

[News story: Crime news: 31 October deadline for defence work online billing](#)

Reminder that Crown Court Defence online billing is mandatory for AGFS and LGFS work after 31 October 2017.

The Claim for Crown Court Defence (CCD) system is mandatory from 31 October 2017 for claims under the:

- Advocates' Graduated Fee Scheme (AGFS)
- Litigators' Graduated Fee Scheme (LGFS)

This means you will no longer be able to submit paper forms for your work.

More than 68% of bills are already submitted online instead of using the paper alternative. This breaks down into 74% for AGFS and 63% for LGFS.

How to sign up

Signing up to use the new system is very quick and easy. Benefits include:

- immediate bill submission avoids postal delays
- reduced postage and printing costs
- online messaging and instant notifications from the processing teams
- online evidence submission
- no need for a 'wet' signature

Last paper applications

Any AGFS or LGFS bill will be accepted on paper providing it is received by the Legal Aid Agency on or before 31 October 2017.

Consideration will be given to accepting AGFS and LGFS paper bills on a case by case basis for two months up until 31 December 2017.

What support is available?

- quick user guide
- online WebEx training sessions are being held in the lead up to 31 October 2017
- 'frequently asked questions' document

See 'further information' below to access these resources along with a booking link for training and details on how to sign up to the system.

Further information

[Legal aid: criminal legal aid processing](#) – quick user guide, frequently asked questions and how to sign up

[WebEx training sessions](#) – Eventbrite booking link

[Press release: Takeaway directors banned for employing illegal workers](#)

Alawor Rahman Siddique Jafforey, and his son, Tufael Mahmood Siddique, acted as directors of Spiceway Limited (Spiceway), which traded as Kings Balti Palace Restaurant in Cheltenham.

Officers from Home Office Immigration Enforcement visited the premises on 4 December 2015 when Spiceway was found to be employing two illegal workers.

Spiceway were issued with a £20,000 Notification of Liability for Civil Penalties for employing illegal workers which they did not pay.

The directors subsequently took steps to place Spiceway into liquidation, which took place on 31 March 2016.

Following an investigation by the Insolvency Service, Mr Jafforey and Mr Siddique gave undertakings to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy in which they did not dispute failing to ensure Spiceway complied with immigration laws. The disqualifications are in effect as of 25 September 2017.

Robert Clarke, Head of Insolvent Investigations North at the Insolvency Service, said:

The Insolvency Service pursues directors who fail to pay fines imposed for breaking employment and immigration laws. We have worked closely in this case with our colleagues at the Home Office to achieve this disqualification.

The public has a right to expect those who break the law will face the consequences. Running a limited company means you have obligations as well as statutory protections. If you fail to comply with your obligations, the Insolvency Service will investigate you.

Spiceway Limited (CR0 No. 08607643) was incorporated in July 2013. The

company's trading name was Kings Balti Palace, and operated from 237 London Road, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, GL52 6HZ.

Spiceway Limited entered liquidation on 31 March 2016 with assets of £6 and liabilities of £23,760.

Mr Jafforey is from Cheltenham and his date of birth is September 1960.

Mr Siddique is from Cheltenham and his date of birth is October 1989.

The disqualification undertakings were accepted by the Secretary of State on 4 September 2017 and are in effect from 25 September 2017.

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings.

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

The Insolvency Service, an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), administers the insolvency regime, and aims to deliver and promote a range of investigation and enforcement activities both civil and criminal in nature, to support fair and open markets. We do this by effectively enforcing the statutory company and insolvency regimes, maintaining public confidence in those regimes and reducing the harm caused to victims of fraudulent activity and to the business community, including dealing with the disqualification of directors in corporate failures.

BEIS' mission is to build a dynamic and competitive UK economy that works for all, in particular by creating the conditions for business success and promoting an open global economy. The Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions team contributes to this aim by taking action to deter fraud and to regulate the market. They investigate and prosecute a range of offences, primarily relating to personal or company insolvencies. The agency also authorises and regulates the insolvency profession, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

Press release: British Ambassador visits children's hospital and recovery centre

On 18 October, British Ambassador to Ethiopia Susanna Moorehead visits CURE Hospital and Alemachen recovery centre.

Ambassador Moorehead was able to see children with disabilities who have travelled from across Ethiopia to get Orthopaedic surgery at the CURE hospital. She handed over a small donation from the British Embassy to Alemachen that will help improve the well being of the children.

The Ambassador visited children's recovery home and physiotherapy rooms at Alemachen. She also met three British Doctors working at the CURE hospital operating on children with significant disabilities.

The hospital provides treatment for issues predominantly related to the consequences of untreated rickets, club feet and poorly healed fractures.

Alemachen provides recovery support services to the children who have undergone operations at the CURE hospital. Supported by volunteers and members of staff, the centre provides support to up to 40 children at a time.

Speaking after the visit, Ambassador Moorehead said:

I'm pleased to see CURE Hospital and Alemachen support each other to give hope to children with disabilities from the poorest parts of society. I have seen how the children's lives can be improved by relatively simple interventions. British doctors making life changing operations for Ethiopian children is testament to the strong links between our two countries

Media Enquiries:

Mail to: saba.ermias@fco.gov.uk

Press release: Wider lanes for drivers

on M62 smart motorway near Rochdale

Drivers on a 5-mile stretch of the M62 near Rochdale can now benefit from wider lanes, helping to improve the flow of traffic on one of the busiest motorways in the region.

Temporary narrow lanes have been removed between junctions 18 and 20, marking the start of a phased opening of the North West's first smart motorway scheme to tackle congestion and improve journey times.

The Highways England project will use new technology to provide better information to drivers and variable speed limits to keep traffic moving at a steady speed. Extra lanes will also be opened on the M62 before the Christmas getaway, increasing capacity on the stretch of motorway between Greater Manchester and Yorkshire by a third.

Jon Stokes, Senior Project Manager at Highways England, said:

I'm pleased we've been able to remove the temporary narrow lanes on the M62 – benefiting the 180,000 drivers who use the route every day. Nearly 600 people are currently working to complete the smart motorway and we will open each section along the route as soon as possible.

When the smart motorway is complete, drivers will be able to travel in an extra lane on the M62 and variable speed limits will help to keep traffic flowing – tackling the stop/start conditions and tailbacks caused by sudden braking.

Overnight closures will continue to take place between junctions 18 and 20 on the M62 to carry out resurfacing work and to commission the new smart motorway technology.

The closures will be in place between 10pm and 6am, Sunday to Thursday, and between 9pm and 10am on Friday and Saturday nights. Overnight closures will also continue on sections of the M60 for major construction work on the smart motorway.

The scheme is Highways England's most complex smart motorway project, affecting the second busiest motorway in the country and covering 13 junctions – an average of one junction every 1.4 miles.

The full scheme stretches between junction 8 of the M60 near Sale and junction 20 of the M62 near Rochdale. The next stage of the phased opening will see the removal of the temporary narrow lanes between junctions 8 and 10 on the M60 later in the autumn.

The new technology will be tested to ensure the 100 traffic sensors which have been installed along the 17-mile route are working effectively, before

the new electronic variable speed limit signs are switched on from junctions 8 to 10 on the M60 and junctions 18 to 20 on the M62 by the end of the year.

The temporary narrow lanes are due to be removed between junctions 15 and 18 on the M60 in early 2018, and from the final section of roadworks – on a 5 mile stretch of the M60 between junctions 10 and 15 – in spring 2018. The new variable speed limit signs are due to be switched on between junctions 10 and 18 by summer 2018.

When the smart motorway is complete, traffic sensors will automatically monitor the flow of traffic and adjust the speed limit accordingly. A total of 50 CCTV cameras will also provide 100% coverage of the route, and allow Highways England's traffic officers and the emergency services to respond quickly to incidents.

More details are [available on the scheme website](#).

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[News story: Smart Meters Bill introduced to Parliament](#)

Measures to ensure consumers continue to get the most out of their smart meters have been introduced to parliament in the Smart Meters Bill today (Wednesday 18 October).

Every home and small business in Great Britain will be offered a smart meter by the end of 2020, saving consumers billions of pounds over the course of this vital national infrastructure upgrade.

The Bill, first announced in the Queen's Speech, will enable the Government to continue to regulate the roll-out of smart meters up to completion at the end of 2020.

It will also help the Government to act on the results of any findings made after 2020 that could improve the experience for consumers and small businesses.

The legislation will also ensure consumers are protected in the unlikely event that the company running the national smart meters communications infrastructure, currently the Smart Data and Communications Company, were to become insolvent.

This will bring the programme in line with other utilities such as water and energy network companies.

Energy Minister Richard Harrington said:

The roll-out of smart meters continues at pace with almost 7.7 million already operating in Great Britain and nearly 350,000 being installed every month, bringing an end to estimated bills and helping people to save energy and money.

Every home and small business will be offered a smart meter by the end of 2020. The Bill published today will ensure consumers continue to get the most from their smart meters once installed, during and beyond the roll-out.