

## Our Non-Contentious Probate Pricing

### *SRA Pricing Transparency*

#### **The First Step**

Whichever Service you select below, we will always need to meet with you initially whether that be in person or virtually.

Your meeting with one of our experts usually takes just over an hour and we will try to establish which of the services listed below service would be most appropriate for you and your circumstances. We want to ensure during this stressful period, our trusted advisors are on hand to guide, advise and reassure you. Based on your initial meeting, your matter will be assigned to an expert in the team with the appropriate level of qualification and expertise and you will be made aware of who will be dealing with your matter on your behalf along with details of their hourly rate and the arrangements to be put in place to supervise their work.

Our initial meeting is charged on the basis of the time spent with you and we always let you know who you will be meeting and how much we charge you for their time. Following the meeting, if you decide to instruct us to undertake any of the services below, the costs of the meeting will form part of the overall quote we will provide you. If you choose to take our advice only we will only charge for the time spent with you at the meeting. Provided we have sufficient time in advance of the meeting, you will receive a letter from the expert you will be meeting confirming their details including their hourly rate (their hourly fee).

#### **Professional Fees**

Our professional fees will vary depending upon the terms of the Will (or if the deceased died intestate, the extent of their family tree), the complexity of the estate and the type of assets they owned. Our professional fees do not include VAT, this will be charged in addition.

Unlike many of our competitors, we do not charge for the administration of an estate in terms of a percentage of the gross estate value. We do not believe that value of an estate necessarily equates with the complexity or indeed the amount of work that might be required to administer the estate.

Our overall professional fees for dealing with the administration of an estate are usually calculated on a time spent basis of the expert or experts helping you. This is opposed to a fixed fee arrangement whereby the total professional fees is set at the beginning of the matter. The hourly fee of the expert helping you is broken down into minimum 6 minute “units” of time.

The hourly rates of our experts are as follows:

- Paralegal from £150 - £165
- Solicitor / Legal Executive from £165 to £200
- Associate from £240 to £255
- Legal Director from £270 to £285
- Partner £320

We always ensure that the right person at the right level manages your matter and the appropriate level of supervision is on hand.

It is very difficult to provide an overall quote for our professional fees without knowledge of the estate and what it contains, however, as a guide, our professional fees for full estate administration will typically range between from £6,000 – £10,000 for a straightforward estate whilst fees for complex estates can and will sometimes exceed £20,000. The overall costs associated with your particular matter is likely to fall within this range and we can narrow the range of costs down for you more accurately once we have been made aware of the work that will be required.

If you simply want us to obtain the Grant of Representation (often called a “Grant of Probate”) on your behalf, our charges will range as follows:

- A fixed fee of £2,000 if the simpler Inheritance Tax form is required (or not required at all for deaths occurring after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022) (for smaller, non- Inheritance Tax bearing estates); or
- if the more complex Inheritance Tax form is required (for larger, Inheritance Tax bearing estates) we would recommend you utilize our Bespoke Service as detailed below.

If, however, you wish to instruct us to provide any of our other Services (as detailed below), we will be able to provide you with a more accurate indication of our likely professional fees once we have established the relevant details about your particular matter.

Due to the number of possible considerations which can impact on what work we need to carry out for clients it is often impractical to provide you with a maximum estimate of the costs, for example, the factors that determine our professional fees include:

- The terms of the Will (or extent of family tree);
- The number, location and complexity of assets;
- The number, location and type of beneficiaries;
- Whether the estate attracts Inheritance Tax and whether any reliefs are available;
- Whether there are family members or friends available to undertake non-legal tasks within the administration process;
- Whether the Personal Representatives encounter difficulties with dealing with Beneficiaries or other third parties connected with the estate;
- Whether any advice is required as to likely claims against the estate;
- If there is an asset in the estate requiring specialist attention;
- If the DWP issue a claim against the estate
- Whether HM Revenue & Customs investigate the deceased’s lifetime tax affairs
- Whether HM Revenue & Customs investigate the valuations placed on assets for Inheritance Tax/Capital Gains Tax purposes. This can involve protracted negotiations with third party professional valuers whose costs will be in addition to our own.

It is often impossible to know whether any of these factors will be relevant at the outset of the matter and they may only become known once a quote has been provided and a degree of work has already been undertaken on your behalf. As soon as we are aware of any factors that will impact on the level of professional fees and/or disbursements (see below) payable, we will notify you and provide you with an indication of the likely impact.

Costs can be reduced considerably if family members are prepared to help with the non-legal tasks such as clearing personal items, meeting with estate agents and transferring utility accounts. These aspects can often be time-consuming but do not usually require our expertise.

## **Time Frames**

In most cases it takes around 3 – 6 months to obtain a Grant of Representation and a further 6 - 8 months to complete the estate administration. In some straightforward cases the administration may be completed within 6 months whilst it may take longer than 18 months to finalise the administration of more complex, taxable estates. We will provide you with frequent updates on timeframes as your matter progresses.

A great deal of the administration process is outside of our direct control. For example, the amount of time taken by third party institutions to process requests for information, the amount of time taken by the Probate Registry to accept and progress applications for the Grant of Representation and perhaps most significantly, the amount of time it can take for matters to be dealt with by HM Revenue & Customs can all impact on the time taken to administer an estate.

## **Our Services**

### **1. Grant Only Service**

Our Grant Only Service can be a quick, simple and cost effective way to obtain a Grant of Representation in a non-taxable estate. It is only advisable to use this service where an estate is straightforward and the personal representatives are confident with dealing with the ongoing administration themselves.

Using this service, our experts will draft the documents (including an IHT205 if applicable) you need in order to obtain the Grant of Representation using information provided by you. We will provide you with a questionnaire which you will be required to complete. We will rely on the information provided and we will not provide any advice as to the accuracy of the information provided to HM Revenue & Customs. We will not be able to complete the work required to apply for the Grant of Representation without having been provided with all the information needed from you.

Our Grant Only Service fixed fee is £2,000 plus VAT.

However, we can provide general advice as to the next steps in the administration process once the Grant of Representation has been obtained should you opt for the Grant and Advice Service (as detailed below).

### **2. Grant and Advice Service**

Our Grant and Advice Service is ideal for those that will require additional advice as to their legal obligations and advice relating to estate administration process once the Grant of Representation has been obtained.

We will require you to provide all of the information to enable us to complete the paperwork needed to apply for the Grant of Representation as in the Grant Only Service.

If you wish for us to undertake the work rather than simply advise you of what work is required, we suggest you select the Bespoke Service as detailed below.

### **3. Bespoke Service**

Our Bespoke Service is ideal for those who need more help getting started with the estate administration process but who still feel confident in dealing with the estate once the Grant of Representation is obtained. We find it most appropriate when Inheritance Tax is payable

as we can take the worry out of the process by ensuring the correct amount of Inheritance Tax is paid and on time.

In addition to the work that we will carry out under the Grant Only Service, we will also carry out the initial fact finding to establish the extent of the assets and liabilities of the estate.

Having obtained the Grant of Representation for you, you then undertake the majority of the remaining necessary tasks yourself, however, we are on hand at your request to step in and take the burden away by carrying out certain elements of the work we would ordinarily offer within our Premium Service. Of course, we will advise you as to the likely additional costs that will be incurred at the appropriate point in time so that you can make the right decision for you.

#### **4. Premium Service**

By far our most popular service, the Premium Service is designed to ensure that we deal with everything that the administration of an estate process will usually entail. In addition to the tasks undertaken within our Bespoke Service we will also see the administration of the estate through to the end with you.

We would refer you to our Probate Pricing information sheet which includes details of other factors which could increase our overall professional fees.

## Estate Expenses/Disbursements

Below is an extensive list of the types of third party expenses (also known as disbursements) that may be incurred during your matter which are in addition to our professional fees. The list is not exhaustive but is an indication of the common types that we often come across. Not all of these will be incurred during the administration of every estate – we will be able to give you a clearer idea as to what to expect once we have met with you.

Details of Disbursement/Expense	Likely Cost	VAT Chargeable?	When due
Probate Registry Application Fee	£273 (plus £1.50 per Court Sealed	No	Upon application for Grant of Representation
Probate Registry Settling Fee	£12 (per settled Oath)	No	Upon request to the Probate Registry
Office Copy Entries – Land Registry	£3 per title	Yes	Upon application to the Land Registry
Property Valuation Fee	£150 to £500 (estimated)	Yes	Upon receipt of the valuation report
Asset Valuation Fee (such as chattels and business interests)	£150 to £2,500 (estimated – dependent on asset type)	Yes	Upon receipt of the valuation report
Genealogy Fees	£dependent on instructions provided	Yes	Upon receipt of their findings
Beneficiary Bankruptcy searches	£2 per beneficiary (per distribution)	Yes	At the outset of the matter and upon each distribution to them
Foreign Beneficiary Bankruptcy searches	£dependent on jurisdiction of beneficiary	No	At the outset of the matter and upon each distribution to them
House Clearance Costs	£dependent on amount to be cleared	Yes	Upon completion of the house clearance
BACs Fees (electronic payment fees)	£10 for next day (dependent on amount)	Yes	Upon making payment
Lawyer Checker Fee	£1.67	Yes	Upon making payment
Estate Agent Fees	£dependent on value of property	Yes	Upon completion of the sale of the property
Copy Death Certificate Fees	£9.50 per copy	No	Upon registering the death
Copy Grant of Representation Fees	£10 per copy	No	Upon application for copy
Section 27 Trustee Act notice fees	£150 to £300 (dependent on publication)	Yes	Upon placing the adverts
Unknown/dormant asset search fees	£135	Yes	Upon receiving their findings
Indemnity Fees (lost share certificates, lost policy documents)	£dependent on value of shareholding	Yes	Upon provision of the indemnity (usually when shares are to be sold/transferred)

## Team details

Below is a list of fee earners within Shakespeare Martineau's Private Client team across the firm's offices together with confirmation of their respective hourly rates. You are likely to deal with more than one of the fee earners during your matter.

Name of Fee Earner	Job Title	Hourly rate (£) as at 01/06/2021*
Lesley Davis	Partner	350
Suzanne Leggott	Partner	350
Virginia Harvey	Partner	350
Hannah Tait	Partner	350
Iwan Williams	Partner	350
Verity Kirby	Legal Director	350
Sarah Brack	Legal Director	300
Matt Parr	Legal Director	300
Jayne Leedham	Associate	255
Ben Sharp	Associate	240
Elaine Hart	Legal Executive	210
Kathleen Ryan	Solicitor	200
Paul McMaster	Solicitor	195
Victoria Taylor	Solicitor	195
Lauren Crowhurst	Solicitor	180
Kuldeep Chauhan	Solicitor	165
Nicola Leeson	Paralegal	165
Jessica Rhodes	Solicitor	165
Helen Pole	Trust Administrator	150
Jade Vickers	Paralegal	150
Georgina Luckman	Paralegal	150
Megan Wendler	Paralegal	150
Leanne Wilkinson	PA	90
Simran Kaur	Legal Secretary	90

\*All hourly rates are subject to annual review and the hourly rates of the fee earners managing your matter will be highlighted in our client engagement correspondence at the outset of the matter.