

Saara Idelbi

Call 2008



clerks@5essex.co.uk



+44 (0)20 7410 2000

Saara is a dynamic legal professional, strategic advisor, and effective advocate recognised by Legal 500 as a 'Leading Junior' in the areas of Administrative Law and Human Rights, Court of Protection and Community Care, and Inquests and Inquiries. She has built a reputation for navigating complex legal challenges with precision and clarity.

She provides expert advocacy and advisory services on key issues relating to public law, human rights, equality, privacy, and information law. She has successfully represented clients in Tribunals, County Courts, Coroners' Courts, the Court of Protection, High Court, and Court of Appeal.

As a member of the Attorney General's B Panel of Counsel, Saara is trusted to represent central government and public bodies in high-profile and legally complex cases. Saara is distinguished by her ability to break down complex legal issues into clear, relatable concepts.

Whether advising individuals, organisations or public authorities on complex litigation, policy formulation or risk mitigation, she ensures legal advice is accessible and practical. Saara provides solutions-oriented strategies that assist her clients to navigate legal complexities with confidence.

Beyond the courtroom, Saara is passionate about digital technology and its intersection with law, business, and society. As a Certified International Privacy Professional (CIPP/E), she advises on data privacy, cybersecurity, AI ethics, and emerging tech regulations, helping organisations and public authorities navigate the evolving digital landscape. Her ability to simplify complex legal and technological issues makes her a trusted advisor for businesses, policymakers, and innovators.

Saara authored '[A Practical Guide to Non-Pecuniary Damages in Human Rights Act Claims](#)' with [Paige Jones](#) in November 2024, providing essential guidance to practitioners on compensation for human rights violations. She is a member of the Equality and Human Rights Commission's B Panel of Counsel.

Saara's insight is shaped by her experiences as Law Clerk to Justice Khampepe in the Constitutional Court of South Africa and a Judicial Assistant to Lord Justice Pill in the Court of Appeal, as well as having worked at the Treasury Solicitor's Office (now the Government Legal Department), HMRC, and a top healthcare law firm.

Saara also sits as a Fee-Paid Judge of the First Tier Tribunal in the Health, Education, and Social Care chamber.

Expertise

Public & Administrative

Recognised by the Legal 500 as a 'Leading Junior' in Administrative Law and Human Rights, Saara is a highly experienced legal professional and her portfolio covers key sectors including equality and human rights law, health and social care, criminal justice, and immigration.

As a member of the Attorney General's B Panel of Counsel, Saara is trusted to represent central government and public bodies in high-profile and legally complex cases. Saara provides strategic legal guidance on operational policies and governance matters. Saara is distinguished by her ability to break down complex legal issues into clear, relatable concepts.

In addition to her established public law practice, Saara is expanding her work into commercial public law issues, including challenging tax liability decisions by HM Revenue and Customs and disputes over public procurement contract awards.

Saara is passionate about digital technology and its intersection with law and society. As a Certified International Privacy Professional (CIPP/E), she advises on data privacy, cybersecurity, AI ethics, and emerging tech regulations, in administrative decision making.

Saara authored '[A Practical Guide to Non-Pecuniary Damages in Human Rights Act Claims](#)' with Paige Jones in November 2024, providing essential guidance to practitioners on compensation for human rights violations. She is a member of the Equality and Human Rights Commission's B Panel of Counsel.

Memberships:

- Constitutional & Administrative Law Bar Association
- Human Rights Lawyers Association

Notable Public & Administrative cases

Advising public authorities on their policies on the use of social media in their operations.

Advising public authorities on 'naming' policies for private sector contraventions of legal requirements.

Representing a claimant challenges to the funding available for their care.

Representing claimants challenging the Home Office's delay in dispersing them from hotel accommodation.

R (on the application of Osman) v Department for Work and Pensions

on whether the arrangements for correspondence to registered blind claimants amounted to a failure to make reasonable adjustment.

R (on the application of Suleiman & UNJUST) v Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis

on the operation of the Gangs Violence Matrix.

R (on the application of Ginn) v HM Senior Coroner for Inner London [2022] EWHC 28 (Admin)

on the directions given to the jury in summing up, and the ambit of *Tainton* admissions.

R (on the application of JM) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2021] EWHC 2514 (Admin)

on the provision of essential living needs to asylum seekers living in full-board hotel accommodation during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic.

R (on the application of FF) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2021] EWHC 2566 (Admin)

on the extent to which the Secretary of State was required to consider material submitted by a third party to exclude a person from the UK.

R (on the application of Secretary of State for the Home Department) v First-Tier Tribunal [2021] EWHC 1690 (Admin)

on whether the Secretary of state was obliged to accommodate failed asylum seekers during the COVID-19 pandemic by reference to Articles 2, 3 and 8 rights of the

individuals and the public at large.

R (on the application of ZA) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2020] EWCA Civ 146

on the lawfulness of detaining individuals making a claim on the basis of their sexual orientation and ensuring medical examination of an individual on detention.

R (on the application of Good Law Project Ltd) v Secretary of State for Health and Social Care [2019] EWCA Civ 1211

on whether the Human Medicines Regulations permitting pharmacists to sell or supply prescription-only medicines under a serious shortage protocol.

R (on the application of SS) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2017] 1 WLR 3641

age assessment case dealing with the analysis of Article 28 of the Dublin III Regulations in light of the CJEU's decision in Al Chodor [2017] 4 WLR 125.

R (on the application of Molina) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2017] EWHC 1730 (Admin)

case concerning the definition of marriage of convenience within the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2006.

Civil Liberties and Human Rights

Recognised by the Legal 500 as a 'Leading Junior' in Administrative Law and Human Rights, Saara is a highly experienced legal professional and her portfolio covers key sectors including equality and human rights law, health and social care, criminal justice, and immigration.

Saara specialises in representing both claimants and defendants in civil claims against public authorities. She is an effective trial advocate known for her astute litigation skills and pragmatic, strategic advice to secure the best possible outcome for her clients. Saara's ability to combine legal excellence with strategic foresight, which establishes her as a trusted authority in civil liberties and human rights' litigation for clients seeking pragmatic solutions.

As a member of the Attorney General's B Panel of Counsel, Saara is trusted to represent central government and public bodies in high-profile and legally complex cases. Saara is distinguished by her ability to break down complex legal issues into clear, relatable concepts.

Saara authored '[A Practical Guide to Non-Pecuniary Damages in Human Rights Act Claims](#)' with Paige Jones in November 2024. This authoritative guide is a vital resource for legal professionals navigating the complexities of human rights damages awards. She is a member of the Equality and Human Rights Commission's B Panel of Counsel.

Her practice spans a diverse range of critical issues, including:

- Abuse and failure to remove cases;
- The provision of adult social care;
- Data privacy, retention, and processing compliance;
- Prison conditions and offender management;
- Discrimination claims in the employment tribunal with particular experience of section 50 and 58 claims;
- Alleged failures to investigate crime;
- Alleged operational failures in the prevention and detection of crime; and
- Military claims involving both civilians and personnel.

Memberships:

- Human Rights Lawyers Association
- Discrimination Lawyers' Association

Notable Civil Liberties and Human Rights cases

A test case concerning prison conditions during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A claim concerning the provision of reasonable adjustments for disabled court users.

A claim concerning the transfer of a transgender prisoner to open conditions during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Claims concerning the care arrangements for vulnerable adults deprived of their liberty.

Alseran v Ministry of Defence [2017] EWHC 3289 (QB)

Civil human rights claims for damages by Iraqi civilians arising from the 2003 to 2009 Iraq War.

Court of Protection

Recognised by Legal 500 as a 'Leading Junior' in Court of Protection and Community Care law, Saara has built a thriving practice in all aspects of health and welfare proceedings, including where issues relating to property and affairs overlaps with safeguarding the rights and well-being of vulnerable individuals.

Her work frequently involves challenging deprivation of liberty authorisations, medical treatment disputes, and the legal standing of attorneys and deputies. She advises and represents a diverse range of clients, including the protected party (by the Official Solicitor or other litigation friends), family members, local authorities, NHS trusts, and integrated care boards.

Saara has a deep understanding of service delivery structures and operational challenges in the care sector. She possesses strong expertise in the intersection of Court of Protection proceedings, judicial review of [decision making](#), and [civil claims](#) concerning social care provision, bringing valuable insight into how these processes interact within the broader community care landscape. Her ability to bridge legal expertise with practical, person-centred solutions makes her an invaluable asset to organisations navigating complex legal issues.

Saara is passionate and robust in representing her clients and takes a proactive approach to progressing proceedings. She is particularly interested in the intersection of mental capacity and mental health law, including how legal frameworks empower and protect individuals rather than hinder their autonomy.

Saara also sits as a Fee-Paid Judge of the First Tier Tribunal in the Health, Education, and Social Care chamber.

Her cases include:

- Securing appropriate medical treatment for individuals lacking capacity.
- Advocating for the removal of individuals from unsuitable placements, such as hospital wards or temporary accommodations.
- Ensuring court oversight over the detention of vulnerable adults in police custody.
- Supporting local authorities in challenging the validity of lasting power of attorney arrangements.
- Preparing or responding to plans authorising the physical use of force by care providers.
- Advising care providers on their obligations in respect of service users with complex conditions and
- Defending individuals' rights in cases involving contraception decisions, use of physical force in care transitions, and Deputyship appointments.

Membership:

- Court of Protection Bar Association.

Inquests

Saara is a highly regarded 'Leading Junior' specialising in Inquests and Inquiries, recognised for her "*carefully considered and effective advocacy*" (Legal 500 – 2023). She provides expert legal representation in both jury and non-jury inquests, acting for a diverse range of interested persons, including bereaved families, local authorities, healthcare providers, central government departments, and police forces. Her experience encompasses both Article 2 and non-Article 2 inquests, demonstrating her ability to navigate complex legal and factual issues with precision and diligence.

Saara approaches inquest proceedings with a deep appreciation of their dual legal and human dimensions. She offers clients not only robust legal representation but also strategic foresight, identifying potential issues that may not be immediately apparent and providing well-considered advice to address them effectively. Her prior experience in government legal departments and at a leading healthcare law firm has given her a comprehensive understanding of organisational structures, regulatory frameworks, and operational challenges, enabling her to identify key evidential issues and address anticipated Regulation 28 concerns with confidence.

Her expertise in [judicial review proceedings](#) and [civil claims](#) concerning inquests allows her to bring valuable insight into how these processes interact within the broader legal landscape.

Recognising the weight of inquest proceedings, Saara is adept at engaging with clients with empathy and reassurance, ensuring they feel supported throughout the process. She communicates with witnesses sensitively yet incisively, balancing the need for rigorous questioning with a measured and respectful approach. Her meticulous advocacy ensures that her clients' interests are robustly advanced while maintaining the highest standards of professionalism and integrity.

Her expertise extends across a broad range of inquest matters, including but not limited to:

- The pursuit of suspected offenders.
- The use of tramadol in patients with COPD, sleep apnoea and suffering from obesity.
- A bilateral lung transplant.
- Alleged failures to provide medical treatment for bedsores.
- Alleged failures by care providers and commissioners to apply to the Court of Protection for the treatment of a service user.
- Resuscitation efforts following choking and implementation of DNAR.
- Alleged failures in the provision of support to prevent suicide.
- Alleged failures to utilise section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983 to detain a person.

Public Inquiries

Saara is a highly regarded 'Leading Junior' in Inquests and Inquiries (Legal 500). She brings strategic insight and a proactive approach to complex legal matters, helping organisations navigate high-profile public inquiries with confidence.

With experience representing Core Participants and advising organisations without core participant status, Saara excels in anticipating challenges and delivering tailored solutions. She is adept at marshalling vast amounts of complex documentation and identifying key evidence, ensuring her clients are well-prepared at every stage of the process.

Saara's background in government legal departments and a top-tier healthcare law firm gives her a unique ability to understand operational structures and organisational realities. She has a proven track record of drafting successful Rule 14 responses and contextualising potential criticisms to safeguard her clients' reputations. Her meticulous and strategic approach ensures that organisations can engage with inquiries effectively.

Featured inquiries include:

- Module lead counsel on Module 5 on Procurement in the COVID-19 Inquiry; and
- Investigation into "Religious Organisations and Settings" in the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse.

Information Law

Saara represents both claimants and defendants in privacy, confidentiality, data protection, freedom of information, and harassment claims, as well as matters involving reporting restrictions. She has a strong command of UKGDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Her passion is digital technology and its intersection with law, business, and society. She is particularly interested in the legal and societal implications of rapid digital transformation, including how emerging technologies – especially artificial intelligence – challenge privacy norms and impact equality and individual autonomy.

As a Certified International Privacy Professional (CIPP/E), she advises on data privacy, cybersecurity, AI ethics, and emerging tech regulations, helping organisations and public authorities navigate the evolving digital landscape. Her ability to simplify complex legal and technological issues makes her a trusted advisor for businesses, policymakers, and innovators.

She possesses strong expertise in the intersection of data protection and information law, [judicial review](#), and [civil claims](#) concerning the processing of personal data, bringing valuable insight into how these processes interact.

Memberships: International Association of Privacy Professionals

Notable Information Law cases

Advising public authorities on their policies on the use of social media in their operations, including the equality and human rights impacts.

R (on the application of S) v Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police [2023] EWCA Civ 240

concerning a challenge to the accuracy of police records following a welfare visit.

R (on the application of Suleiman & UNJUST) v Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis

concluded in November 2022, and concerned the data protection implications of the operation of the Gangs Violence Matrix.

Representing defendants in applications for compliance orders seeking data following subject access requests for personal data exchanged between domestic and international law enforcement agencies.

Advising defendants on the disclosure of third-party data in decisions concerning Disclosure and Barring Service certificates.

Representing organisations facing compensation claims in respect of digital data breaches, cyber attacks, and/or alleged failures to comply subject access requests for personal data collected for law enforcement purposes.

The unlawful disclosure of healthcare data by a town council in a public meeting.

Representing a claimant on the unlawful disclosure of an inaccurate summary of the individual's conviction in a Parole Board report in the prison setting.

Advising organisations on privacy policies.

Personal Injury

Recognised by the Legal 500 as a 'Leading Junior' in Administrative Law and Human Rights law, Saara is a highly experienced legal professional dealing with personal injury claims arising from alleged breaches in the delivery of public services and functions. Her portfolio covers key sectors including equality and human rights law, health and social care, criminal justice, and immigration.

She regularly represents public authorities in claims arising out physical and sexual abuse, failure to remove, and adult social care cases. She is an effective trial advocate known for her astute litigation skills and pragmatic, strategic advice to secure the best possible outcome for her clients. She communicates with witnesses sensitively yet incisively, balancing the need for rigorous questioning with a measured and respectful approach. Her meticulous advocacy ensures that her clients' interests are robustly advanced while maintaining the highest standards of professionalism and integrity.

As a member of the *Attorney General's B Panel of Counsel*, Saara is trusted to represent central government and public bodies in high-profile and legally complex cases. Saara is distinguished by her ability to break down complex legal issues into clear, relatable concepts.

Saara authored '*A Practical Guide to Non-Pecuniary Damages in Human Rights Act Claims*' with Paige Jones in November 2024. This authoritative guide is a vital resource for legal professionals navigating the complexities of human rights damages awards. She is a member of the *Equality and Human Rights Commission's B Panel of Counsel*.

Her cases span a diverse range of critical issues, including:

- Abuse and failure to remove cases;
- The provision of adult social care;
- Data privacy, retention, and processing compliance
- Prison conditions and offender management
- Alleged failures to investigate crime;
- Alleged operational failures in the prevention and detection of crime; and
- Military claims involving both civilians and personnel

Memberships: Personal Injury Bar Association

Notable Personal Injury cases

Alseran v Ministry of Defence [2017] EWHC 3289 (QB)

Civil human rights claims for damages by Iraqi civilians arising from the 2003 to 2009 Iraq War.

A test case concerning prison conditions during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A claim concerning the provision of reasonable adjustments for disabled court users.

A claim concerning the transfer of a transgender prisoner to open conditions during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Claims concerning the care arrangements for vulnerable adults deprived of their liberty.

Education & Qualifications

LLB Law, University of Warwick

LLM in Public Law and Human Rights, University College London

Memberships

- Attorney General's B Panel of Counsel
- Equality and Human Rights Commission's B Panel of Counsel
- Administrative Law Bar Association
- Human Rights Lawyers Association

- Court of Protection Bar Association
- International Association of Privacy Professionals
- Personal Injury Bar Association
- Employment Lawyers Association
- Discrimination Lawyers' Association
- She has Security Check clearance
- She is qualified for public access

Awards

