

Administration of Estates

When someone dies an executor or administrator deals with their estate, and this can include obtaining a Grant of Probate or Administration. This can all seem rather complex and daunting which is why we can help you handle the process during this time of bereavement.

Administering an estate means dealing with that person's money, investments, property, possessions and debts they had at the time of their death and ensuring that all debts (including taxes) are settled and then dividing the estate amongst the entitled beneficiaries.

If the person left a will the estate is distributed in accordance with the terms of the will, if the person died intestate (without a will) then the estate is distributed in accordance with the rules of intestacy. We can help with the whole administration process, or if preferred we can just obtain the Grant on behalf of the Executor so that he/she can then deal with the distribution of the estate.

We do not have fixed scale of charges nor, unlike many banks, trust companies and some solicitors, charge fees on a percentage value of the estate. Every estate administration is different and our charges are based on the work that you want us to do and the time that we spend on the matter, for example, if there is an estate with one beneficiary, no property and a few bank accounts then our charges would be at the lower end of the range. If there are multiple beneficiaries, property and multiple bank accounts and investments then costs will inevitably be at the higher end.

Our hourly charging rate for the estate administration is £300 plus VAT. There are also a number of disbursements and fees (payments to third parties) that may be incurred during the course of the administration.

Additional Expenses in dealing with an estate:

HMCTS – probate fee	£273.00
– additional copies of the Grant	£1.50 each
Section 27 Trustee Act 1925 Notices	£255.00 plus VAT (approx.)
Electronic ID Search fee	£6.00 plus VAT
HMLR – bankruptcy searches (UK only)*	£2.00 (per person)
Valuation fee (house/contents)**	
Financial Asset Search**	£155.00 plus VAT

* If required (these notices help protect against claims from unknown creditors and other unexpected claims)

** If required

We usually handle payment of such disbursements and fees on your behalf to ensure a smoother process.

We set out below an example of our average charges to obtain a Grant of Probate only. A full case specific estimate can be obtained by contacting us.

Example (to obtain Grant of Probate only)

Our averages charges (assuming that a valid will, no inheritance tax liability, no foreign assets, no shareholdings and there are no disputes or claims against the estate) would be £1,200.00 plus VAT, and HMCTS probate fee of £273 plus £3 for 2 additional copies including:

- An initial meeting with the executor with a member of the Private Client team.
- Calculating the gross and net value of the estate for probate purposes based on information provided by the Executor.
- Applying for the Grant of Probate using the HMCTS online case management system.
- Arranging for the Executor to sign the Legal Statement.
- Completing online application and arranging to send the original Will to the Harlow District Probate Registry.
- Obtaining the Grant of Probate and 2 copies for the Executor to use.

Assuming also that, the Executor provides the information at the initial meeting, the process should take approximately 6 weeks to apply for the Grant. The issue of the Grant of Probate will officially appoint the Executor so that he/she can deal with the administration of the estate. Obviously, should the Executor wish us to wind up the estate then we would be happy to assist and provide an estimate of our charges to do so at that point.

We can, of course, handle the whole process from start to end dealing with estate administrations from the most straightforward to the most complex. Again, please contact us to discuss further and to obtain a case-specific estimate of our charges.