

DIRECTION NO.2 OF 2026
GIVEN UNDER THE LEGAL AID FOR CROWN COURT
PROCEEDINGS (COSTS) RULES (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2005

REMUNERATION ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE REFRESHER FEE PILOT
INVOLVING CROWN COURT CASES IN NORTHERN IRELAND

1. This Direction is issued to the Legal Services Agency Northern Ireland under rule 4(1) of The Legal Aid for Crown Court Proceedings (Costs) Rules (Northern Ireland) 2005, as amended (“the 2005 Rules”).
2. This Direction applies only to cases falling within the Refresher Fee Pilot commencing 2 March 2026 as set out in the protocol agreed by the Department of Justice (“the Department”), the Law Society of Northern Ireland and the Bar of Northern Ireland. It is without prejudice to any future or developing remuneration arrangements in respect of wider criminal, civil or family legal aid.
3. Subject to Rule 4A of the 2005 Rules and paragraphs 4 to 7 of this direction, for cases falling within the pilot, the Department intends that Refresher Fees payable to solicitors under Rule 8(3)(b) and to counsel under Rule 11(3)(b) shall be remunerated as set out in the table following this paragraph.

<i>Category Of Representative</i>	<i>Daily Refresher Fee (all trial durations)</i>
<i>Solicitor</i>	<i>£609</i>
<i>Led Junior</i>	<i>£464</i>
<i>Sole Junior</i>	<i>£603</i>
<i>Leading Junior</i>	<i>£696</i>
<i>King’s Counsel</i>	<i>£928</i>

4. For cases falling within this pilot and for Crown Court trials where the first day of trial is on or after 2 March 2026, a single daily Refresher Fee, dependent on the category of legal representative, but regardless of the duration of the trial, will be payable.
5. Refresher Fees are considered ‘full day’ fees, covering a full day at court from 11am until 1pm and from 2pm until 4pm, and, as such, if another fee that is claimed under:
 - i. the 2005 Rules
 - ii. the Magistrates’ Courts and County Court Appeals (Criminal Legal Aid) (Costs) Rules (Northern Ireland) 2009
 - iii. the Civil Legal Services (Remuneration) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 or
 - iv. the Civil Legal Services (Remuneration) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025

during the period from 11am until 1pm and from 2pm until 4pm a full day Refresher Fee shall be paid, however, the full day Refresher Fee shall be reduced on a pro rata basis, of one-minute intervals, at the hourly rates set out in the table following this paragraph.

Category Of Representative	Hourly Rate for Deductions Overlapping Claims
<i>Solicitor</i>	<i>£152.25</i>
<i>Led Junior</i>	<i>£116</i>
<i>Sole Junior</i>	<i>£150.75</i>
<i>Leading Junior</i>	<i>£174</i>
<i>King’s Counsel</i>	<i>£232</i>

6. Except for a Late Sitting Fee, no additional fee or uplift will be paid where the trial commences before 11am or finishes after 4pm. The Late Sitting Fee is only

payable where the representative has been present at the hearing for more than 45 minutes beyond 4.30pm.

7. Where a practitioner has more than one trial at hearing, only one full day Refresher Fee will be payable on any given date.
8. A claim for costs under this Direction shall be submitted to the Department in such form and manner as it may direct and shall be accompanied by such particulars and documents as it may specify.
9. This Direction shall remain in operation for up to two years, unless extended, or until the pilot terminates.
10. The Legal Services Agency Northern Ireland shall publish this Direction.



NAOMI LONG MLA

MINISTER OF JUSTICE

07 July 2026