

Where can I get support with my SEND Tribunal appeal?

Legal Aid

If you are on a low income or receiving certain benefits, you may be eligible for legal aid. In some cases, a young person (aged 16-25) will qualify for legal aid in their own right.

The type of legal aid available in the SEND Tribunal is known as 'legal help'. A parent or young person eligible for this will receive support from a legal professional to prepare the case, and may also be able to obtain funding for additional evidence needed, such as reports from independent experts. Legal help does not cover having a representative to attend the hearing. However, in exceptional cases, a legal aid provider may be able to secure funding to represent you at a hearing.

[Click here to check if you are eligible for Legal Aid](#)

If you are not eligible for Legal Aid, the SIAS Team may be able to assist you.

SIAS (Southwark Information Advice Support) Team

SIAS Advisors can provide impartial individual advice and support for families who live in Southwark and are appealing to the SEND Tribunal. Our team will assess the level of advice and support you may require. If we have availability within our team, we will be able to support you throughout the Tribunal process – this may include representation at the Tribunal hearing. Our Advisors are not solicitors, but have training in SEN Law and may be able to assist your appeal.

Our Advisors work with parents to empower them to obtain the best possible result at their Tribunal. This may include advice and support with:

- The appeal and Tribunal process and what to expect
- Registering an appeal with the SEND Tribunal
- Preparation of papers for Tribunal
- The case management process
- Advice on evidence required
- The role of witnesses
- Working documents (where your appeal relates to the contents of an EHCP)
- Negotiation with the local authority
- Representation at your hearing

Please note

Parents remain in control of the Tribunal process at all times, and are responsible for making decisions about what they want the Tribunal to know about their child's needs, the support their child requires and the most appropriate educational placement for their child. Parents who are seeking support from the SIAS Team are reminded that Tribunal orders and deadlines remain their responsibility at all times.

For more information on the appeals process, please visit:

<https://localoffer.southwark.gov.uk/education-health-and-care-plan/appeal-to-tribunal/>

Other organisations who may provide information, advice or guidance on SEN Law and related matters*

**The Local Authority is not affiliated with the below organisations and does not make specific recommendations on independent services.*

Independent Parental Special Education Advice (IPSEA)

This charity provides free 'independent legally based advice and support for the families of children with SEN and/or disability.' For further information please visit the [IPSEA website](#).

Additionally, IPSEA provide [online and in-house training](#) for parents/carers, professionals and organisations working with children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND.)

IPSEA provide information on going to [SEND Tribunal](#) including [SEND Tribunal Resources](#).

SOS!SEN

[SOS!SEN](#) provide free information, advice and support with legal issues and procedures. These include; A free telephone helpline, drop in services, information sheets.

Child Law advice

This charity provides 'legal advice and information on family, child and education law affecting children and families.'

Child Law advice provides information on [legal aid for educational law](#). This may be useful in learning more about who qualifies for legal aid and how does an application for legal aid work.

LawWorks

This charity provides free legal advice to individuals or not-for-profit organisations that are not eligible for legal aid, and are on a low income. [LawWorks](#) provide 'pro bono' legal advice to all those that qualify. Please visit the [legal advice for individuals section](#) on the LawWorks website to learn about various services available. To search for legal advice clinics near you please click [here](#).

SEN4you

This law firm specialises in SEN legal advice and representations. For more information please visit the [SEN4you website](#). For information on costs please click [here](#).

Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS)

Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS) is a national helpline providing information, advice and support relating to issues on equality and human rights.

For advice and information on discrimination and human rights contact EASS on Freephone:

Telephone: 0808 800 0082

Textphone: 0808 800 0084

[Equality Advisory Support Service website](#)

Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

You can find useful information about discrimination on the EHRC website at www.equalityhumanrights.com.

Coram Voice

This charity supports children and young people in having a voice in the children's services by ensuring that the care system provides them with a positive experience. It encourages children and young people to take control of their own lives. The charity upholds the children and young people's rights through an advocacy service which caters to their needs and ensures that their voice is heard. For further information please click [here](#).