PRACTICAL WORKING GUIDE / ENGLAND AND WALES

Litigant Case File Starter Kit

EvidenceCanvas

A neutral 30-minute organisation guide

Jurisdiction: England and Wales

Reviewed: 16 August 2026

> This kit helps you organise papers and dates. It does not tell you what to do, what evidence to rely on or what position to take. Your current court order and the applicable rules take priority.

First: urgent issues

EvidenceCanvas is not an emergency or continuously monitored service. If someone is in immediate danger, call 999. If you have an imminent court deadline or need advice about what to do, contact a regulated family solicitor or an appropriate official/support service. Do not wait for a download or a portal response.

Your 30-minute reset

Minutes 0-5: protect the originals

- Keep every original document, message export, photo, audio file and email.
- Do not edit an original to make it clearer.
- If you need a redacted or annotated version, make a separate copy.
- Do not forward private case papers to a general marketing form or public AI/chat service.

Minutes 5-10: create one working structure

Create these folders inside your protected matter workspace or controlled local folder:

1. `01 - Court orders and applications`
2. `02 - Statements and reports`
3. `03 - Correspondence`
4. `04 - Messages and screenshots`
5. `05 - School medical police local-authority material`
6. `06 - Photos audio and video`
7. `07 - My instructions and working notes`
8. `08 - Drafts`
9. `09 - Filed or served copies and receipts`

This is your working file, not necessarily the structure of a hearing bundle.

Minutes 10-20: make a document inventory

Use one row per item:

ID	Date	Source	What the item is	Status	Related event	Check needed
EV-0001	2026-04-17	Family Court	Sealed order	Sealed copy	CH-0001	Read deadlines

Good descriptions are neutral:

- "Email from school dated 3 May 2026"
- "Screenshot of message thread exported 10 May 2026"
- "Unsigned draft statement received 14 May 2026"

Avoid conclusions in the inventory such as "proof they lied". You can record a disputed statement as an attributed statement for later review.

Minutes 20-25: list key dates

Event ID	Date/time	What happened (neutral wording)	Source	Exact page/message
CH-0001	2026-04-17	Court made an order	EV-0001	p.1

If a date is uncertain, say so. Do not guess. If accounts differ, record both with their sources.

Minutes 25-30: make a next-check list

- ☐ Read the latest court order and highlight every date/action.
- ☐ Confirm which document version is signed, sealed, filed or only a draft.
- ☐ Note files that will not open or are incomplete.
- ☐ Mark likely duplicates; do not delete originals yet.
- ☐ Record any document that needs a separate redaction review.
- ☐ Put urgent legal questions on a separate list for a regulated adviser.
- ☐ Keep proof of anything you file or serve.

File names that sort properly

Use:

`YYYY-MM-DD - source - document type - short neutral description.ext`

Examples:

- `2026-04-17 - Family Court - sealed order.pdf`
- `2026-05-03 - school - email response.pdf`
- `UNDATED - unknown source - photograph 003.jpg`

Do not place allegations or children's full names in filenames unless strictly necessary and appropriately controlled.

What to upload to EvidenceCanvas

Only upload after you receive access to a protected matter workspace. For each item:

1. choose the correct matter;
2. upload the best available original or complete copy;
3. add a short neutral description;
4. state the date/source or say that it is unclear;
5. explain which event or task it relates to;
6. do not describe the upload as filed or served unless you also have evidence of that action.

Getting legal help

If you need advice about your position, prospects, what evidence to use or what to say, seek a regulated legal professional.

- Law Society Find a Solicitor: https://solicitors.lawsociety.org.uk/
- Check the SRA register: https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/register/
- GOV.UK representing yourself: https://www.gov.uk/represent-yourself-in-court
- Support Through Court: https://www.supportthroughcourt.org/

> General organisation information for England and Wales, reviewed 16 August 2026. It is not legal advice and may not apply to your case. Current rules and any case-specific court order take priority. EvidenceCanvas is not a law firm and does not provide legal advice or representation.