

Sovereign LAW – LSC Update – October 2007

One of the most important aspects of the LSC October 2007 update is the increased use of IT (information technology) systems to record and submit your firm's LSC data directly to LSC on line.

In accordance with LSC schedule, Curat Lex are implementing the following 2 stage update of the Sovereign LAW programs.

Stage 1 - 1st October Sovereign LAW update

1. Generation of UFN – for LSC Civil (CMRF) matters

As from 1/10/07, it will be necessary to allocate a UFN (unique file number) to all Civil non-certificated civil (CMRF) matters. During creation of new file records, Sovereign LAW will prompt for "first action" date and then give option to either automatically generate UFN or allow user to enter it manually. The auto UFN is formatted as: ddmmyy/5xx

where: ddmmyy is first action date;
 5 indicates civil UFN (as opposed to crime UFN)
 xx is sequential number (eg. 01, 02, 03 etc) of matters on the same date.

At present, the LSC Civil UFN can then be viewed via the Enquiries on Files – Details & Terms – Quality Info options. However, the UFN will eventually be included in the new SPAN data screen (15/10/07).

The Curat Lex Help Desk will initiate this change to your Sovereign LAW system immediately.

2. L/A Bands & Charge Rates – LSC Civil (CMRF) matters

Although fixed fees apply to most of the work, it is still vitally important to accurately time record on your system. This will enable you to quickly assess how much work you have completed and see when you have reached the 'Exceptional Case threshold' level. For these EC claims, the LSC are advocating computerised print outs of time records (which will eventually lead to electronic upload of time records directly to LSC online).

Therefore, as from 1/10/07, it is important to ensure that the Civil L/A Bands and charge rates are set up correctly in Sovereign LAW and that time recording is completed accurately.

Depending on your firm's franchised areas of Civil law, Curat Lex recommends that the following distinct bands for non-certificated civil (CMRF) work are set up:

Category: L – Legal Aid Civil

Band Description

- A TFF Replacement – Actions against police, clinical negligence, community care, consumer, debt, education, personal injury, public law, welfare benefits
- B TFF Replacement – Housing & Employment
- C All other TFF replacement categories and tolerance work

- D Family Public Law Level 1)
- E Family Public Law Level 2) – (eg. care, local authority etc)
- F Family Public Law Level 3) (Level 3 is not CMRF)

- G Family Help Private Law Level 1 & Level 2 (eg. divorce, custody, finances etc)

Depending on your franchised areas of law, you may also need to consider additional bands for:

Immigration & Asylum
Mental Health

NB. It is **NOT** necessary to set up all of the above bands. Only set up the bands that are required by your firm. Also, you have probably been using Band G for most of your previous Legal Help matters. Therefore, it is recommended that you retain band G for your main franchised area of Law (eg. this may be “Family Help Private Law Level 1 & 2” as listed above or it may be “TFF Replacement” in which case make this Band G). This should help to minimise the number of files where the band needs to be changed.

Alternatively, you may want to re-assess the bands that are used for Civil CMRF matters. For example, you may decide that it is better to use L1 for Family Help Private/Public Level 1, L2 for Family Public Level 2, L3 for Family Public Level 3 etc. Curat Lex Help Desk will have a program available to re-band all open files if necessary.

(i) To check the bands that are set up on your system, select options: Utilities – Module Parameters – L/A Bands & Rates – Display or Amend.

NB. All of the relevant CMRF related bands should all be set up as Consolidated Claim (ie. CMRF) bands (ie. set the flag using the L/A Bands & Rates – Amend option).

Remember, you will need to retain the other L/A bands for LSC Civil Certificated work. These will not be set as consolidated matters.

(ii) To check the charge rates, select the options: Utilities – Module Parameters – L/A Bands & Rates – Charge Rates. Amend and print as required. It is the Exceptional Case (hourly) rates that should be used. These can be found in the LSC “Legal Aid Reform – Provider Training Pack (Sept 07)”. The rates should be set up on the system as £ per unit.

If you require any assistance then please contact the Curat Lex Help Desk.

3. Crime SPOCC data screen and Civil SPAN data screen

Note that your firm has until the 15th October 2007 to complete the Civil CMRF & Crime CDS6 submissions (for September 2007 period). This data can continue be entered in Sovereign LAW using the existing LSC codes etc.

After the 1st October, you can continue to use the existing SPOCC and SPAN data screens for the October 2007 data for the time being.

As part of the Curat Lex stage 2 update, your existing SPOCC and SPAN data (including the post-Oct and any pre-Oct 07 on-going matters) will be automatically converted to the new format.

Stage 2 – after 15th October – Sovereign LAW update

After the 15/10/07, the LSC online website will closedown until November 2007 to allow them to update their system.

As far as Sovereign LAW is concerned, the Curat Lex Help Desk will update your Sovereign LAW system with the following programs:

- (i) Revised Civil SPAN data screen (including new LSC codes etc)
- (ii) Revised Crime SPOCC data screen (including revised Police Station codes, surname and forenames fields and disability (3 char) codes.
- (iii) Program to convert any existing SPOCC and SPAN data into the new format.
- (iv) New Time Records print out option in new LSC format

More information will be included at this time.

If you require any further assistance then please contact the Curat Lex Help Desk (Tel: 01332 298881 or Email: support@curatlex.co.uk).

Curat Lex Help Desk
1st October 2007