Finding legal evidence for social security

**Blue Volumes:** The Department for Communities maintain an electronic version of the Blue Volumes or “The Law Relating to Social Security for Northern Ireland”. You can search legal documents by year, volume (the specific area of social security law, e.g. Universal Credit) and title. The provisions are available from 1975 to the current year. Find the link [here](#).

**Commissioner decisions:** The Department for Communities also maintain an electronic version of the compendium of decisions given by Northern Ireland’s Social Security and Child Support Commissioners on benefit, child support and compensation recovery appeals. This is more commonly known as NIDOC (Northern Ireland Digest of Case-Law). It provides access to important Northern Ireland (generally “reported”) decisions from 1972 to the current date. You can search decisions by year, benefit and topic. Find the link [here](#).

**UK Upper Tribunal Decisions:** The Tribunals Judiciary operate a database for UK decisions in respect of decisions given by UK Upper Tribunal (equivalent to Commissioner level decisions in Northern Ireland). You can search for decisions by category of benefit (e.g. Universal Credit, Personal Independence Payment, Employment Support Allowance etc.). You can also browse the most recent decisions. Find the link [here](#).

**Rights Net:** If you are regularly hunting for cases it may be worthwhile subscribing to Rightsnet. In addition to providing up-to-date news on developments affecting benefits, the case law section on Rightsnet contains summaries, arranged by benefit, of all recent commissioners' decisions. As well as this, more than 1500 decisions from the late 1940's to the 1990's, many unavailable elsewhere on the internet, can be found here. Rightsnet also contains a discussion group. Many people with practical knowledge and experience in this area contribute and there is a general willingness to send copies of decisions via email or to give help in tracking down decisions relating to a particular area. Subscribe to Rightsnet [here](#).

**Legislative and policy updates:** Law Centre provides a bi-monthly social security bulletin. It provides updates on the latest social security legislation and policy as well as an update on Universal Credit, a view of the issues that Law Centre is dealing with on the frontline and a top tip for advisers. You can sign up [here](#).