilitate informed and effective decision-making and spreads the workload fairly amongst the LAC Members. Bearing in mind the lengthy process to advertise and interview candidates, if a LAC member feels that they are no longer able to undertake this commitment they will discuss the circumstances with the Chairman or Vice Chairman and, if appropriate, resign at the earliest possible opportunity in order that a successor can be recruited in a timely and efficient manner.

NON-ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

4. There may be times where prior arrangements, unexpected situations or ill health mean that a LAC member cannot attend a meeting. In such cases the LAC member must as soon as reasonably practicable send apologies which explain the circumstances to the Chairman or Secretary, or for sub-Committees to the Chair of the sub-Committee, but in all cases for the apology to be able to be considered for consent, it must be with the Chairman, Vice Chairman or Secretary prior to the meeting. A sub-Committee Chairman must apologise for absence to the Chairman of the LAC.
5. If the Chairman or Secretary are not aware of the apology before the scheduled start time of the meeting then consent cannot be given.
6. When a member has been absent for two consecutive LAC meetings or for a period of two months whichever shall be the longer period, the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the LAC will be responsible for contacting the member to find out whether the member's absence is likely to continue and/or whether the member wishes to continue in office.
7. If a LAC Member wishes to resign other than by virtue of the automatic non-attendance provisions set out in paragraph 2 above this must be done in writing to the Chairman and copied to the LAC Secretary.

This Policy was adopted by the Legal Aid Committee at a meeting held on 12th July 2023


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Ruth Costain
Chairman, Legal Aid Committee

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