



CHRIS CANNING

Year of call
2014

Chris Canning is a mixed civil and criminal practitioner.

He practises in personal injury, clinical negligence, crime, employment and general civil work. His civil practice includes claims valued in excess of £1m. He has appeared in criminal trials which have attracted national notoriety. His work sometimes overlaps the civil and criminal jurisdictions and he has appeared in both divisions of the Court of Appeal.

Chris is qualified to accept instructions directly from clients and is registered under the Bar Council's Public Access Scheme, meaning that members of the public who seek specialist advice can come direct to him. In addition, he welcomes instructions from solicitors, in-house law departments, qualified foreign lawyers, and clients licensed by the Bar Council to give instructions direct to barristers under the Bar Council's Licensed Access Scheme. For more information please visit our Direct Access page [here](#).

LEGAL EXPERTISE

Crime

Chris prosecutes and defends. He is a Grade 2 CPS advocate.

Chris has appeared in some of the most complex cases prosecuted in the Midlands in recent years. Between 2017 and 2019 he prosecuted members of the Rooney family in a series of trials in Nottingham and Leicester. The case was the longest and most complex prosecution for modern slavery offences ever conducted in this country. The defendants recruited homeless men to work in the building trade and forced them to live and labour in degrading conditions, some for over 20 years. The case was widely reported in the national media. In 2018 and 2019 Chris also acted in long trials involving allegations of sex trafficking; courier fraud; and money laundering.

In recent years Chris has defended allegations of serious violence, offences related to firearms, and dishonesty. In 2018 he defended one of the leaders of a proscribed terrorist organisation at Birmingham Crown Court, in one of the trials concerning the far-right *National Action* group.

Chris acts for defendants not only in England but also offshore. He is instructed to advise on general criminal work in Jersey and the Isle of Man, but he has also advised offshore entities on their compliance with anti-money laundering and other quasi-criminal legislation. The nature of that work is generally confidential.

Chris is also regularly instructed by the National Crime Agency to advise and provide representation in relation to complex ongoing investigations.

Selected Cases

[R v A & Ors \(2019\)](#)

Acted in a series of trials in which the defendants were charged with courier fraud and money laundering.

[R v D \(2018\)](#)

Appeared for the main defendant in one of the National Action trials.

[R v Csomor & Os \(2018\)](#)

Prosecuted a sex trafficking and prostitution ring.

[R v Rooney & Ors \(2017-2019\)](#)

Prosecuted (as a led junior) a series of trials concerning the most complex investigation into modern slavery ever conducted in this country.

Clinical Negligence

Clinical negligence is one of Chris' core practice areas. He acts mainly for claimants. He appears on behalf of families at inquests; advises on liability and quantum; pleads claims against clinicians and institutions; and appears frequently at interim hearings and case management conferences.

Selected Cases

Advising a claimant on causes of action when a hospital failed to comply with her advance directive to refuse life-saving treatment.

Advising on liability and quantum where women suffer obstetric and gynaecological injuries.

Advising on liability and settlement and pleading a range of cases involving orthopaedic injuries caused by late diagnoses, missed diagnoses, and negligent surgery.

Pleading and advising on settlement in dental cases arising from failure to treat tooth decay.

Ineffective diagnostic techniques; inadequate management of periodontitis; and other negligent dental interventions.

Pleading cases arising out of mistakes in labelling patients' samples, GPs' failures to refer patients to consultants, and failures of clinicians to obtain appropriate consent to treatment.

Personal Injury

Chris receives instructions for both claimants and defendants. He has experience of acting in cases where claimants are injured, or allegedly injured, in road traffic accidents. He has successfully pursued and defended allegations of fraud. He has also acted in many trials concerning Highways Authorities' breaches of section 41 of the Highways Act 1980, and their defence under section 58. He is instructed in employers' and public liability cases.

Selected Cases

Acting for a claimant who fell through a void in a scaffold and sustained multiple orthopaedic injuries to his back.

Representing a claimant at trial and on appeal where she sustained a mild brain injury when a car park barrier descended on her head.

Advising in cases where children have been injured by defective equipment in parks and play areas.

Employment

Chris acts for both sides in employment law. He has experience of bringing and contesting claims for unfair dismissal; claims for holiday pay or other unlawful deductions from wages; for whistleblowing and discrimination. In 2019 Chris appeared for five claimants in a two-week employment tribunal, in which the claimants variously brought claims of ss. 15 and 19 discrimination, and constructive unfair dismissal. The case featured a dense statistical defence of justification. In June 2019 judgment was handed down upholding all of the claims.

In an appropriate case Chris is prepared to act on Damages Based Agreement. He is instructed by trade unions

or individual claimants and employers on a roughly 60/40 split.

Selected Cases

Harris & Ors v South West Ambulance Service Trust (2019)

Successfully appeared for five claimants in a 2-week trial, in which a group of paramedics and associated staff brought claims of ss 15 and 19 discrimination and constructive unfair dismissal following the decision of an ambulance trust to reform rota patterns to meet patient demand.

N v Burundi Embassy (2018-present)

Instructed by an embassy in a claim which asserts a defence of diplomatic immunity.

D v A (2017)

Appeared for the respondent in a tribunal in which the Claimant claimed unfair dismissal after he was dismissed following an ill-judged remark to a colleague and EU national regarding the Brexit vote.

Commercial

In commercial and general civil law, Chris is instructed in cases of contractual disputes and breach of statutory duties. He is frequently instructed on behalf of a national firm of bailiffs in cases where debtors or third-party claimants contest seizures of goods. He provides advice, pleading and representation to businesses seeking damages for unpaid invoices where there is some contractual complexity. He also has experience of professional negligence claims relating to defective building work and disrepair.

Selected Cases

Howard v Dalton (2019)

Successfully appeared for the appellant landlord in a case concerning the imposition of draconian statutory penalties for successive failure to protect tenant deposits.

K v MS (2018)

Representing a defendant, a colleague of the claimant, sued in the county court for harassment and battery arising out of alleged conduct at work.

Loson v Newlyn Plc (2017-2018)

Appeared at first instance and on appeal for a firm of bailiffs in case concerning the correct approach to an application to vary a judgment order.

Consumer Contract Work

Chris acts for consumers and businesses in consumer contract disputes. He has acted in many claims arising out of breaches of implied contractual terms under the Consumer Rights Act 2015. Chris' recent work includes advising claimants in cases relating to sub-standard care provided by residential care homes; advising landlords on unfair terms in contracts for services with letting agencies; and acting for universities in claims against students who defaulted on their agreements to pay tuition fees.

In the context of the Covid-19 / Coronavirus pandemic, Chris is currently advising consumers on their claims for refunds arising out of travel and accommodation fees incurred for trips which are now impossible. In the related employment context, he has been instructed to advise on the rights of employees and employers under the new furlough provisions, and on pay issues such as the interplay between statutory sick pay and contractual sick pay where employees self-isolate.

Chris is public access qualified. He is able to give advice by telephone or by video conference to businesses and consumers on their pandemic rights.

Appointments

- CPS Advocate (Grade 2)

Memberships

- Action Against Medical Accidents
- Criminal Bar Association
- Employment Lawyers Association
- Personal Injuries Bar Association
- Young Fraud Lawyers Association
- Gray's Inn