

Estimated Probate Fees

Our fees are split between two stages of instructions, 1) the work required to obtain the Grant of Probate (**Application**) and a separate future instruction for stage 2) the work required to Administer the Estate once the Grant has been received (**Administration**).

1. Estimated costs for stage 1) Applying for a Grant of Probate

Simple estates:

For a simple estate which is not liable to Inheritance Tax, we anticipate this will take between 7 and 14 hours of work @ £245 per hour plus 20% VAT (Fee Earner). The total costs for obtaining the Grant of Probate are estimated to be between a minimum of £1,500 to £3,000 per hour plus 20% VAT (plus disbursements). A minimum of £1,500 plus 20% VAT is applicable.

There are also disbursements that apply (fees payable to third parties such as the probate registry application fee) which are detailed under the heading disbursements in this document.

Our costs are worked out using the following hourly rates plus 20% VAT as a guide:

Grade of Fee Earner	£	20% VAT	£
Partner/Director	330.00	66.00	396.00
Senior Lawyer / Fee Earners	245.00	49.00	294.00
Lawyers / Senior Paralegals	195.00	39.00	234.00
Non-Legal Managers	165.00	33.00	198.00
Paralegals / Senior Trainees	150.00	30.00	180.00
Junior Trainees / Admin Assistants	100.00	20.00	120.00

The exact cost will depend on the individual circumstances of the matter.

For example, if there are minimal assets and no shares there will be less work required to obtain the figures necessary to draft the application, the costs can be at the lower end of the range for the application.

If there are multiple bank accounts, shares, property, investments, pensions and/or inheritance tax relief (exempted amount) calculations such as gifts that reduce the nil rate band, the costs will be at the higher end.

Our costs can be higher than our initial estimate when there are additional complexities requiring us to complete the more complex set of application forms:

Complex estates:

The more complex the estate the higher the likelihood of the application requiring HMRC's approval which will involve the more complex and costly IHT 400 application.

Sometimes due to complex circumstances, the estate will be required to apply with the more complex Inheritance Tax application (IHT 400) even when there is no Inheritance Tax to pay. This can happen when your probate practitioner will need to apply for Inheritance Tax reliefs.

- The estimate of our costs is a minimum of £3,500 plus 20% VAT (plus disbursements) but it can be up to £6,000 plus 20% VAT (plus disbursements).
- Examples when the more complex forms are required:
 - Significant gifts were made in the previous 7 years before death.
 - Inheritance Tax is due on the estate.
- If the estate is over £650,000 and requires IHT 400 to obtain the additional Residential Nil Rate Band inheritance tax mitigation.

The IHT 400 application has anticipated costs time recording of 7 to 27 hours, should this estimated time be exceeded we will update you.

We will update you if we are expecting to exceed our initial estimates above.

What our application fees do not cover:

After a Grant of Probate is issued, any work required for future stage 2: 'administration' of the estate (closing of bank accounts) will be costed separately.

For example, if we are to close any bank accounts during the application, this will also be time recorded in addition to our estimate.

Any sale or assent of property (conveyancing) will also be costed separately by our conveyancing department.

2. Estimated Costs for stage 2) Administration of the Estate

Where, following obtaining the Grant of Probate the Executors require us to administer the estate on their behalf, which includes calling in assets, and distributing to the beneficiaries in accordance with the terms of the Will we anticipate a further 7 – 14 hours work. Our Costs will be charge at an hourly rate of £245 per hour plus 20% VAT (Senior Lawyer / Fee Earners). We therefore estimate a further £1,500 to £3,000 plus 20% VAT (plus disbursements) for our time in dealing with the administration of the Estate.

- The exact cost will depend on the individual circumstances of the matter. For example, if there is one beneficiary and no property, costs will be at the lower end of the range. If there are multiple beneficiaries, shares, multiple bank accounts, costs will be at the higher end as our work is recorded on an hourly rate.

If conveyancing is required to sell property, there will be conveyancing costs in addition to the above estimate.

Our estimate in respect of the above assumes that:

- There is a valid will
- There is no more than one property
- There are no more than 3 bank or building society accounts
- There are no other intangible assets
- There are 1 - 4 beneficiaries
- The division is an equal split
- There are no Charitable beneficiaries
- There are no disputes between beneficiaries on division of assets. If disputes arise this is likely to lead to an increase in costs
- There is no inheritance tax payable and the executors do not need to submit a full account to HMRC
- There are no claims made against the estate or the validity of the Will.
- The named Executors are able and willing to act.
- Neither this firm nor any of the firms Directors are acting as Professional Executor and/or Trustee.

Disbursements

Disbursements are costs related to your matter that are payable to third parties, especially during the application process. The most frequent disbursement is the £273 probate application fee. There is also £1.50 for each additional copy. We order 5 copies as part of our ordinary process. We handle the payment of the disbursements on your behalf to ensure a smoother process.

Estimated anticipated disbursements payable in addition to the cost of obtaining probate:

Disbursements for stage 1) application:

- **Probate application fee** - currently £273
 - Please note that there is always the possibility that this fee can change if government policy changes.
- Optional: **Financial asset search:**
 - We can provide an additional service for £155 plus 20% VAT which is a comprehensive search of various financial companies, a search with the share registrar Equiniti and a credit report.
 - The financial assets and debts search is provided by a third party search provider and is useful when you do not know much about the finances of the person who died. It is also recommended to take out the additional search service to be sure you have made reasonable searches to find unknown assets that would otherwise simply become dormant accounts if unclaimed.
- **Land Registry** official copy searches £3 each (estimated £3 to £6)

- Additional copies of the Grant - £1.50 each
 - If any additional copies of the grant are required from the Probate Registry these will cost (subject to change by the Probate Registry) at the time of Application for the Grant of Probate £1.50 each.
 - We usually order 5 as standard at the time of application but you may require more if there are many assets.

Disbursements for stage 2) estate administration:

- Regulatory searches (£12 per executor/beneficiary).
- Deceased estate notice: £75.90 plus 20% VAT (subject to increase at the discretion of the London Gazette)
 - You may also request us to post a public notice in a Local Newspaper, the cost of which will vary depending upon the Local Newspaper.
- Electronic Transfer Fees: £50 plus 20% VAT per transfer in the UK.
 - For example, a transfer of the net residue to a beneficiary at the end of the administration, or transfers of any interim payment.
- Conveyancing costs:
 - Where we are instructed on the sale of a property included within the estate there will be additional costs payable to our Conveyancing Department in accordance with the guidance of Residential Sale Costs if you instruct us to sell the property.

Potential additional costs or disbursements:

- Share costs:
 - If there is no will or the estate consists of any share holdings (stocks and bonds) there are likely to be additional costs that could range significantly depending on the estate and how it is to be dealt with. The registrar who manages the share will charge their own fee for dealing with the sale of any shares. By the time the estate is administered the executors will find that the shares will have gone up or down as shares are not frozen.
- Unknown disbursements.
 - It is possible there could be other disbursements depending on the circumstances for example a qualified tax adviser may be required if the estate has income tax or capital gains tax considerations since the date of passing of the deceased.

How long will this take?

On average, estates that fall within this range are dealt with within 6 - 12 months. Typically, obtaining the grant of probate on average takes 16 weeks after application (while the probate registry have the application). If HMRC are involved then it will take a further 20 working days on average for them to deal with providing clearance to the inheritance tax accounts we submit to them on top of the 16 weeks the probate registry takes. There could be additional delays if there is no way to pay inheritance tax, in which case we will advise you on potential options which may be available to come to an agreement with HMRC regarding the inheritance tax due.

- Collecting assets and distribution follows after the grant of probate. You are welcome to instruct us on the administration of the estate after the grant of probate is issued. Precise timescales for this very much depend upon the banks and/or building societies with whom the accounts/assets are held and whether there is a property to sell and how quickly a sale is agreed. However, the majority of simple estate with which we deal are dealt through to final distribution within approximately 12 months.

Our Service includes:

- An experienced probate practitioner to work on your matter
- Identify the legally appointed executors or administrators
- Identify the type of Probate application you will require
- Obtain relevant documents required to make the application (information required to complete the statutory forms will need to be provided by the Executors/family/beneficiaries)
- Obtain figures from relevant banks and complete the Probate Application and the relevant HMRC forms
- Make the application to the Probate Court on your behalf
- Obtain Probate and notify you once received

Where you have also instructed us in connection with the calling in and distribution of assets:

- Collect and distribute all assets in the estate in accordance with the wishes of the will.

Claims against the estate:

If at any point a probate claim is made against the validity of a will, or the estate is contested under the Inheritance Act 1975, **then our estimates above do not apply.**

We would need to discuss with you the relevant cost implications from our dispute resolution team.

Bespoke quotations:

For a more specific quotation for your particular matter [please contact our Private Client department by clicking here.](#)