

Template letter to MPs

Dear xxx,

I write to you as your constituent and a member of Young Legal Aid Lawyers ('YLAL') to raise serious concerns about access to justice for victims of trafficking.

A new report by YLAL, "[A Sector at Breaking Point: Justice Denied for Victims of Trafficking](#)", finds that victims of trafficking are often unable to access legally aided asylum and immigration advice and representation. The report also shows that the Civil Legal Aid (Remuneration) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 will further restrict access to justice for this vulnerable group.

Access to legal aid for asylum and immigration matters is essential for victims of trafficking to recover from their trauma.

YLAL's report is drawn from a survey of the anti-slavery support sector. The report shows that:

- 70.6% of respondents stated that it was either 'impossible' (2.9%), 'extremely difficult' (20.6%) or 'difficult' (47.1%) to find legal aid representation for victims of trafficking.
- 44.1% of respondents stated that victims of trafficking had left their service before they were able to find them an immigration representative.
- Victims of trafficking are incurring debt and being exploited in order to pay for a private immigration representation due to legal aid providers being unavailable.
- Lack of access to asylum and immigration legal aid lawyers puts victims of trafficking at risk of exploitation from unregulated asylum and immigration providers.

The Civil Legal Aid (Remuneration) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 will further restrict access to justice for victims of trafficking as they make complex asylum and immigration cases financially unviable.

Please bring YLAL's report to the attention of the Legal Aid Minister, Alex Chalk MP. I would be grateful if you could ask him what impact assessments were undertaken about the impact of the regulations on access to legal aid for victims of trafficking. I understand that the regulations were rushed through in response to COVID-19 without a full consultation. Please ask the Minister to withdraw the regulations and pause to properly consult with the sector to address the serious issues identified in YLAL's report.

I would be grateful if you could add your name to the Opposition's [fatal motion/prayer](#) to block these regulations.

I am grateful for your support on this important issue.

Yours,

xxx