



Probate and Estate Administration – Guidance on Costs

There are three stages involved in winding up the estate of a person who has died.

1. Obtaining a Grant of Representation.
- 2.

In order to apply for a Grant of Representation, whether or not there is a Will, you will need to be able to declare the value of the estate to the Probate Registry.

Depending on the value of the estate, you may also need to complete an Inheritance Tax Account and, possibly, also pay Inheritance Tax.

Our fees: If you would like us to make an application for a Grant of Representation, where the matter is straightforward because:

- There is a valid Will and the application is being made by all living executors named in the Will;
- There is no Will and the application is being made by the sole beneficiary entitled to the estate on intestacy;
- You have provided us with full details of the assets and liabilities and values of the estate; and
- Inheritance Tax forms are not required;

our charge will be £695.

Where the matter is straightforward (see above) but a full HMRC Form IHT400 is necessary, our charge will be £1,250.

If there is any additional work to be carried out in obtaining asset information or ascertaining the people entitled to apply for a Grant of Representation, we would charge on an hourly basis for carrying out the additional work. The hourly rate is presently £150 per hour.

You may also need to pay valuation fees for valuations of property or possessions. You may also be advised to undertake an asset search or a Will Search. There will be a Probate Registry fee of £273.00 plus £1.5 for each official copy of the Grant.

If Inheritance Tax is payable, this will need to be paid, at least in part, before the Personal Representatives can apply for the Grant of Representation. The 'Personal Representatives' are the people who will be named on the Grant of Representation.

2. Administering the estate – collecting in the assets.

After the Grant has been issued, the Personal Representatives are authorised to collect in the assets of the estate and pay all debts and liabilities of the deceased and sell their property.

The Personal Representatives will need to present an official copy of the Grant to each of the third party organisations (banks, investment managers, NS&I, Land Registry, stockbrokers etc) they will be dealing with.

3. Administering the estate – paying the beneficiaries.

When all the assets of the estate have been collected in, and all known liabilities have been paid, the Personal Representatives can make payment to the beneficiaries.

Our charges for dealing with the administration of a simple estate (after the Grant has been issued) will be in the region of £1,050.

As a guide, a simple estate is one where:

- There are up to five bank or building society accounts;
- There are no investments (for example, stocks and shares);
- There are up to five beneficiaries;
- There is a single property;
- There are no disputes between the beneficiaries about the division of the assets;
- There are no claims made against the estate.

In addition to our charges, there are third party expenses which are incurred during the administration of the estate. These are:

- Statutory Notices.(sometimes called ‘advertising for creditors’). Placing these Notices protects the Personal Representatives against unexpected claims from unknown creditors. The average cost of the Notices is between £200 and £300 plus VAT.
- Bankruptcy Searches. Before distributing the estate to the beneficiaries, the Personal Representatives should carry out bankruptcy searches. These are checks which are carried out on the individual beneficiaries to ensure they are not bankrupt, as this would mean the Personal Representatives should not pay their distribution to them. Bankruptcy Searches cost £2 per beneficiary. If a beneficiary lives outside the UK, the cost of the searches will typically be in the region of £150 to £200 plus VAT.

If any beneficiary is under the age of 18, their share will need to be held on trust for them until they reach the age of 18 (or 16, in some circumstances). A bankruptcy search will not need to be carried out against a minor beneficiary.

Timescales: We can provide you with an estimated timescale for dealing with obtaining a Grant of Representation and dealing with the administration of an estate depending on the individual circumstances. For example, some applications for a



Grant of Probate can be made online (which has a faster turnaround time at the Probate Registry) and some applications must be paper applications (which are presently taking around five months to turnaround.)