

SRA Transparency Rules Cost & Service

Motoring Offences: Fixed fee

We believe in ensuring quality in our services and aim to ensure that the funding of your case is cost-efficient and entirely transparent. We thrive in providing you with dedication to your case but we understand that the costs of your case will be important to you and to those involved in your case. It is important that you are fully aware of how much you will need to pay. We will always agree costs in advance of any particular case once we have had an opportunity to assess the issues and the level of work and assistance required. We will take time to agree the costs with you by understanding you, your case and the work involved. However, in accordance with the Solicitors Regulation Authority's Transparency Rules and in order to provide a good estimate of the sort of level of fee you will pay (whether that be an agreed fee or a range of the costs involved in a typical case) if you were to instruct us, we have set out on our website a breakdown of our standard charges for this type of work. There may be other costs that you would need to pay over and above our fees and we aim to provide information of those in addition. Our aim is to enable you to have a good understanding of what it may cost you overall.

Set out below is service and cost information for advice and representation at the Magistrates Court in relation to summary only road traffic offences dealt with at a single hearing.

You may also have the benefit of other sources of funding such as legal expenses insurance or funding through a trade union or other representative. Please do not hesitate to contact us to explore your options.

Value Added Tax (VAT)

VAT @ 20% has to be added to our fees and some disbursements.

Who provides the service?

Our crime department is headed up by Kate Nield, Solicitor and Member Partner and assisted by a team of professional criminal solicitors and legal clerks, Sukhdev Bisla Partner, Faye Darlison Associate Solicitor, Fiona Brooks Associate Solicitor, Steve Morris, Solicitor, and Legal Clerk Donna Plumb.

We have over 30 years of experience covering all aspects of Criminal Law, and our defence solicitors are all qualified members of the duty solicitor schemes regulated by the Legal Aid Agency (LAA). They provide private or legal aid services based upon your individual circumstances.

All motor offences work is supervised by Kate Nield, Solicitor and Member Partner and Sukhdev Bisla, Solicitor and Partner.

Summary Only Road Traffic Offences Dealt with at a Single Hearing Under Part I of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and S89 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984

Basis of our fixed fees

- Guilty Plea and sentence on the same day – £600 plus VAT @ 20% £120 Total £720
- Guilty Plea and adjournment (e.g. 2 hearings) – £800 plus VAT @ 20% £160 Total £960
- Any additional adjournment – £200 plus VAT @ 20% £40 Total £240

- Exceptional Hardship/Special Reasons Arguments (road traffic) – £1000 plus VAT £200 Total £1200
- Trials – dealt with on a case by case basis depending on length of trial, number of witnesses etc. Starting fee £2,000 Plus VAT @ 20% £400 Total £2,400. This includes the fee for the initial plea hearing. Up to £10,000.00 plus VAT @ 20% Total £12,000.
- Crown Court fees – Please speak to Fee Earner who will obtain a quotation from counsel and provide an estimate of costs. These can be anywhere from £1,000 to £100,000 depending on the type and length of proceedings.

For the Magistrates' Court part of the work:

- a. Guilty Plea and Committal for Sentence – £150 Plus VAT @ 20% £30 Total £180
- b. Not Guilty Plea and Committal for Trial – £100 Plus VAT @ 20% £20 Total £120

Services included in the fee quoted

- attending you to take instructions either at the office or court
- considering evidence
- providing advice in relation to plea and likely sentence
- where we cannot anticipate the likely sentence, advice on the options available to the court in relation to sentencing
- where appropriate, advice on whether an exceptional hardship, or special reasons argument should be made
- where appropriate, making Written Representations to the Prosecution
- full preparation for the Hearing, including preparing your Full Mitigation
- attendance and representation at a single hearing at the Magistrates' Court.

For hearings in areas in close proximity to our offices, we would generally attend the hearing ourselves but for cases in courts further away we may use agents or counsel. Counsel's fees are NOT included in the quoted fee above.

Services not included in the fees quoted

On most occasions where you are entering a guilty plea, the matter will be dealt with at a single hearing. If you plead not guilty or there are any circumstances which mean that the matter is adjourned, set down for a longer hearing or trial, this will usually require assistance at hourly rates (see below). In particular, the fixed fee quoted does not cover the following services:

- any trial and preparation for trial
- instruction of any expert witnesses
- taking statements from any witnesses
- advice and assistance in relation to a special reasons hearing
- advice and assistance in relation to an exceptional hardship hearing
- any additional hearings
- If you are unhappy with the outcome, the cost of challenging a decision or consideration of your options.

Any services which are not included in our fixed fee will be charged at our hourly rate which ranges from £180 ((plus VAT @ 20% = £36) (total £216)) to £250 ((plus VAT @ 20% = £50) (total £300)) per hour and we will discuss this with you should it become necessary and provide a bespoke quote depending on your circumstances.

Expenses and Disbursements not included in the fee quoted

Disbursements such as, but not limited to expert's reports, medical fees, Counsel's fees and travel costs— both mileage and parking fees, or train fares - are not covered under these fixed fees. These expenses will by their very nature be variable in price, but we will not incur any additional costs without your express agreement. Please speak to the Fee Earner who will be able to give you an estimate of the fees.

Expenses and disbursements could include:

- interpreters fees at £25 plus VAT @ 20% (£5) (total fee £30) per hour if needed
- translation of documents at £25 plus VAT @ 20% (£5) (total fee £30) per hour if needed. It is not possible to predict the cost of these as this varies according to the particular circumstances.
- court fees – likely to be in the region of £500 to £1000.00 (no VAT)
- travel costs to the Court - there will be additional disbursements in respect of our mileage/travel expenses based upon a rate of £0.45 per mile or second class public transport (plus VAT @ 20%) and car parking fees to a maximum of £20 per day.
- if we need to stay overnight then hotel accommodation may be chargeable (amounts subject to VAT @ 20%) but we would try and avoid there where possible.
- Counsel's fees. These will depend on the type of hearing and length of proceedings and range from £1000.00 to £100,000.00.
- Experts fees are from £100.00 to £10,000.00.

Please speak to the Fee Earner who will be able to give you an estimate of the fees.

In addition, any appeal following on from such a hearing would incur additional costs.

Key stages

Prosecution papers are available until 5 days before the first hearing. Advice may not be available until the day of the hearing, but we will endeavour to advise in advance of that.

The key stages will depend on the particular circumstances of the case but on the presumption that you have entered a guilty plea and have a date set for your hearing and the matter will be dealt with conclusively at the hearing, they will include:

- your attending us to provide your instructions at a convenient date between instruction and the first hearing.
- our consideration of initial disclosure, any other evidence and provision of advice
- explaining to you the court procedure so you know what to expect on the day of your hearing
- explaining the sentencing options available to the court
- attending court on the day and representing you – this usually needs us to attend for up to half a day as there will be some waiting time
- discussing the implications of the outcome with you but this does not include advising on options to appeal.

There is normally an initial hearing, which is normally in your absence, when a hearing is fixed to sentence or deal with any legal arguments. A pure sentencing hearing is normally fixed within 1-2 months. Legal arguments and trials are normally fixed within a couple of months of the initial hearing. If a case is committed to the Crown Court then this is within 6 weeks of the first court hearing. Trials in the Crown Court are taking considerably longer. Some trials are being fixed in 4 years time.

Typical timeframes – how long will the process take?

In cases where a case is dealt with at a single hearing the whole case is usually completed within six months from the date of the offence.

The first hearing is normally within 6 weeks of charge or a date provided by postal requisition. The postal requisition must be sent out within 6 months of most traffic offences.

More serious motoring offences can be heard at any time a decision is made that a case should proceed to court. This can be up to several years after the offence. If these matters proceed to the Crown Court then it can take several years to finalise a matter that proceeds to trial.

Matters in the Magistrate Court would normally be concluded within 6 months.

However, each case is different and we cannot provide a precise timescale of how long each key stage will take or when hearings will take place, as this depends on many factors such as the complexity of the matter and court listings.

We should be able to give you a more accurate idea of timescale when we've more details about your case.