

Probate law pricing

Probate is the word commonly used to describe the work which is required to deal with someone's estate after their death.

We do not charge for probate work based on the value of the estate. Instead, our charges will reflect the amount of work which is involved in dealing with the estate, applying our hourly rates which, in turn, reflect the seniority and experience of the lawyers carrying out the work.

It follows that the cost in each case will vary depending on the individual circumstances of the estate. For example, if there is only one beneficiary, a few bank accounts and only one property, the costs will be lower than if there are multiple beneficiaries, multiple assets and an inheritance tax liability. As no two estates are ever the same, we cannot give you a reliable estimate of the costs of us helping you until we have details of your intended case. Our costs for probate work start from £2,000 plus VAT of £400, totalling £2,400 and will be calculated on the basis of the hourly rates listed below:

Partner	£385 to £410
Consultant	£385 to £445
Senior Associate	£365
Associate Solicitor	£315 to £365
Solicitor	£215 to £275
Trainee Solicitor	£165
Paralegal	£155 to £215
Solicitor Apprentice	£115 to £165

As an example only, and in the very specific circumstances described below, we would expect our charges to obtain the grant of probate, collect in the assets and distribute them to the beneficiaries in accordance with the will to be from £4,305 plus VAT of £861, totalling £5,166. This is based on an expectation that the work will take up to 12 hours and that the work will be carried out by an associate (hourly rate £350 plus VAT of £70, totalling £420) supervised by a partner (hourly rate £385 plus VAT of £77, totalling £462). The specific circumstances on which that estimate is based are as follows:

The deceased left a valid will appointing an executor who is willing to act.

The deceased left his/her estate to two adult beneficiaries.

The estate is made up of no more than four UK bank and/or building society accounts totalling no more than £250,000.

The deceased had made no lifetime gifts.

No inheritance tax is payable by reason of the death of the deceased.

There are no disputes or claims against the estate.

We will not prepare income tax or capital gains tax returns for either the deceased or the executor.

In addition to our charges, additional costs will be £300 for the probate court fee and £16 for each additional copy of the probate.

Other likely costs may be around £300 in fees to advertise for creditors in the London Gazette and in a local newspaper. We have set out below the key stages and anticipated timescales for a simple probate case based on the specific circumstances set out above.

From initial instruction to obtaining the grant of probate – up to 4 months, depending on the probate registry processing times

From obtaining the grant of probate to collecting in the assets of the estate – up to 6 weeks.

From collecting in all the assets of the estate to distributing the residuary estate to the beneficiaries – up to 2 months (longer if it is necessary to advertise for creditors and/or observe the statutory period for potential family provision claims).

No probate cases are ever the same and we cannot set out every possible permutation or cover every complication which would impact on our charges and on the timescales. We will be dependent upon information being provided by financial institutions and other third parties, and that will affect the timescales for our work.

Additional information: For information regarding how inheritance tax may apply to someone's estate following their death, please use this link to the HMRC website www.gov.uk/inheritancetax