



PROBATE AND ESTATE ADMINISTRATION

TYPICAL LEGAL COSTS Updated 23/10/2023

HOW MUCH DO WE CHARGE?

OUR FEES

Standard probate work

Applying for a 'Grant of Probate' and collecting and distributing assets in a 'simple' matter is the most common type of probate work which we deal with. Namely, where someone has passed away leaving a valid will which is not disputed, the beneficiaries can be easily ascertained and there is not a very large or complex estate to divide up.

VAT is charged at 20%.

Our fees for this work will either be agreed with you as a fixed sum at the start of our work together or based on how much time it takes to deal with your case. Our standard hourly rates for probate work are £250 plus VAT. Normally a straightforward fairly low value estate takes between five and seven hours work at £250 per hour plus VAT. Total costs for straightforward estates therefore tend to be in the region of £1,250 - £1,750 plus VAT. Fixed fees would typically fall within these ballpark estimates also. We can also assist on an application only fixed fee basis where we are only involved in the completion and submission of the application for probate. For non-taxable application only matters our fixed fee starts at £800 plus VAT.

The total costs will depend upon how straightforward or complicated the case is. For example, if someone has died leaving only one beneficiary in an undisputed will and no property, then costs would be at the lower end of the range because it will be simple to administer. If there are multiple beneficiaries, a property and multiple bank accounts however, costs will be at the higher end even if the will is still not disputed.

We have provided three example estimates below:

Example 1:

Non-taxable estate covered by a simple Will comprising of one bank, one national savings product and one shareholding. The estate is to be divided between two residuary beneficiaries. Our fees would range from £1,400 to £1,600 (plus VAT plus disbursements)

Example 2:

Non-taxable estate covered by a simple Will, but where a full inheritance tax account needs to be submitted because the residence nil rate band is required. The estate comprises of one bank, one national savings product, one investment and a property. The estate is to be divided between two residuary beneficiaries. Our fees would range from £4,200 to £4,600 (plus VAT plus disbursements). Any conveyancing work would be quoted separately by our property team.

Example 3:

Taxable estate covered by a simple Will and requiring the submission of an inheritance tax account and the payment of inheritance tax. The residence nil rate band and the transferrable nil rate band both need to be

claimed. The estate comprises of five banks, one national savings product, four investments and two properties. The estate is to be divided between three residuary beneficiaries and seven specific legatees. Our fees would range from £9,600 to £10,600 (plus VAT plus disbursements). Any conveyancing work would be quoted separately by our property team.

We would still be delighted to work with you in more complicated matters but would need to give you a quotation for the work tailored to your individual circumstances. Please contact us to learn more.

DISBURSEMENTS

Disbursements are payments that we make to third parties on your behalf. These are separate payments for which the estate is liable in addition to our costs as described above.

Typical disbursements in Probate matters are:

- Probate application fee, which is currently: £273 plus £1.50 for every extra office copy of the Grant of Probate which you require;
- Land registry bankruptcy search fees: £2;
- Legal notice which requires posting in the London Gazette (this can help protect against unexpected claims from unknown creditors): £91 plus VAT;
- Certainty combined search of the National Will Register / Reach search: £105 plus VAT; and
- Financial Assets Search: £160 plus VAT

OTHER COSTS TO CONSIDER

Please note that the costs estimates above do not include any additional costs incurred in disposing of estate assets such as the sale of any property or business. Our property team will be happy to provide you with a quote to assist you with any conveyancing work required.

HOW LONG WILL THIS TAKE?

Generally speaking, 'simple' estate matters such as those described above can normally be dealt with within three to six months. This is broken down into the following stages, with rough time estimates for each stage as follows:

- notifying asset holders, placing legal notices and applying for probate: one to two months;
- the probate registry are currently quoting 16 weeks from receiving the application to issuing the grant;
- distributing the assets: approximately one to two months; and
- Preparing the estate accounts – once the estate is finalised we can generally prepare these in one to two weeks.

KEY STAGES OF YOUR CASE

The precise stages involved vary according to the circumstances. The guidance on our fees above covers the work in relation to the following key stages of a 'simple' probate process:

- Identifying the executors and beneficiaries
- Checking the type of Probate application you will require
- Obtaining the relevant documents required to make the application
- Completing the Probate Application and the relevant HMRC forms
- Preparing the legal statement for signature
- Making the application for probate via our firm's online portal with HMCTS
- Obtaining the Probate and distributing copies as necessary
- Collecting and distributing the assets of the estate

It would not normally be necessary to undertake other work or incur costs other than those described above. However, we would be very happy to provide you with a more tailored quote for all stages of your particular case once we know about your specific circumstances. We are happy to provide as much or as little assistance as you may require.

Who will be dealing with my matter?

Your probate matter will be handled by one of our partners on our experienced probate team. The partners on this department are:

<p>Martin Chandler</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admitted as a solicitor 01/10/1985 • Able to assist with all probate matters. 	<p>Stuart Hyden</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admitted as a solicitor 01/06/2009 • Able to assist with all probate matters.
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Martin and Stuart may be assisted from time to time by other experienced legal advisors and paralegals specialised in this area of law.