



dodds
S O L I C I T O R S L L P

SRA transparency rules cost & service

Probate: range of costs (with fixed fee for additional work) and fixed fee

Our Wills and Probate department team is headed up by Susan Fletcher (<https://www.doddssolicitors.co.uk/about-us/meet-the-team/>), who has a vast amount of experience when it comes to will writing tailored to a client's individual needs as well as inheritance and tax planning and probate issues ranging from the straight forward to those more complex estates involving trusts.

Full administration of the estate - applying for the grant of probate/letters of administration, collecting and distributing the assets

Our total charges for dealing with the administration of an estate are based on the time spent in dealing with your matter (**we do not charge a percentage of the value of the estate**).

This will include attendances upon you and perhaps others, time spent travelling and waiting, considering, preparing and working on papers and correspondence and making and receiving telephone calls. This will apply until or unless an alternative fee arrangement has been agreed and confirmed in writing by us. Letters (including emails) of a routine nature and telephone calls of a routine nature, made and received, will be charged as units of one tenth of an hour. Other letters and calls will be charged on the basis of the time spent.

Average fees for dealing with the full administration of an estate are generally in the region of between 1 ½ % and 3 ½ % of the gross estate value (ex VAT and disbursements).

Fee estimates are available

The service we provide includes:-

- An initial interview to obtain your instructions
- Advice about the terms of the Will or rules of Intestacy
- Advice about your obligations as Personal Representative
- Arranging valuations of any assets held at the date of death
- Obtaining details of any liabilities of the deceased
- Completing the online probate application to produce the Legal Statement

- Completing the necessary IHT forms for submission to HMRC (if applicable)
- Going through the documentation with you prior to you signing it (either in person or remotely)
- Submitting the IHT forms to HMRC (if applicable)
- Dealing with any Income tax issues during the 'administration period' and advising on Income Tax issues up to the date of death (if applicable)
- Realising the estate assets i.e. closing bank/building society accounts, selling shares and cashing in life insurance policies – this does not including the sale of transfer of the deceased's property although a quote can be provided for this additional service
- Deal with discharging the estate liabilities once agreed with you, the Personal Representative
- Prepare Estate Accounts to show all transactions that have taken place in the administration period and advise on distribution
- Contact all beneficiaries about their inheritance and obtain all necessary identification
- Carry out bankruptcy searches against all beneficiaries
- Finalise the administration of the estate

What is not included:

- Dealing with any challenges to the estate
- Dealing with any disputes between beneficiaries
- The costs associated with the sale of any property
- Dealing with any property held outside of the England and Wales
- Locating missing beneficiaries
- Tracing unknown assets
- Dealing with any trusts in which the deceased was involved
- DWP enquiries

Disbursements

These are costs related to your matter that are payable to third parties, such as Court Fees. We handle the payment of the disbursements on your behalf to ensure a smoother process.

- Probate Registry fee £300 + £1.50 per additional copy of the Grant required if the value of the estate is over £5,000.
- There is no fee if the value of the estate is £5,000 or less
- You may be able to get help to pay the probate fee if you have a low income or are on certain benefits.

Time scales

The time it takes to administer an estate can vary dramatically and generally depends on the complexity of the deceased's affairs. Factors which affect the time it will take to administer the estate are:

- Whether the estate is taxable
- The number and variety of assets help e.g. multiple accounts with different banks, numerous share holdings in different companies;
- Whether there are any challenges to an estate e.g. a claim under the Inheritance (Provision for Family and Dependants) Act 1975

The administration of most estates would usually be completed within around 8 to 12 months. Although we always strive to bring the administration period to an end as quickly as

possible we rely heavily on the organisations we have to liaise with such as HMRC or banking institutions dealing with us in a timely fashion.

When we meet with you and know the details of the estate we are generally able to give you a clearer indication of the likely timescale involved in your case.

Fixed fee probate – obtaining the grant only

Probate

We can help you through this difficult process by obtaining the Grant of Probate or Letters of Administration (if there isn't a Will) on your behalf. We will ask you to complete a simple questionnaire so that we have the necessary information to complete the application on your behalf.

How much does this service cost?

TOTAL: fixed fee of £840 (incl. VAT). This includes: registering the online application with HMCTS, preparing the Legal Statement for the Personal Representatives to sign, submitting the online application, submitting the hard copy documents to HMCTS and obtaining the grant.

Breakdown of costs:

Legal fees £700 + VAT £140 Total £840

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As part of our fixed fee we will:

- Provide you with a dedicated and experienced probate solicitor or chartered fellow of the institute of legal executives to work on your matter
- Identify the legally appointed executors or administrators
- Accurately identify the type of Probate application you will require
- Complete the online Probate Application and the relevant HMRC forms (if applicable)
- Obtain the Probate and send sealed copies to you

Typically, it takes HMCTS up to 16 weeks to issue the Grant from the date on which they receive the application. If a 'paper' application has to be made it can take them substantially longer to deal with this.

If Form IHT400 is required then we will provide you with an estimate of our costs based on the anticipated time that will be spent on the matter.

If you require more information please contact us on 0116 2628596 or email enquiries@dodds-solicitors.co.uk