

LAY MAGISTRATES' HANDBOOK

**LADY CHIEF JUSTICE  
OF NORTHERN  
IRELAND**

**LAY MAGISTRATES' HANDBOOK**

REVISED MAY 2026

**CONTENTS**

1. Introduction
2. Eligibility for Appointment
3. Essential Qualities
4. Terms and Conditions of Appointment
5. Conduct and Competence
6. Duties of a Lay Magistrate
7. Resignation and Removal from Office
8. Miscellaneous

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Lay Magistrates ('LMs') in Northern Ireland are appointed under the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2015. The work of a Lay Magistrate aims to respond to the need for a justice system which is responsive to community concerns, encourages community involvement and promotes public confidence.
- 1.2 There is a longstanding tradition of lay judicial office in this jurisdiction. The role of a Lay Magistrate is not to be a legal expert but rather to consider the evidence in each case in a reasonable and common-sense manner and to reach a decision which best serves the interests of justice in accordance with the law. LMs normally come to the post without any formal legal education, and they are not expected to obtain such an education or to acquire the knowledge of a legally qualified person. Rather, LMs bring an invaluable fund of life experience from a diverse range of backgrounds to the task.
- 1.3 When hearing cases in the Youth Court or Family Proceedings Court two Lay Magistrates sit with a legally qualified District Judge (Magistrates' Court) ('DJ(MC)') who will have had considerable experience of the practice of law. In any such case there will be:
  - (a) issues of law to be decided; and
  - (b) issues of fact to be decided.

While the LMs and DJ(MC) together decide the issues of law (all three having an equal vote for this purpose) the LMs will be guided by the DJ(MC) who will usually be looked to in order to determine e.g. which legal principles are relevant, which parts of the law apply and what orders the court is legally entitled to make in a given case. LMs and

the DJ(MC) together decide the issues of fact (again, all three having an equal vote for this purpose).

- 1.4 LMs may occasionally be required to sit on their own outside normal court hours to hear very specific matters (*e.g.* to deal with an application for an Emergency Protection Order, to hear a complaint for the purposes of issuing a Summons to a Defendant, or to hear applications for a variety of search/arrest warrants). LMs receive induction and refresher training to ensure that they are familiar with the procedure and the basic principles and requirements of the law in these cases.
- 1.5 On appointment LMs are provided with a copy of the Judicial Studies Board's Lay Magistrates' Manual, the Lay Magistrates' Induction Booklet and the Emergency Protection Order Pack. This Handbook supplements these documents and provides information relating to terms and conditions of appointment (such as eligibility, renewal of appointment, conduct and discipline).

## **2. ELIGIBILITY FOR APPOINTMENT**

- 2.1 Lay Magistrates are appointed by the Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission ('NIJAC'). Appointments are made solely on merit following an open and transparent selection process.
- 2.2 For administrative purposes, the jurisdiction of Northern Ireland is divided into 'administrative court divisions'. Under the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 LMs are appointed for a specified administrative court division but have Northern-Ireland wide jurisdiction and can exercise their judicial functions in respect of any administrative court division both in terms of sitting duties and signatory duties.
- 2.3 The Lay Magistrates' (Eligibility) (Northern Ireland) Order 2004 ('the 2004 Order') prescribes a range of offices and occupations (in some circumstances even when these are held

by a spouse, partner or close relative) that generally render a candidate ineligible for appointment. It is considered that these circumstances could give cause for concern about the impartiality of the candidate. The Order also sets out other circumstances which serve as a bar to appointment.

- 2.4 NIJAC's [Eligibility Policy](#) underpins the 2004 Order and specifies a number of offices or occupations that could render a candidate ineligible for appointment where the role could create a perception of a conflict of interest. Candidates are asked to declare on their application form and at interview anything which they think might be relevant in relation to them, their spouse or partner or close relative. Each case is individually assessed on its own merits. Where possible, efforts are made to put safeguards in place to avoid a conflict of interest arising, for example, where a LM has prior knowledge of a particular case, he/she may be required to declare an interest and step down.
- 2.5 DoJ has a statutory discretion to relax the eligibility criteria in a particular case, after consultation with the Lady Chief Justice. In order to determine whether an office, occupation or activity might render a candidate ineligible for appointment all relevant matters are considered. These include:
- the exact nature of the work or duties undertaken by the candidate;
  - the location at which his/her duties are carried out; and
  - where the candidate is the spouse, partner or close relative of a person deemed ineligible for appointment by virtue of the Order, the exact occupation of that person, the nature of the relationship and the degree of contact.
- 2.6 Should a candidate be unsure as to whether or not they are eligible to be a Lay Magistrate, they should contact the Lady Chief Justice's Office (LCJO) of the Northern Ireland Court and Tribunals Service (NICTS). They should also contact

LCJO for further advice if they hold an office or occupation in the Republic of Ireland which is analogous to those described in the eligibility criteria or has a spouse, partner or close relative who holds such an office or occupation.

### **Nationality Requirements**

2.7 Lay Magistrates must fulfil at least one of the following nationality requirements

- be a citizen of the United Kingdom;
- be a citizen of Ireland;
- be a citizen of a Commonwealth country;
- hold dual nationality, one of which falls within the above criteria.

2.8 Lay Magistrates should exercise caution in any reference to their appointment on, for example, letterheads or in advertising literature. They hold office only when exercising the functions of the office and should not use their office as a means of pursuing personal, professional or commercial advantage.

## **3. ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF A LAY MAGISTRATE**

3.1 The five essential qualities for appointment as a Lay Magistrate, as specified in the 2026 recruitment exercise, are:

- **Intellectual Capacity** - Quickly assimilates information, develops a clear understanding and clarifies uncertainty through eliciting and exploring information.
- **Exercising Judgment** - Demonstrates integrity and applies appropriate independence of mind to make incisive, fair, sustainable and sound decisions.
- **Collaborating Effectively** - Contributes to proceedings appropriately, respects difference and shows empathy and sensitivity in building relationships.

- **Communicating Effectively** - Communicates effectively with a broad range of people across multiple platforms.
- **Commitment to the Role** - Is dedicated, diligent and committed to the role.

#### 4. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT

##### Duration of Appointment

4.1 The appointment of a Lay Magistrate is for a renewable period of five years. At the end of the initial five year appointment, renewal for further successive periods of five years is automatic subject to:

- the individual's agreement;
- the upper age limit of 75 years not being exceeded;
- the individual still satisfying the conditions or qualifications for appointment; and
- there being no grounds for non-renewal.

Grounds for non-renewal include:

- (a) misbehaviour;
- (b) incapacity;
- (c) persistent failure to comply with sitting requirements (without good reason);
- (d) failure to comply with training requirements;
- (e) sustained failure to observe the standards reasonably expected from a holder of such office;
- (f) part of a reduction in numbers because of operational requirements;
- (g) part of a structural change to enable recruitment of new office holders.

4.2 All decisions not to renew on grounds (a)-(e) are taken in consultation with the Lady Chief Justice. At the time of first renewal, confirmation will be sought to determine if the LM wishes to be considered for renewal and if they are aware of

any reason that their appointment should not be renewed. After that the LM will not be asked again and their appointment will be recorded as until retirement date.

- 4.3 All decisions not to renew on grounds (f) or (g) will be subject to requirements of the Lady Chief Justice. The decision to use such grounds and the extent to which they will be used will be taken with the concurrence of the Lady Chief Justice.
- 4.4 A Lay Magistrate is required to vacate their office on the day they attain 75 years of age. They may choose to end their appointment before this by resignation giving twelve months' notice in writing to the Commission (with a cause assigned) or by declining to accept renewal on completion of a term. In cases of ill health this notice period is waived.

### **Time Commitment**

- 4.5 Newly appointed Lay Magistrates will be required to attend and satisfactorily complete an initial induction course before they are eligible to sit. LMs are then expected to fulfil their commitment to a minimum of 10 court sittings *per annum* (both Youth Courts and Family Proceedings Courts) and undertake their fair share of the complete range of duties of the office, including signatory duties. LMs are also required to attend any additional training arranged by the Judicial Studies Board. Attendance at training will be monitored and a training record is maintained for each LM by the Judicial Studies Board.

### **Eligibility**

- 4.6 LMs must advise the Lady Chief Justice's Office<sup>1</sup> immediately of any material changes in their circumstances (or those of their spouse, partner or close relatives). The same factors that disqualify a Lay Magistrate from initial appointment will continue to apply after appointment

---

<sup>1</sup> [LCJOffice@judiciaryni.uk](mailto:LCJOffice@judiciaryni.uk)

should they, their spouse or a close relative take up a position/appointment which is in conflict with their continued judicial role. LMs are expected to offer their resignation if it is considered appropriate, given the change of circumstances. Failure to disclose this information could lead to removal from office.

### **Judicial Oath or Affirmation and Declaration**

4.7 Section 19(1) of the Justice (NI) Act 2002 requires that every person appointed to a listed judicial office (as specified in Schedule 6 to the Act) must, before undertaking any functions of the office, either:

- take the oath specified in section 19(2); or
- make the affirmation and declaration specified in section 19(3).

### **Undertaking**

4.8 On appointment, LMs are required to sign a written undertaking to carry out the full range of duties of the office:

- attendance at induction training organised by the Judicial Studies Board;
- attendance at Youth Courts (as a Lay Magistrate);
- attendance at County Courts (as an assessor);
- attendance at Family Proceedings Courts (as a Lay Magistrate);
- collection of court papers;
- attendance at training seminars (including those incorporated in the Northern Ireland Lay Magistrates' Association AGM and Divisional Meetings);
- attendance at visits approved by Judicial Studies Board, for example, Juvenile Justice Centres, Children's Homes etc; such other attendances as may, from time to time, be approved by the Judicial Studies Board; and

- signatory duties.

### **Renewal of Appointment**

4.9 NIJAC will consider, in advance of the expiration of a Lay Magistrates' first five-year term of appointment, whether the appointment should be renewed. Once renewed, appointments will be treated as permanent. The Lady Chief Justice's Office, through the Lay Magistrate Liaison Officer, monitors offers of sittings, attendance and unavailability for court sittings, and signatory duties and will make this information available to NIJAC. NIJAC will also be provided with information about complaints upheld concerning the personal conduct of LMs.

## **5. CONDUCT AND COMPETENCE**

### **Statement of Ethics**

5.1 The Lady Chief Justice's Office has issued a Statement of Ethics for the Judiciary in Northern Ireland<sup>2</sup> which sets out the principles of judicial conduct and provides guidance on specific topics (such as personal relationships and perceived bias, commercial activities, involvement in community organisations, gifts and hospitality).

5.2 LMs should strive to ensure that their conduct, both in and out of court, maintains and enhances the confidence of the public, the legal profession and litigants in their impartiality and that of the judiciary. LMs are expected to refrain from any activity, political or otherwise, which could conflict with their judicial office or be seen to compromise their impartiality.

---

<sup>2</sup> [Statement of Ethics](#)

## Discipline

5.3 The Lady Chief Justice, as President of the Courts of Northern Ireland and Head of the Judiciary, is responsible for taking any disciplinary action against Lay Magistrates. The Lady Chief Justice's Office has issued a Protocol on Judicial Discipline<sup>3</sup> which sets out the circumstances in which the Lady Chief Justice may take disciplinary action and the penalties that may be imposed.

5.4 A Lay Magistrate must inform the Lady Chief Justice's Office immediately if he/she:

- has been charged with any criminal offence (including a minor road traffic offence which attracts endorsement). The Lady Chief Justice may instruct the Lay Magistrate not to sit, or perform any of his/her magisterial duties, for a prescribed period in accordance with the Protocol on Judicial Discipline;
- is involved in civil proceedings in which he/she is alleged to have acted fraudulently, deceitfully or maliciously and he/she will normally be expected not to perform any of the duties of a Lay Magistrate pending the final disposal of the proceedings, including any appeal;
- is involved in proceedings before a professional disciplinary tribunal or other similar body and should not perform any of the duties of a Lay Magistrate pending the final disposal of the proceedings, including any appeal; or
- becomes bankrupt, as this may make him/her no longer eligible to hold office. The Lady Chief Justice's Office should also be informed if a Lay Magistrate is a director of a company that goes into liquidation or if a Lay Magistrate is otherwise involved in serious financial difficulties, such as non-payment of debts, which could

---

<sup>3</sup> [Protocol on Judicial Discipline](#)

bring into question his/her suitability to sit in judgement on others.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

- 5.5 A person shall not be qualified to serve as a Lay Magistrate for the purpose of any proceedings where he/she has a personal connection with the case.
- 5.6 The governing principle is that no person should sit in a judicial capacity, in any circumstances, which would lead an objective onlooker with knowledge of all the material facts reasonably to suspect that the person might be biased.

### **Complaints about the conduct of Lay Magistrates**

- 5.7 There is a Chief Justice's Code of Practice on Complaints<sup>4</sup> which sets out arrangements for investigating complaints about the conduct of judicial office holders (including LMs). The Code is concerned with complaints about the personal conduct of judicial office holders, for instance whether the conduct is likely to bring the judiciary into disrepute, calls into question the LM's ability properly to administer justice or involves an attempt to gain favour by trading on their position as a Lay Magistrate. Complaints that concern a judicial decision in a case, or the reasoning underpinning such a decision, cannot be considered. Such decisions can only be challenged through established legal procedures.

### **Conduct of close relatives of Lay Magistrates**

- 5.8 A Lay Magistrate should seek the advice of the Lady Chief Justice's Office if a member of his/her family becomes involved in court proceedings or unacceptable behaviour of any kind. It may be that, in the interests of the LM and the standing of the judiciary, the LM should not sit until the proceedings have concluded or the matter has been resolved,

---

<sup>4</sup> [Code of Practice on Complaints](#)

however, this will be considered very carefully in each case. It might also be prudent for the LM not to adjudicate on cases involving similar allegations to those brought against the relative. Such situations will be handled with both sympathy and understanding. On very rare occasions the conduct of a relative may call into question the impartiality of a Lay Magistrate and therefore it may be necessary to suggest that the Lay Magistrate refrains from sitting for a longer period of time, or in extreme cases, that resignation needs to be considered. In such cases the Lady Chief Justice's Office should be consulted at the earliest opportunity.

### **Media Contact**

5.9 The question arises from time to time whether a Lay Magistrate should communicate with the press or appear on a television or radio programme. If a Lay Magistrate is contacted by the media, directly or otherwise, he/she should refer the journalist or reporter to the Lady Chief Justice's Judicial Communications Office.<sup>5</sup> The Lady Chief Justice's view is that, given the nature of their office, judicial office holders should be cautious about their exposure to the media, and about making any public statements, whether on general issues or particular cases, which might be interpreted as raising any doubt about their impartiality; she also expects that they would avoid any involvement, either direct or indirect, in issues which are or might become politically controversial. When a Lay Magistrate has been involved in a case, the Lady Chief Justice does not believe it is appropriate for that Lay Magistrate or a Judge to discuss it publicly out of court, whether or not the matter has finally been disposed of. Different considerations clearly apply where the object of any article or programme is to secure a wider public understanding of the workings of the law. The value of such programmes may be enhanced by the participation of a Lay Magistrate and there may well be a case for those who wish to do so, to take part in them.

---

<sup>5</sup> [LCJOffice@judiciaryni.uk](mailto:LCJOffice@judiciaryni.uk)

- 5.10 A Lay Magistrate should feel free to discuss any matters concerning contact with the media with the Lady Chief Justice's Office. Likewise, if the Lay Magistrate requires guidance or has any query concerning the media he/she should not hesitate to contact the Lady Chief Justice's Office by email: [LCJOffice@judiciaryni.uk](mailto:LCJOffice@judiciaryni.uk)

### **Attendance at Conferences and External Events**

- 5.11 The Lady Chief Justice is generally in favour of members of the judiciary attending conferences and making speeches at them (provided they do not have a political theme or content). She would however like to be informed in advance if a Lay Magistrate has been invited to speak in a judicial capacity in case there is a risk of adverse media attention. If a Lay Magistrate intends to say something which could be considered controversial or which could otherwise attract significant media coverage, the Lady Chief Justice would find it helpful to have a copy of the speech before the event.
- 5.12 Members of the judiciary should not receive a fee personally for speaking at such events (and should return a fee if one is given). If the lecture is for a commercial undertaking, the member of the judiciary may ask that a proffered fee be paid to a charity of choice. A small token gift may be accepted but they should inform the Lady Chief Justice's Office of its receipt (and it will be noted in the hospitality register). LMs should refer to the Statement of Ethics for the Judiciary in Northern Ireland.<sup>6</sup>

## **6. DUTIES OF A LAY MAGISTRATE**

- 6.1 LMs sit with a District Judge (Magistrates' Court) in Youth Courts and Family Proceedings Courts. Lay Magistrates have equal voting rights and are fully involved in the decision-making process. The District Judge (Magistrates' Court)

---

<sup>6</sup> [Statement of Ethics for the Judiciary in NI](#)

determines on points of law and advises Lay Magistrates accordingly.<sup>7</sup> The functions of Lay Magistrates include:

- in the Youth Court, hearing and determining criminal matters brought against young persons up to 18 years of age;
- in the Family Proceedings Court, dealing with issues relating to the welfare, care and protection of children, including issues of residence and contact with parents/care-givers;
- in appeals from the Youth Court or Family Proceedings Court to the County Court, as assessors sitting with the County Court Judge. In these circumstances the Lay Magistrate acts in an advisory capacity only;
- dealing with certain ex-parte applications, such as Emergency Protection Orders or Recovery Orders. In these circumstances a Lay Magistrate acts alone without the assistance of a District Judge (Magistrates' Court); and
- hearing complaints with a view to issuing summonses and warrants, sought, for example, by the Police Service of Northern Ireland ('PSNI'), Public Prosecution Service ('PPS'), HM Revenue and Customs and others.

## **7. RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL FROM OFFICE**

7.1 Lay Magistrates are required to vacate their office on the day they attain 75 years of age. They may choose to end their appointment before this by resigning in writing to NIJAC or by declining to accept renewal on completion of a term of appointment. It would be helpful if a Lay Magistrate intends to resign, that he/she notifies NIJAC at least six months in advance of the proposed date of resignation.

---

<sup>7</sup> See *Director of Public Prosecutions v MC* [2006] NICA 14 and *Chief Constable PSNI v Cassells and Casselles* [2007] NICA 12

## **Removal from Office**

7.2 The Lady Chief Justice may remove from office (and suspend from office pending a decision whether to remove or not) a Lay Magistrate on specified grounds. These are:

- misbehaviour; or
- inability to perform the functions of the office.

All decisions to remove or suspend are taken by the Lady Chief Justice, and only on the recommendation of a tribunal convened under section 8 of the Justice (NI) Act 2002.

## **8. MISCELLANEOUS**

### **Lay Magistrates Liaison Officers**

8.1 Lay Magistrate Liaison Officers ('LMLOs') are members of staff in the NICTS who have been designated as such for each Administrative Court Division and should be the Lay Magistrates' first point of contact. The LMLO is responsible for the allocation of court dates to maintain a consistent level of court sittings throughout the divisional panel of Lay Magistrates. The LMLO will compile a quarterly or monthly calendar of sittings and advise Lay Magistrates of available dates. The LMLO will then allocate individual Lay Magistrates on the basis of availability, number of previous sittings and business need. The LMLO will record each Lay Magistrate's availability, the number of offers of sittings made, any reasons given for declining such offers and actual attendance as well as availability for signatory duties. Lay Magistrates should advise the LMLO immediately if they are unable to satisfy a prior commitment to sit in order to allow time for the business to be reallocated.

8.2 The LMLO also authorises payments for court attendance fees and for allowances for travel and subsistence expenses. The LMLO will also make arrangements for the collection of

court papers, car parking at court (where possible) and access to administrative facilities for official business such as undertaking signatory duties.

### **Presiding Lay Magistrate**

- 8.3 There is a Presiding Lay Magistrate, who is appointed by the Lady Chief Justice. Their responsibilities include: liaising closely with the Lay Magistrates' Association; acting as a conduit through which the lay magistracy can raise issues with the Lady Chief Justice; taking part in reviews of the role of the Lay Magistrate and sitting on the Lay Magistrates' Training Committee.

### **Northern Ireland Lay Magistrates' Association**

- 8.4 The NI Lay Magistrates' Association promotes and encourages liaison between LMs throughout Northern Ireland. It meets around four times a year and is an important communication link between the NICTS (although independent of it) and LMs. The Association comprises a President, Vice President, Chair, Vice Chair, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, a Training Committee representative and not more than nine representative members preferably elected from each of the Administrative Court Divisions.

- 8.5 The representative members act as chairpersons for the Divisions and as the communication link between the Executive of the Association and individual LMs. They organise meetings within their respective Divisions with a view to raising and discussing issues at a local level and also including a training element. The Association holds its Annual General Meeting each autumn and this is an opportunity for members of all Divisions to come together as a whole. More information is available directly from the Association.

## **Signatory Duties**

8.6 All LMs are expected to perform signatory duties in respect of court summonses and warrants as part of their duties. This element of the post does not attract a fee. Documents may be signed while attending a court sitting or as part of a Lay Magistrate's pre- or post-court duties. The PSNI or PPS or other statutory authority may also apply for warrants and the like at other times. The LMLO will make arrangements, at the request of the PSNI, PPS or other statutory authority, to use a courthouse and an official from the statutory authority should be available to deal with any queries raised. Only in exceptional circumstances, and with the agreement of the Lay Magistrate, should signatory duties be performed in the Lay Magistrate's home or in the premises of a statutory authority.

## **Court Files**

8.7 LMs will be expected to review papers and files prior to court and to ensure safe transport of confidential papers. LMs will be required to collect court files from an agreed court office within the Division. They will be entitled to claim mileage allowance when collecting court papers. LMs must personally collect papers. Family or friends cannot be nominated to collect court papers.

## **Remuneration**

8.8 Court attendance fees must be claimed on the appropriate form and certified by the court clerk at the end of daily business before being lodged with the LMLO for processing. LMs are entitled to a full or half-day fee for court sittings. The fee is calculated from 30 minutes before the scheduled court sitting start time:

- full day - any sitting that exceeds 3 hours is a full day fee;
- half day - a half day fee is paid where the sitting time is up to 3 hours;

this includes the 30-minute period before the scheduled sitting time.

LMs are expected to attend half an hour prior to the start of court business to be available to discuss any potential issues with the District Judge (Magistrates' Court) prior to the commencement.

- 8.9 Claims in respect of travel and subsistence for court attendance should be submitted for processing to the LMLO in the Administrative Court Division where the sitting took place, within three months of completion of the court duties. Travel claims in respect of attendance at a training event should be sent as soon as possible to the Judicial Studies Board Office, and no later than 3 months after the event.

The following is a summary of the LMs' entitlement to travel, and subsistence expenses as agreed with HM Revenue and Customs and as set out in a letter from Brian Sinnamon to LMs on 13 November 2006.

**Lay Magistrates assigned to Belfast Division**

- LMs appointed to the Belfast Division are based in Belfast because there is only one court venue.
- As a consequence, any travel etc paid for court attendances in the Belfast Division is to be 'ordinary commuting' rather than 'business travel' and therefore subject to the normal statutory deductions of Income Tax and National Insurance.
- As such claims must be made on the yellow claim form. They should be processed in the normal way and entered on the Monthly Fees Returns spread sheet which is forwarded to Judicial Pay and Pensions Branch. The claim forms together with any relevant correspondence should be filed together with a copy of the authorised Monthly Fees Return spreadsheet for audit compliance purposes.

**Lay Magistrates assigned to Divisions outside Belfast**

- LMs who live outside their division:

The journey between their home and the boundary of their division should be deemed to be 'ordinary commuting' rather than 'business travel' and therefore subject to the normal statutory deductions of income tax and national insurance. As such, claims must be made on the yellow claim form. The remainder of the journey from the boundary of the Division to court is deemed 'business mileage' and therefore not taxable and should be claimed on the blue claim form.

- LMs who live within their division:

Journeys made within the Division will not be taxable.

For example: an LM appointed to the Division of Armagh and South Down but lives in Craigavon: the travel from his/her home to the boundary of the Armagh and South Down Division will attract the statutory deductions but thereafter the mileage to the court sitting venue will not. It is appreciated there may be occasions when a Lay Magistrate may have to complete both a yellow and blue travel claim in respect of the same journey. The yellow claim form will cover the journey from home to the boundary division and the blue travel claim form will cover the journey from the boundary division to the court venue within the division.

LMs should contact LMLOs if they have any enquiries. The NICTS has the discretion to refuse to pay late claims.

- 8.10 LMs should send a copy of their valid certificate of car (or other vehicle) insurance with their first claim for travel expenses. If the trip relates to court attendance, the certificate should be submitted to the LMLO. If for attendance at a training event, the certificate should be sent to the Judicial Studies Board. Further copies should be submitted annually thereafter. The certificate of insurance should permit the Lay

Magistrate to use the vehicle in connection with their business. Where such cover is not in force, claims for travel expenses incurred will not be paid. Full details regarding the completion of claim forms and entitlements are included in the Induction Booklet for Lay Magistrates.

### **Banking Automated Clearance System (BACS)**

- 8.11 All fees and expenses will be paid directly into the LM's bank account via BACS. It is therefore essential that bank account details (or any changes) are notified to Judicial Pay and Pensions Branch and the relevant LMLO at the earliest opportunity.

### **Change of Address**

- 8.12 All changes of address must be notified to Operations Branch, Lady Chief Justice's Office. Where a change of address makes a Lay Magistrate eligible for appointment to another County Court Division, and the Lay Magistrate would like to transfer to this Division, he must make such a request in writing to Operations Branch. Each request will be considered on its own merits and will take account of the residence eligibility criteria and business needs of the Division to which the Lay Magistrate wishes to transfer.

### **Period of Absence**

- 8.13 If a Lay Magistrate is unable to undertake his/her duties for a period of time due to his/her employment or ill health he/she must notify the LMLO for his/her Division and the Lady Chief Justice's Office in writing as soon as practicable. Repeated or extended absence or inability to sit may give cause for concern as to the individual's commitment to the office which could lead to no renewal of the appointment or removal from office.

- 8.14 If a Lay Magistrate has been on extended sick absence, the Lady Chief Justice may seek a view on his/her overall health to enable her to establish whether the Lay Magistrate will be able to provide full and effective service.