



Support for Meetings and Tribunal Hearings

SENDIASS North Yorkshire receives a high number of requests each year to attend meetings and tribunal hearings. As a service supporting parents, carers, children and young people across North Yorkshire, we are unable to attend every meeting we are invited to. All requests will be considered on an individual basis, and decisions will be made in line with the guidance below.

Meetings

- Requests for SENDIASS attendance should be made as early as possible and, wherever possible, at least **two weeks before the meeting date**.
- Attendance is dependent on staff availability, service demand and the purpose of the meeting. During periods of high demand, our capacity to attend meetings may be limited.
- In-person (face-to-face) attendance is exceptional and will only be considered in specific circumstances due to staffing capacity and travel across the county.
- Where attendance is agreed and considered appropriate, SENDIASS may offer to join the meeting virtually using Microsoft Teams or another suitable online platform.
- SENDIASS Coordinators will generally only attend meetings where:
 - there is a clear and specific role for us to fulfil;
 - our attendance is likely to add value to the discussion and support positive outcomes;
 - the parent, carer or young person would benefit from additional support to participate effectively in the meeting or to ensure their views are heard.
- The decision to attend will be made following discussion with the family and consideration of the individual circumstances of the case.
- If SENDIASS is unable to attend a meeting, we will offer a preparation session by telephone or virtually. During this session, we can help you understand the meeting process, identify key points you wish to raise, consider questions you may wish to ask, and signpost you to relevant information and resources.

Tribunals

- We request that you check if you qualify for legal aid by visiting the Civil Legal Advice on the Government website as a starting point. Check if you can get legal aid - [Legal aid: Check if you can get legal aid - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/civil-legal-advice) or you can 'phone them on 0345 345 4345. If you do qualify you may be able to access free professional reports or assessments to support your appeal.

- SENDIASS coordinators are unlikely to attend Tribunals with you. However, in exceptional circumstances may attend as a supporter. This will be discussed on a case-by-case basis.
- Please do not name a SENDIASS coordinator on the appeal (SEND 35 form) or case review form (SEND 45 form) unless it has been agreed.

Representing yourself, your child or young person

Most parents and carers represent their child or young person without legal representation and will move through this process with minimal support. Our role at SENDIASS North Yorkshire is to empower you and we can provide information and different resources to give you the confidence to express your views, wishes, and rights. You are the best person to speak for your child, young person or for yourself and the SEND tribunal is set up to listen to you.

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