

Poonam Bhari

Year of Call: 1999

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Overview

Poonam Bhari practices in all aspects of family law, with experience in complex public law proceedings, private law applications, international child law and financial remedy applications.

Poonam also undertakes Court of Protection cases (health and welfare).

In her first five years in practice Poonam also undertook immigration and criminal law cases.

Poonam is able to accept direct public access cases.

Poonam can speak and take instructions in conversational Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu.

Poonam was selected as one of the six finalists for the prestigious Inspirational Women in Law Awards in 2019.

In 2021 Poonam was appointed by the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice as a member of the Family Procedure Rule Committee.

Recommendations

'Poonam is a brilliant and effective communicator, not just on a professional level with Instructing Solicitors and the other parties but also with the lay clients and any relevant support networks that they have.'

Legal 500 2022/Child Law (public and private)/Midlands Circuit

'Her client handling is excellent.'

Legal 500 2021/Child Law (public and private)/Midlands

'A superb advocate.'

Legal 500 2021/Children Law (including public and private law)/London

'A strong family law generalist.'

Legal 500 2020/Family and Children Law/Midlands

'Outstanding with clients and an excellent advocate.'

Legal 500 2020/Children Law (including public and private law)/London

"A family law specialist"

Legal 500 2018/19/Family and Children Law/Midlands

"An empathetic advocate"

Legal 500 2018/19/Children Law (including public and private law)/London

“Thank you Poonam and thank you so much for your hard work and advice this week”

Social worker

Academic qualifications

- B.Ed (Hons)
- MA in Education
- Graduate Diploma in Professional Studies
- Graduate Certificate in Applied Professional Studies
- Graduate Diploma in Law
- Bar Vocational Course
- Trained Mediator (CALM Mediation, Open College Network)

Professional qualifications & appointments

- Family Procedure Rule Committee Member (March 2021 to date)
- Trained Mediator (CALM Mediation)

Professional bodies

Current:

- Family Law Bar Association (West Midlands)
- LexisNexis case analysis panel
- Middle Temple
- Midland Circuit Women’s Forum committee member

Previous:

- Association of Lawyers for Children executive committee member 2016-2018
- FLBA committee member 2006-2008
- Fellow of Royal Society of Arts (FRSA)
- Legal Action Group (Charity) member 2004-2016; Chair of Board of Trustees 2006-2016
- The General Council of the Bar (Elected Member 2006-2008; Member of GMC and various Bar Council committees)
- West London Law Society

Family

Poonam Bhari appears in the Family Court and specialises in public law children cases where there are allegations of sexual abuse, non-accidental injuries, death of a parent. Poonam undertakes cases with an international element including forced marriage, validity of a marriage and child abduction cases.

Poonam acts for parents, children's guardians, the Official Solicitor and local authorities in public law children cases. Poonam has represented clients with mental health and learning difficulties and clients from minority ethnic groups.

During 2000-2005 Poonam undertook criminal and immigration law cases. She represented the Home Office and appellants in immigration hearings before the tribunal in relation to both asylum and human rights claims.

Poonam undertakes voluntary work. She has reviewed cases for the Bar Pro Bono Unit. Poonam was a Trustee of Legal Action Group (Charity) from 2004 to 2016 and Chair of the Board of Trustees for over 10 years. Poonam has been an Executive Committee member of the Association of Lawyers for Children.

Poonam was a former schoolteacher and special educational needs co-coordinator before retraining as a barrister.

Reported Cases

- Re S (A Child) (Hague Convention 1980: Return to Third State) [2019] EWCA Civ 352
- S (Father) v D (Mother) [2019] EWHC 56 (Fam)
- HA (A Child : placement of a child abroad) [2019] EWFC B2
- M v F [2018] EWHC 1949 (Fam)
- Medway Council v MI & Ors [2017] EWFC 59
- Medway Council v MI & Ors [2016] EWFC 74
- Re B and E (children), [2015] EWFC B203
- Re M'P-P (Children), Re [2015] EWCA Civ 584
- A & Anor v A Local Authority & Anor [2014] EWHC 4816 (Fam)
- Birmingham City Council v Riaz & Ors (Rev 3) [2014] EWHC 4247 (Fam)
- Re O (A Child), Re [2012] EWCA Civ 1955
- Re O (A Child), Re [2012] EWCA Civ 1576
- Re C (A Child) [2009] EWCA Civ 72

Publications

- Provision of undertakings in response to defence under Article 13(b) of Hague Convention 1980 (S (Father) v D (Mother)) - This article was first published on Lexis@PSL Family on 28 January 2019.
- Experts: Maintaining and Expanding the Pool, Family Law February 2005. Co - Author: Dr Claire Sturge
- Transparency in Family Proceedings, The Circuiteer, Spring 2007, Issue 24
- Family Affairs - FLBA Newsletter - Occasional Contributor [1999 - 2006]
- Children Law UK Newsletter - Occasional Contributor [1999 - 2006]