

## Probate/Estate Administration Work

Our highly experienced and compassionate estate administration team can help you through what is often a very difficult time.

The team is led by Partner, [Peter Critchell](#) who has been a solicitor for over 30 years.

Assisting Peter in the department are solicitors [Rebecca Walker](#) and [Mark Ferguson](#) who both qualified as solicitors in 2005.

We can provide advice and assistance with all aspects of the administration of an estate, whether straight forward or complex.

The main element of our charge for dealing with this type of work is based on the amount of time spent on the matter. Peter's current hourly charging rate is £220 per hour plus VAT and Rebecca's and Mark's time is charged for at £205 per hour plus VAT. The following is an indication of our costs for some of the types of work that we do:-

### Application for a Grant of Probate

A Grant of Probate is often required to enable Executors to deal with the administration of a deceased persons estate, giving them authority to collect in the assets and distribute the net estate in accordance with the terms of the Will.

Where our instructions are confined to assisting with the application for a [Grant of Probate](#), we generally find that our charges for obtaining the Grant all in the range of £800 to £1,000 inclusive of VAT. This is in cases where the

Executors are able to furnish us with full details of the assets of the estate, and where the circumstances require the completion of an inheritance tax return in form IHT 205, rather than the full IHT 400 which is required for higher value estate, or where an inheritance tax liability arises.

Each case is individual, but with the co-operation of the Executors we would generally find the Grant can be obtained in 6 to 12 weeks.

### Estate Administration

Most commonly we are asked to assist with all aspects of the administration of an estate, to ensure that the matter is dealt with correctly and that the Executors are not exposed to the risk of personal liability for failing to discharge their obligations correctly.

Our fees for estate administration work are normally calculated in accordance with Law Society guidelines, which involve an element based on the time spent on the matter, and an element relating to the value of the estate.

Where any charges are made relating to the value of the estate, these will never exceed the amount that would have been charged on a time recorded basis.

Without having some insight into the individual estate, it is difficult to estimate how much time the administration might take. However, based on our experience, an estate that has a [valid Will](#), one UK property, no more

than two bank accounts, and no more than two stock/share/unit trusts holdings we would anticipate being able to finalise the administration within 12 months from instruction, and often very much more quickly than this, particularly where the Executor or Executors are also the beneficiaries of the estate.

For such estates, we would generally find that our costs for dealing with the administration where estates have a value of between £100,000 and £200,000 would fall in the range of £2,000 to £4,000 plus VAT plus payments to third parties. This assumes that there are no disagreements between the Executors or the Executors and third parties, that there is no inheritance tax payable and there is no need for the Executors to submit a full account to [HMRC](#). If a dispute arises, or a claim is made against the estate then this is likely to delay finalising the administration of the estate, and is also likely to give rise to an increase in fees.

Call us on: **01604 60 95 60**

✉ [info@dfalaw.co.uk](mailto:info@dfalaw.co.uk) 🏠 [www.dfalaw.co.uk](http://www.dfalaw.co.uk)

DFA Law LLP | SRA No. 484839 | Registered No. OC334104

Property, Employment, Dispute Resolution, Corporate and Commercial - 2 Waterside Way, Northampton NN4 7XD  
Family Law, Wills Tax and Estate Administration - 6 Cheyne Walk, Northampton, NN1 5PT

## Payment to third parties

Where an estate has a value in excess of £5,000 a Court fee is payable to obtain a Grant of Probate. This is currently £155, plus a small charge for obtaining additional Court sealed copies of the Grant.

At the moment the application for the Grant will often need to be sworn in front of a solicitor/notary/commissioner for oaths who will generally charge a fee of £7 per Executor.

In many instances it is prudent for the Executors to place statutory advertisements in the London Gazette and a local newspaper to protect themselves against ongoing personal liability for debts of the estate that they

couldn't know about. We generally find the costs of those adverts to be in the range of £150 to £250.

In many instances professional valuations of assets are required, for example of property interests, personal effects and stocks and shares. If requested to do so by the Executors, we can obtain cost estimates before any such additional expenses are incurred.

If a property needs to be transferred to beneficiaries then a Land Registry fee is likely to be incurred.

## Inheritance Tax Returns

We are able to assist in the preparation of all types of inheritance tax returns, including those required for more complex estates where a full return must be filed with HM Revenue and Customs. In those instances, the

estate administration costs are likely to be somewhat higher than the figures mentioned above.

## Potential additional fees

**The following matters are likely to have an impact on the level of our charges:-**

- Where there is no valid Will (an intestacy situation)
- If the estate consists of a large number of stocks and shares or other equity based investments
- Where beneficiaries cannot be located
- Where deceased's income tax affairs up to the date of their death have not been completed with HMRC
- Where the estate's income tax and capital gains tax affairs for the period of the administration of the estate are complex

Where property needs to be sold during the course of the administration of an estate, this will be dealt with as a separate matter and our [Property Department](#) will be able to provide you with a fixed fee quotation.

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