



## Magistrates Association

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Response to	<b>Second batch of Standard Family Orders</b>
Issued by	<b>President of the Family Division</b>
Link to consultation	<a href="http://www.judiciary.gov.uk/publications/practice-guidance-standard-family-orders">www.judiciary.gov.uk/publications/practice-guidance-standard-family-orders</a>
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The MA are responding to the above Practice Guidance and consultation on Standard Family Orders.

The MA welcome the comprehensive work that has gone into drafting all the orders, and support the stated aims of improving consistency and efficiency. The MA's primary interest in responding is to ensure the template orders are as clear and accessible as possible for those that use them, particularly for litigants in person.

We recognise that many of the orders contain additional information, and the format is designed to ensure logical structure of that information. However we are aware there are possible concerns around it not being clear to litigants in person what the key information is for them to take away or what they are required to do before any future hearings. For example with the additional information, the penal notice is therefore not prominently displayed on the front page. We appreciate the inherent difficulty in presenting complex information in a way that is accessible for unrepresented parties, whilst also ensuring that the templates produce orders that remain legally enforceable. As such, we would agree with a proposal put forward by Lucy Reed's recent [blog](#): that a separate or introductory cover sheet could be developed to set out an order's key instructions, including the penal notice, details on the next hearing and an overview of key requirements for each party, with deadlines clearly presented.

We feel that this would have the potential to improve engagement with unrepresented parties, without impacting on the future enforcement of orders.

We would be happy to discuss this in greater detail if this would be of assistance.