

How does public and direct access work at 4PB?

When you call us, you'll speak to Denise, the 4PB dedicated direct access clerk. She'll ask you to tell her what your legal case is about, how long it has been going on and what stage it is at, what upcoming hearings have been fixed, and what you're hoping to achieve. She is not a lawyer and won't be able to give you any legal advice, but does have a lot of experience in helping people in your position to access advice and advocacy from direct access barristers. If, having heard what you say, she believes that a barrister from 4PB will be suitable for your case, she will ask you to fill in a short form so that they can investigate barristers' availability, and allocate the case to the appropriate barrister. If a number of different barristers are available to do the work, you will be asked to choose which one you would like to work with; alternatively, you may have someone in mind before you call.

The barristers charge a fixed price for the work they do, which will be agreed with you in good time. Unless time is tight, you will usually be given the option of a short introductory conference by phone or Skype with your barrister for a small fee; you could even try out a couple and see which you prefer. Alternatively, you can go straight to a full conference, which we try to schedule in good time before the hearing so that you are able to act on any advice given by your barrister.

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