

# Client Care

## A. Legal Services

My aim is to offer accessible legal services with no hidden costs.

I am committed to delivering a service, which provides high quality advice, advocacy and support efficiently and effectively.

I have developed long term relationships with clients due to understanding what my clients value and delivering a service in a proportionate and effective manner. This means aligning my services with their needs.

I also believe that you should be able to discuss your case at a time and place to suit you. This means that the client can be kept up to date over the phone, by e-mail and post.

Everything is explained in clear, simple terms – avoiding legal jargon wherever possible to help you understand the issues and the process.

Further guidance can be obtained from the Bar Standards Board's website for Public Access Clients: [Public Access Guidance for Lay Clients](#).

## B. Fees

Costs are important to everyone and you should discuss with my clerks how much you are likely to have to pay in total for my services. My clerks will try to give you the best estimate they can and will tell you how the bills are worked out. My clerks will confirm either the estimate or the basis on which the fees will be charged in writing.

A reasonable fee will take account of:

- ◆ the amount of work and the time involved (including how complicated, difficult or novel the matter is)
- ◆ the level of specialised knowledge, responsibility and supervision needed
- ◆ the length, number and importance of any documents which need to be prepared or read
- ◆ the place and circumstances in which the work is done
- ◆ the urgency of the case
- ◆ the amount of money or value of any property involved

My guideline rates are £300.00 - £400.00 per hour plus vat. This is based on my experience, seniority at the Bar and the fee a hypothetical Counsel, capable of conducting the case effectively would be content to take on the brief.

If you are concerned about the costs, then I am content to agree a fixed spending limit with you. If that limit is reached, then my clerk will contact you before I do any more work on your behalf.

My fees are based on hourly rates, save where fixed fees are agreed for the work.

Fees will need to be agreed before commencing any work.

Clients need not be shy negotiating fees with my clerks. Fees need to be tailored to the situation, to ensure that the fees agreed are proportionate to the value or importance of the claim, and to provide the client with certainty.

The work I undertake on behalf of clients can be funded using one of the following options:

### **Private Funding (hourly rates)**

My fees are calculated by simply multiplying the time taken by the appropriate hourly rate.

### **Public Funding**

A client may be eligible for Legal Aid Agency funding.

### **Legal Expenses Insurance**

This can also be referred to as "before the event" insurance (BTE), and is insurance that a client may already hold as part of Household contents or Car Insurance. Some credit cards also include BTE insurance and it can also be taken out as a separate insurance policy. BTE insurance may pay for the legal costs when making a claim for compensation, whether the client wins or loses.

### **Conditional Fee Agreement**

A conditional fee agreement (CFA) is a "no win, no fee" agreement, which effectively provides that legal fees become payable only if the case is won.

### **Reduced Rate Conditional Fee Agreement**

A reduced rate conditional fee agreement is a "no win, no fee" agreement, which provides that fees are paid at a reduced rate. The full rate only becomes payable if the case is won.

### **Fixed Fee Agreement**

A fixed fee agreement provides clients with a fixed price in advance for each area of work. A fixed fee is set as a total sum for the work performed and cannot be varied. This does not include disbursements for obtaining medical records, expert reports etc. The client will be expected to discharge disbursements.

I fully understand that some clients may be financially stressed or even technically insolvent, sometimes as a direct result of the behaviour of the other party; others may

simply feel themselves to be incapable of mustering the firepower of their better-resourced opponents.

I am willing to accommodate any of the above funding options to ensure that the client is in a strong position to pursue or defend a claim in the interests of justice.

### **C. Professional Status**

I am a member of the Inner Temple and registered with the Bar Standards Board – Registration Number: 35472.

I am authorised to conduct the following reserved legal activities:

- ◆ Full rights of audience
- ◆ Authorised to Conducting Litigation
- ◆ Registered to undertake Direct Public Access
- ◆ Probate activities
- ◆ Administration of oaths

### **D. Complaints**

I am committed to handling complaints effectively. The following information is provided to assist you through making a complaint about the service I provide or the behaviour of my staff.

Complaints are a vital source of information to ensure I provide the best service possible. I aim to establish and maintain the highest professional standards and thus hope to avoid complaints about, or dissatisfaction with, the services provided. I recognise, that such complaints or dissatisfaction may from time to time arise and that it is important to ensure that they are dealt with promptly, courteously, efficiently and sensitively.

#### **Chief Executive Officer**

You can make a complaint to Mr. John Irvine, Chief Executive Officer, Chambers of Andrew Ritchie QC, 9 Gough Square, London, EC4A 3DG.

Tel: 020 7832 0500

Email: [jjrvine@9goughsquare.co.uk](mailto:jjrvine@9goughsquare.co.uk)

#### **Legal Ombudsman**

The Legal Ombudsman is an independent and impartial scheme set up to help resolve complaints about lawyers in England and Wales. To find out more about the Legal Ombudsman visit their website [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk) or phone their helpline on 0300 555 0333.