

Applicant Communication Policy

1. It is Advocate's charitable objective to match deserving applicants without means to pay for their legal help with a volunteer barrister free of charge.

How we communicate

2. Advocate has Caseworkers who manage communication with applicants, you.
3. We will primarily contact you via email or letter if you do not have an email address.
4. From time to time we will telephone you.

When we communicate

5. We will only contact you when there is a specific update related to your application.
6. At any one time the casework team is dealing with hundreds of applications, therefore unfortunately we cannot communicate with you all the time.

How you contact us

7. Contacting us for a general update will slow down the progress we can make on your application. No news will often mean there is no news.
8. Please do respond swiftly if:
 - a. We ask you for additional information or documents,
 - b. You have found alternative representation or would like to withdraw your application,
 - c. There is a change in your circumstances, or
 - d. You have any update for us relating to your deadline or application.

Telephone enquiries

9. If you contact Advocate by telephone, please only leave one voicemail.
10. A caseworker will aim to respond to your single voicemail within 2 working days.

Email/postal enquiries

11. If you contact Advocate by email, a caseworker will aim respond to you within 5 working days.

Inappropriate communication

12. It is Advocate's policy that no member of staff will accept inappropriate comments in any form.

13. Whilst we appreciate that lack of communication can be frustrating during what may be a stressful time for you, Advocate is a charity and has procedures in place to ensure it is able to fulfil its charitable objectives.
14. If you continue to speak to a member of staff inappropriately, you will be warned that assistance may be withdrawn if you continue to communicate in the same manner.

We are grateful for your understanding.

Policy created:	21 April 2016
Policy last updated:	15 May 2018
Review date:	15 May 2019