



Annabel Cresswell
Acting President CBA
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Tēnā koe Annabel

Thank you for your letter of 19 February 2024, in which you have raised concerns on behalf of the Criminal Bar Association (CBA) regarding the timeliness of Legal Aid invoice payments.

In your letter, you note there are instances of invoices being paid after 15 days, and you have asked whether there are any issues with payments being made on time. I can confirm that Legal Aid Services (LAS) timeliness standards for provider invoices are being met. For the financial year-to-date, LAS has paid 94.1% of invoices within 10 days, and 98.7% of invoices within 20 days.

LAS endeavors to pay all invoices as quickly as possible however, I acknowledge that in a small number of instances invoice payments can be delayed and this places stress on providers and makes it difficult to make payments for case related services.

You may be aware that an update was published via the *What's New* communications channel on 29 February 2024 to advise providers that in recent days LAS has experienced technical difficulties with our case management system, and this may result in longer processing times than providers have been used to. We are working to restore normal services as soon as possible and have allocated additional staff to assist with workflow and minimise impact to providers. The article can be found at www.justice.govt.nz/about/lawyers-and-service-providers/legal-aid-lawyers/whats-new/#Message-from-the-Legal-Services-Commissioner

We are committed to resolving any issues that arise and I encourage providers to raise specific examples with our LAS Managers who can investigate any unpaid invoices or deal with other operational concerns. Their contact details are as follows:

Kamini McCarthy
Email: Kamini.McCarthy@justice.govt.nz
Phone: 027 838 6657

Greg Ishikawa-Pearson
Email: Greg.Ishikawa-Pearson@justice.govt.nz
Phone: 027 563 7494

I have appreciated the strong working relationship with the CBA over the last few years and look forward to meeting and working with you in the future.

Nāku iti noa, nā

Tracey Baguley
Legal Services Commissioner