

Price Information

As required by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) transparency guidelines, we are required to provide further information on some of the services we provide to ensure that potential clients have sufficient information to make an informed choice of legal services provider, including understanding what the costs may be. Pathfinder Legal Services provides legal services for public sector and not for profit clients only and we are not able to take instructions from members of the public or private businesses.

Employment Tribunals (defending claims for unfair or wrongful dismissal)

Pathfinder Legal Services has a highly experienced team of fee earners who advise on a variety of employment issues. With experience of representing local authority and public sector organisations of varying sizes we recognise the need to alter our approach in line with the client's requirements.

We understand that every case is unique. You will receive expert tailored advice according to the facts of your case including representation from the time of instruction through to its conclusion.

Who will work on my case?

Our team of specialist employment lawyers have years of experience in dealing with employment disputes. Our Principal Lawyer heads up a team of 4 lawyers and has been working in this area for more than 20 years, leading some of our most high-profile cases to a successful conclusion.

Our fee earners have experience in all aspects of employment law and we dedicate ourselves to ensuring our knowledge stays up to date, in order to give you the best service possible. We always make sure that junior lawyers and all members of staff are supported and supervised appropriately so that the quality of advice is not affected, regardless of who is working on your case.

We also employ a team of 3 paralegals and one principal paralegal who can assist with much of the day to day work on cases. Although they are not legally qualified, they have between them 1 and 13 years' experience. They each work under the direct supervision of a lawyer within the firm with at least 5 years post qualification experience, receive extensive training within the firm and some are undertaking study for a CILEX qualification.

Regardless of who works on your case they will be supervised by one of the following, details of whom can be found using the following link: <https://pathfinderlegal.co.uk/our-people/>

Debbie Carter Hughes – Executive Director
Salma Kantharia – Head of Service

Types of cases and anticipated costs

The costs of defending claims for unfair or wrongful dismissal will vary depending on the complexity of a case. We will notify you how we have classified the complexity of the case once we have received full instructions.

To assist in understanding the overall costs of defending such claims, the guide prices below give you an indication of the legal costs we may charge:-

SRA TRANSPARENCY DETAILS

	Fee (excluding VAT and third-party Disbursements)
Simple Case	£6,000 - £8,000
Medium Complexity Case	£10,000 - £20,000
High Complexity Case	£20,000 +

There are a number of issues which could change the categorisation of a case and see its complexity increase, these include:-

- If there is a long and complex history associated with the claim;
- Complex preliminary issues e.g. whether a claim has been brought in time, whether an individual is an employee, the strength of a case or if it should be struck out;
- Additional or multiple allegations being made by the claimant;
- If there are any other claims being brought with the unfair/wrongful dismissal claim. This could be a claim for discrimination.
- If it is necessary to defend a claim or multiple claims and if this needs to be done in person;
- Amendments or changes to the claims after receipt;
- Issues with disclosure and anonymity;
- Costs applications – making or defending one;
- A large number of witnesses or a large volume of documents;
- Issues with automatic unfair dismissal claims e.g. whistleblowing cases or issues relating to TUPE;
- Cases where a separate remedy hearing is required e.g. to work out the level of financial award to be made.
- Disputed or complex issues which cannot be agreed between the parties;
- Dealing with cost applications (either making or defending such a claim)

Disbursements

Disbursements are costs incurred on the case which are payable to third parties, such as court fees, counsel fees, independent experts etc. Pathfinder Legal Services will charge any disbursement costs incurred to you and pay these on to the third party.

We will always seek to agree the costs of any third party disbursements with you before the costs are incurred. Counsel's fees are estimated to be between £750 to £2500 per day, exclusive of VAT (depending on the experience of the advocate) for attending a Tribunal Hearing (including preparation). Costs for expert reports can vary and are estimated between £2000 to £4000 dependent on the expert and their level of expertise.

What does the guide fee cover?

The guide fees set out above cover the work being undertaken by Pathfinder Legal Services fee earners (not disbursements and other third party costs) and include the following:

- Taking instructions, reviewing papers and providing initial advice (this will be revised and amended as the case progresses);
- Entering into pre-claim conciliation; a mandatory stage required to explore whether settlement can be reached;
- Preparing the response to the claim and any counter-claim;
- Reviewing the claim any responses received and providing continuing advice on this;
- Exploring options for settlement and negotiating settlement;
- Preparing for (and attending) a preliminary hearing or preparing instructions to counsel;

- Preparing or considering a schedule of loss;
- Considering all documents received;
- Exchanging documents and agreeing the contents of the bundle;
- Preparing the bundle of documents;
- Taking witness statements, drafting statements and finalising the contents;
- Reviewing other party's witness statements and documents;
- Agreeing a list of issues, a chronology and/or cast list.
- Instructing Counsel if required.
- Preparation and attendance at a final hearing.

How long will it take for my case to be dealt with?

Timescales for an unfair or wrongful dismissal case will depend on a number of factors including whether settlement can be achieved, what alternative dispute resolution practices are followed and the availability of the Tribunal to hear the matter. If a claim progresses to final hearing it may take up to 12 months from date of instruction for the matter to be heard. We will keep you updated regularly on the position of your file and anticipated timescales as the matter progresses.

Debt Recovery (Up to £100,000)

Pathfinder Legal Services has a highly experienced team of fee earners who advise on debt recovery. With experience of representing local authority and public sector organisations of varying sizes we recognise that there are various approaches to debt recovery and the importance of this given the resource limitations within the public sector. Depending on the nature of the debt outstanding. We will work with you to identify what stance your organisation would like to take in relation to the recovery of debt, whatever the nature and size, and provide support and guidance on all options available.

Pathfinder Legal Services understands the need for recovery of outstanding debt and we personalize our services to ensure they are specific to your needs. You will receive expert tailored advice according to the facts of your case including representation from the time of instruction through to its conclusion.

Who will work on my case?

Our team of specialist debt recovery fee earners have years of experience in dealing with debt recovery disputes. Our Principal Lawyer heads up a team of 2 lawyers and 4 paralegals. They continue leading some of our most high-profile cases to a successful recovery of monies owed.

Our fee earners have experience in all aspects of this area and we dedicate ourselves to ensuring our knowledge stays up to date, in order to give you the best service possible. We always make sure that junior lawyers and all members of staff are supported and supervised appropriately so that the quality of advice is not affected, regardless of who is working on your case.

Our paralegals assist with much of the day to day work on cases and although they are not legally qualified, they have between them 1 and 13 years' experience. They each work under the direct supervision of a lawyer within the firm with at least 4 years post qualification experience, receive extensive training within the firm and some are undertaking study for a CILEX qualification.

Regardless of who works on your case they will be supervised by one of the following, details of whom can be found using the following link: <https://pathfinderlegal.co.uk/our-people/>:

Debbie Carter Hughes – Executive Director
Salma Kantharia – Head of Service

Anticipated costs

The following costs apply where your claim is in relation to an unpaid invoice which is not disputed, and enforcement action is not needed. If the other party disputes your claim at any point, we will discuss any further work required and provide you with revised advice about costs if necessary, which will likely be on an hourly rate.

Debt Value	Court Fee	Our Fee (Hourly)	Estimated Timescale (Hours)	Total
Up to £5,000	£35-£205	£73-£150	10	£150-£1,500
£5,000 - £10,000	£455	£73-£150	25	£555-£3,750
£10,000 - £100,000	5% value of the claim	£73-£150	40	5% value of the claim + £73-£6,000
£100,000 – £200,000	5% value of the claim	£73-£150	1-50	5% value of the claim + £73-£7,500
£200,000 +	£10,000	£73-£150	1-100	£10,000 + £73 - £15,000

We will provide an indication of cost and likely timescales when instructions have been received and considered, and will keep this updated as the matter progresses.

Disbursements

Disbursements are costs incurred on the case which are payable to third parties, such as court fees, counsel fees etc. Pathfinder Legal Services will charge any disbursement costs incurred to you and pay these on to the third party.

We will always seek to agree the costs of any third party disbursements with you before the costs are incurred. Any case which progresses to court will require a Court fee to be paid, this is based on the value of the debt being recovered plus interest (see table above). Should it be necessary to instruct Counsel in a court hearing Counsel's fees are estimated to be between £750 to £2500 per day exclusive of VAT (depending on the experience of the advocate and the complexity of the matter) for attending a hearing (including preparation).

What does the guide fee cover?

The guide fees set out above cover the work being undertaken by Pathfinder Legal Services fee earners (not disbursements and other third party costs) and include the following:

- Taking instructions, reviewing papers and providing initial advice (this will be revised and amended as the case progresses);
- Undertaking appropriate searches;
- A letter demanding payment and/or a letter before claim – This is a letter making demand for an outstanding sum of money before court action is taken and the contents of these letters can be simple or complex. If properly worded, we know from our experience, that such a letter can result in payment without the need for further action and legal costs being incurred.
- Responding to a letter demanding payment / letter before claim – Even if the debt is relatively low, it is vital to deal with any such letter quickly and effectively. Failure to do so and simply ignoring it in the

hope that the letter before claim will go away can agitate the creditor and lead to the next step in the recovery action which is often County Court proceedings, High Court proceedings or some sort of insolvency type proceedings such as a winding up petition or bankruptcy petition.

Filing claims:

- Small Claims Court – claims that do not exceed the small claims limit of £10,000.00, with exception. If there is not response to any letter demanding payment, you can submit a small claim. We can assist you with this process and ensure it is accurate as it can be difficult to amend a claim once it has been submitted to the small claims court.
- County Court – County Court claims can last from a few minutes to days, depending on the issues to be resolved. Any money claim under £100,000.00 has to be issued (or commenced) in the County Courts. Cases typically heard in the County Courts include:
 - Money claims of up to £100,000.00;
 - Housing claims, including possession of residential and commercial properties and other landlord and tenant matters, such as eviction;
 - Bankruptcy and insolvency matters;
 - Personal injury claims;
 - Adverse possession claims, or claims against trespassers;
 - Claims involving a breach of contract;
 - Negligence claims, where a person has suffered a loss as a result of the actions of someone else;
 - Probate claims and other claims in relation to Wills and Trusts;
 - Consumer disputes;
 - Small claims (claims of less than £10,000.00).

High Court – There are three separate divisions: the Chancery Division; the Queen’s Bench Division; and the Family Division. The High Court operates throughout the year in four periods, known as sittings. The dates for sittings change each year, but usually follow the format below:

- Michaelmas: 1 October to 21 December;
- Hilary: 11 January to the Wednesday before Easter Sunday;
- Easter: the second Tuesday after Easter to the Friday before the second May bank holiday; and
- Trinity: the second Tuesday after the second May bank holiday to 31 July.
- If urgent it may be possible to have hearings outside of the above dates, but not usually any trials.

Enforcement of judgment – Judgment is obtained upon conclusion of legal proceedings. It is vital to act quickly and take advice to either set aside or enforce the judgment.

- There are different ways to enforcement the judgment including the High Court Enforcement Officer, statutory demands, bankruptcy petitions, winding up petitions, attachment to earnings orders and charging orders. Choosing the best route is often very important to make sure that you obtain payment of the monies owed.
- A ‘county court judgment’ or “CCJ” – This is a final court decision about a claim or part of a claim in civil proceedings. It is usually followed by an order, for example, for payment of money, known as a judgment debt. If payment is not made as a result of the county court judgment, then there are various ways to collect the money owed.
- Collect money after winning a judgment or order in the county court – If you succeed at court and get a CCJ, we can help you in collecting the judgment debt the court has ordered to be paid.
- Default judgments – This is a judgment made by the county court when a defendant does not either acknowledge service of the county court proceedings or file a defence to the county court claim or the counterclaim within the time limits set down by the Civil Procedure Rules.

SRA TRANSPARENCY DETAILS

- We can assist you in enforcing the default judgment if payment under the CCJ has not been made.
 - Taking Control of Goods – This can be an effective way of enforcing a money CCJ. It requires the issue of a court document (in the High Court, a Writ of Control, in the County Court, a Warrant of control) which instructs an enforcement officer to seize and sell a Judgment Debtor's goods and raise funds to satisfy the judgment debt.
 - Attachment of Earnings Order – This is a method of enforcing an unpaid money judgment or CCJ whereby a proportion of a Judgment Debtor's earnings are deducted by the Judgment Debtor's employer and paid directly to the judgment Creditor by regular instalments until the judgment debt is paid.
 - A Third Party Debt Order – Will freeze a bank account containing money owed to a Judgment Debtor that is in the hands of a third party (for example, a bank) and this money can then be used to pay the County Court Judgment.
 - A Charging Order – This secures a debt payable under a CCJ or order by imposing a charge over a Judgment Debtor's interest in land, securities or certain other assets. The creditor can apply for an order for the sale of the property in some circumstances.
- Seeking payment and returning funds to you upon receipt.

How long will it take for my case to be dealt with?

Timescales for a debt recovery case will depend on a number of factors including whether the debt is paid following initial contact, Judgement in Default is obtained or the matter is contested. If a claim progresses to final hearing it may take up to 12 months from date of instruction for the matter to be resolved. We will keep you updated regularly on the position of your file and anticipated timescales as the matter progresses. Should the matter progress to court and judgement is received it may take additional time to recover monies should enforcement action then be necessary.