

FAMILY LAW AWARDS 2026

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CATEGORIES AND ENTRY CRITERIA

Children's Law Team of the Year

This award recognises a firm, team or group of practitioners who have delivered outstanding work across public, private or international children's law.

Judges will consider:

- Demonstrated excellence in representing children's best interests across complex and sensitive cases
- Evidence of strong client care, including safeguarding, communication, and child-focused approaches
- Notable legal achievements, including landmark cases or innovative legal strategies
- Effective collaboration with courts, social services, and other professionals
- Commitment to continuous improvement, diversity, and supporting vulnerable families

Cornwell Award for Outstanding Contribution to Family Law

This award is made in honour of John Cornwell, who dedicated his working life to the development and progress of family law. The winner is recognised as an individual who has made a major contribution to the field of family law, either through practice, commentary, teaching, pro bono and/or judicially.

Judges will consider:

- Unquestionable contribution to the field of family law over a sustained period
- Demonstrated integrity, professionalism, and commitment to the highest ethical standards
- Positive impact on clients, colleagues, and the wider legal community
- Evidence of leadership, mentorship, or inspiring others within the profession
- Dedication to improving access to justice or advancing best practice in family law

To nominate your candidate, please email with a brief statement outlining why they should win.

Family Law Associate Solicitor of the Year

This award celebrates a solicitor with over five years PQE who the judges believe has made a major contribution to the field of family law through their practice, shown that they have provided outstanding client service and demonstrated teamwork within their firm, with external lawyers and/or other professionals.

Judges will consider;

- Evidence of strong technical ability and sound legal judgment across a range of family law matters
- Demonstrated impact on cases, including successful outcomes or handling complex work
- Excellent client care, with a sensitive and pragmatic approach

- Contribution to the team, including collaboration, reliability, and supporting colleagues
- Evidence of professional development, initiative, and future leadership potential

Family Law Chambers of the Year - London

This award recognises the London set which has demonstrably provided outstanding quality of legal service for its clients and has displayed high levels of teamwork internally, with external lawyers and/or other professionals.

Judges will consider:

- Strength and depth of expertise across a broad range of family law work
- Quality of advocacy and consistent delivery of outstanding client outcomes
- Reputation within the legal community, including instructions in complex or high-profile cases
- Commitment to diversity, wellbeing, and pro bono work
- Effective leadership, strategy, and innovation in managing and growing the set
- External nominations/testimonials (supporting material)

Family Law Chambers of the Year - Regional

This award recognises the set on any of the bar circuits which has demonstrably provided outstanding quality of legal service for its clients and has displayed high levels of teamwork internally, with external lawyers and/or other professionals.

Judges will consider:

- Strength and depth of expertise across a broad range of family law work
- Quality of advocacy and consistent delivery of outstanding client outcomes
- Reputation within the legal community, including instructions in complex or high-profile cases
- Commitment to diversity, wellbeing, and pro bono work
- Effective leadership, strategy, and innovation in managing and growing the set
- External nominations/testimonials (supporting material)

Family Law Clerking Team of the Year

This award celebrates the barristers' clerking team which has been at the heart of delivering outstanding quality of legal service in family law.

Judges will consider:

- Excellence in clerking function, including efficient case management and barrister support
- Strong client service, responsiveness, and ability to manage competing demands under pressure
- Contribution to the success and reputation of the chambers or team
- Effective teamwork, communication, and relationship-building with clients, counsel and instructing solicitors
- Innovation, leadership, and commitment to professional development within the clerking function

Excellence in Family Law Mentorship

This award celebrates the achievement of an individual, firm, chambers or organisation which has had demonstrable impact in family law through impactful leadership in mentoring, coaching and standard setting. This category aims to recognise the value and impact of these initiatives for family law practitioners and on the field of family law. The category will be decided by an open vote by the family law community.

Those submitting a nomination can highlight how the nominee's outstanding mentoring has benefitted them personally, or how they have observed nominees positively guide and impact others through mentoring.

Judges will consider:

- Demonstrated commitment to mentoring and developing others within family law
- Positive impact on mentees' careers, confidence, and professional growth
- Structured and effective mentoring approaches, including accessibility and support
- Contribution to fostering an inclusive and supportive professional culture
- Evidence of leadership, role modelling, and dedication to nurturing future talent

Family Law Firm of the Year - London

This award recognises the London firm or local authority in each region that has provided consistently outstanding quality of legal service for its clients and has displayed high levels of teamwork within its firm or local authority, with external lawyers and/or other professionals. Entries must have a head office address in London.

Judges will consider:

- Overall excellence in delivering high-quality family law services across London
- Strength and breadth of the team, including expertise in complex and high-value matters
- Track record of successful outcomes and strong client satisfaction
- Contribution to the profession, including thought leadership and reputation in the London market
- External nominations/testimonials
- Commitment to innovation, diversity, and supporting staff development
- Training and career progression of employees

Family Law Firm of the Year – Regional

This award recognises the firm or local authority outside London that has provided consistently outstanding quality of legal service for its clients and has displayed high levels of teamwork within its firm or local authority, with external lawyers and/or other professionals. Entries must have a head office address outside London.

Judges will consider:

- Overall excellence in delivering high-quality family law services across the region
- Strength and breadth of the team, including expertise in complex and high-value matters
- Track record of successful outcomes and strong client satisfaction

- Contribution to the profession, including thought leadership and reputation in the region
- External nominations/testimonials
- Commitment to innovation, diversity, and supporting staff development
- Training and career progression of employees

Family Law Junior Barrister of the Year

This award recognises a barrister of at least five years call who has made their mark through excellent advice and high-level advocacy.

Judges will consider:

- Quality of advocacy and legal strategy across a range of family law matters
- Ability to handle complex or sensitive cases with confidence and sound judgment
- Strong client care and effective communication with instructing solicitors
- Evidence of growing reputation, including notable cases or judicial praise
- Commitment to professional development and contribution to chambers or the wider profession

Family Law KC of the Year

This award is made to the KC who has made a major contribution to the field of family law through their advice, high-level advocacy and leadership.

Judges will consider:

- Outstanding advocacy and leadership in complex, high-profile family law cases
- Demonstrated excellence in legal strategy, judgment, and case outcomes
- Influence on the development of family law through precedent-setting work or thought leadership
- Strong reputation among peers, judiciary, and instructing solicitors
- Commitment to mentoring, professional standards, and the wider legal community

Family Law Partner of the Year

This award celebrates a partner who has made a major contribution to the field of family law through their practice and strategic vision through outstanding leadership.

Judges will consider:

- Exceptional leadership and strategic direction within a family law practice
- Strong track record in complex, high-value, or sensitive cases
- Outstanding client care and ability to build and maintain trusted relationships
- Contribution to the growth, reputation, and success of the firm or team
- Commitment to mentoring, developing others, and promoting a positive team culture

Family Law Workplace of the Year

This award will go to the UK-based workplace (firm, chambers or other type of organisation) that demonstrates meaningful commitment to its people and supporting them in delivering excellence in family law.

Judges will consider:

- Commitment to creating a positive, inclusive, and supportive working environment

- Evidence of staff wellbeing initiatives and work-life balance support
- Investment in training, development, and career progression
- Strong leadership, culture, and employee engagement across the organisation
- Demonstrable impact on retention, satisfaction, and overall team performance

Family Law Young Barrister of the Year

This award is made to a barrister under five years call who has stood out from their peers and shown the key qualities of a leading family lawyer of the future. Previous winners of this award category are ineligible.

Judges will consider:

- Quality of advocacy and legal analysis going beyond expectations of early practice
- Ability to manage a varied caseload, including complex or sensitive matters
- Strong client care and effective communication with instructing solicitors
- Evidence of rapid progression, including notable cases or recognition
- Commitment to learning, development, and contributing to chambers or the wider profession

Family Law Young Solicitor of the Year

This award recognises a solicitor under five years PQE who the judges believe has stood out from their peers and shown the key qualities of a leading family lawyer of the future. This could be demonstrated, for example, by positive external nominations, acting in a reported case or through pro bono work. Previous winners of this award category are ineligible.

Judges will consider:

- Strong legal ability and sound judgment early in their career
- Effective handling of cases, including complex or sensitive matters
- Excellent client care and clear, empathetic communication
- Evidence of progression, initiative, and growing responsibility
- Commitment to professional development, pro bono work and contribution to their team or firm

Financial Remedies Team of the Year

The award will recognise the family law firm, chambers or other legal organisation, which has demonstrated excellence in the area of financial remedies.

Judges will consider:

- Excellence in handling complex financial remedy cases, including high-value or multi-jurisdictional matters
- Strong track record of achieving successful and pragmatic outcomes for clients
- Depth of expertise across the team, including technical skill and strategic approach
- Effective collaboration with clients, counsel, and other professionals
- Commitment to innovation, efficiency, and delivering a high standard of client service

International Family Lawyer of the Year

This award is made to a lawyer who has stood out as a practitioner and leader in the field of international family law.

Judges will consider:

- Expertise in cross-border family law matters, including jurisdictional and enforcement issues
- Strong track record in complex international cases, including relocation, abduction, or multi-jurisdictional finance
- Ability to coordinate effectively with overseas counsel and navigate differing legal systems
- Excellent client care in sensitive, high-stakes international matters
- Contribution to the development or profile of international family law through thought leadership or collaboration

Excellence in Non-Court Dispute Resolution

This award is made to the team or individual who has demonstrated clear impact and an ongoing commitment to NCDR and led by example to develop standards of practice and secure best outcomes for clients and the family justice system.

Judges will consider:

- Demonstrated excellence in resolving disputes outside of court, including mediation, arbitration, or collaborative law
- Strong track record of achieving fair, durable, and cost-effective outcomes for clients
- Ability to manage complex or high-conflict cases with a constructive and solution-focused approach
- Effective collaboration with other professionals to support holistic client outcomes
- Commitment to promoting non-court dispute resolution and best practice within family law

Access to Justice/ Social Impact Award

This award reflects the essential importance of access to justice in family law, and the centrality of family law practice for social groups who may be underserved and underrepresented. It is made to the individual, team, organisation or business which demonstrates significant achievements in bringing about change and impactful outcomes for those in need.

Judges will consider:

- Demonstrated commitment to improving access to justice for individuals, families or social groups
- Evidence of meaningful social impact, including pro bono work, outreach, or community initiatives
- Innovation in addressing barriers to legal support or engaging underserved groups
- Measurable outcomes showing positive change for clients or communities
- Sustained dedication to promoting fairness, inclusion, and equality within family law

Innovation in Family Law

This award reflects the importance of continued innovation in family law practice to ensure practitioners and the wider family law system keep pace with structural, technological and cultural changes which impact them and their clients. It is made to the individual, team, organisation or business which demonstrates significant achievements in leading positive change and innovation in family law practice.

Judges will consider:

- Development and implementation of innovative approaches, services, or technologies in family law
- Clear impact on client outcomes, efficiency, or accessibility of legal services
- Creativity in addressing complex or evolving challenges within family law
- Evidence of measurable success and potential for wider adoption across the sector
- Commitment to continuous improvement and forward-thinking practice