

UNCONTESTED PROBATE - PRICING INFORMATION

We charge for legal work in relation to obtaining a Grant of Representation (whether a Grant of Probate or a Grant of Letters of Administration when there is an intestacy) and assisting in the administration of an estate on the basis of time recorded by us. Many firms also charge a fee related to the value of an estate in addition to time recorded. This is permitted by the Solicitors' Regulation Authority but we at Goodman Derrick do not believe that it represents a fair way of charging because it does not reflect the amount of work involved.

Our hourly charging rates vary according to the level of experience of our lawyers and we aim to deliver a high quality service in all matters relating to the administration of the Estate, from the giving of the initial instructions to the final distribution of the Estate. The team has particular expertise in high value estates and inheritance tax. Ordinarily one member of our team will have conduct of your matter but where appropriate we will involve other members in order that work is carried out at the right level. Whoever works on your matter, their work will be supervised by a partner.

At what is often a very difficult time for clients, we pride ourselves on being sensitive to your particular needs and requirements while providing an efficient service. We will assist you to whatever extent you wish; you do not need to hand over the entire administration of an estate to us. We are happy to liaise with your other advisers, such as your accountants and financial planners as appropriate.

Costs

It is understandably very difficult to estimate a likely fee before we know anything about the nature and complexity of a particular estate. However, as a rough guideline, fees up to the point of obtaining the Grant of Probate or Grant of Letters of Administration are likely to be between **£3,000 - £6,000** plus VAT for a relatively simple estate where inheritance tax is not payable and between **£6,000 - £12,000** plus VAT for more complex estates and where inheritance tax is relevant.

These estimates do not include disbursements such as Court probate fees and statutory advertisement fees which are charged separately.

Of course, it is difficult to estimate fees for very complex estates such as where there are assets outside the UK or there is a dispute over the Will, as this could increase fees significantly. We will always aim to give an accurate fee estimate at the outset but this is not always possible, particularly in the case of disputed probates or complicated intestacies. However we would keep you informed of future likely costs on a regular basis.

Our costs for administering the Estate after the Grant has been issued are based on the amount of time spent by us on the matter. This is dependent on a number of factors including whether any queries have been raised by HMRC in relation to the value of the Estate, if assets are difficult to sell or transfer to beneficiaries or where there are ongoing trusts arising from the Will or Estate. We would always aim to keep you informed on a regular basis of the costs accruing during the administration process.

Where the firm or a member of the firm is appointed an executor under the will then additional costs are likely to be charged consistent with the responsibility that an executorship entails.

Our hourly charging rates are as follows, excluding VAT at 20%:

NAME	ROLE	HOURLY RATE
Ian Bradshaw	Partner and Head of Private Client Department (supervisor)	£395 + VAT at 20%
Diana Rawstron	Consultant (supervisor)	£395 + VAT at 20%
Lilly Whale	Associate	£240 + VAT at 20%

We may be able to act on a fixed fee basis if requested.

Disbursements

Disbursements are costs related to your matter that are payable to third parties, such as the Probate Application fee. To ensure a smooth process we manage the payment of the disbursements on your behalf using money that you have placed on account.

DISBURSEMENTS	COST
Probate Application fee (where net estate is above £5,000)	£155
Sealed copies of the Grant (per copy)	£1.50
Bankruptcy search (per person)	£2 + VAT at 20%
Statutory Advertisements/notices	£200 - £300 plus VAT at 20%
HM Land Registry searches (per property)	£3

Billing

We will generally render our first invoice when the application for the Grant is made. Thereafter if we are assisting in the administration of the Estate, we will render an account at regular intervals, generally monthly or quarterly, to be agreed with you. Work after the Grant of Probate is issued generally includes settling debts, paying legacies, collecting and distributing assets, finalising inheritance tax and obtaining clearance from HMRC. Preparation of Estate tax returns and Estate Accounts are not included in our estimates of costs but we are happy to agree a process for these to be prepared.

Key Stages and Timescales

The exact timescale of the probate process will depend on a large variety of factors, including the complexity of the Estate and the speed with which third parties and executors respond to our queries. As a rough guideline, we would expect the entire process (from initial instruction to final distribution of the Estate) to take anywhere between 6 and 24 months, although particularly complicated Estates may take longer. The first stage of the process involves preliminary review, taking initial instructions and ascertaining the size and value of the deceased's Estate in order to prepare the inheritance tax account. This can take up to 6 months (and potentially longer), depending largely on the nature of the Estate and the speed at which third parties and

the executors respond to us. HMRC can take 6 to 8 weeks to issue a receipt, at which point we can then apply for the Grant of Probate or Letters of Administration. The Probate Registry can take around 8 weeks to issue a Grant. The second stage of the process post-Grant involves collecting in the deceased's assets and settling any liabilities, paying legacies and distributing the Estate, and sorting any outstanding tax issues. Timescales for this second stage will vary enormously between Estates and therefore are hard to predict accurately. If there are any ongoing trusts arising from the Will or Estate then the matter could continue for several years. Whatever the situation, we aim to keep you as informed and up to date as possible regarding timescales.

If you would like to consider instructing us in other matters such as the preparation of Wills, Lasting Powers of Attorney or inheritance tax planning, we will gladly discuss this with you and provide you with an estimate of our fees.