

1. 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 Limited 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.

2. Employment Tribunals (defending claims for unfair or wrongful dismissal)

Pathfinder Legal Services Limited's team of highly experienced employment law solicitors have extensive experience providing advice and assistance on a variety of employment disputes. The team has considerable experience of representing local authority and public sector organisations of varying sizes and 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 solicitors have over 35 years of collective experience in dealing with employment disputes. They have particular experience in acting for respondents defending employment tribunal claims. Our Head of Service leads a team of 3 employment solicitors and has been working in this area for more than 16 years, leading some of our most high-profile cases to a successful conclusion. The team is made up of senior and junior solicitors, and they have between 2 and 12 years of experience in this area.

Our solicitors 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 solicitors and 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 have a proven track record in achieving successful outcomes for our clients.

We also employ a team of 2 paralegals and 1 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 2 and 17 years' experience. They each work under the direct supervision of a qualified solicitor 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 and have degrees in law.

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/>

Salma Kantharia – Joint Chief Executive

Zena Wroe – Head of Service

Types of cases and fee estimates

The costs of defending claims for unfair or wrongful dismissal will vary depending on the complexity of a case. We charge based on an hourly rate which varies depending on the member of staff dealing with your matter. The seniority of the members of staff dealing with your case will depend on its complexity and 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 fee estimates below give you an indication of the legal costs we may charge:-

	Typical Fee Estimate (plus VAT charged at 20% and any third-party Disbursements)
Simple Case	£7,500- £15,000
Medium Complexity Case	£15,000 - £30,000
High Complexity Case	£30,000 +

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;
- Defending claims that are brought by litigants in person;
- Complex preliminary issues e.g. whether a claim has been brought in time, whether the claimant is an employee, or whether the claimant is disabled;
- 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 or whistleblowing;
- Where there is more than one named respondent;
- If it is necessary to defend a claim or multiple claims and if this needs to be done in person;
- Issues with disclosure and anonymity;
- A large number of witnesses or a large volume of documents;
- 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;
- If it is necessary to make or defend applications to amend claims or to provide further information;
- Making or defending a costs application; and
- If it is an automatic unfair dismissal claim e.g. defending a claim involving whistleblowing allegations, transfer of undertakings, trade union issues, health and safety.

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 Limited 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, including obtaining tailored estimates for your case. Counsel's fees are estimated to be between £750 to £3,000 per day, plus VAT charged at 20% (depending on experience) which will be charged for time spent attending an employment tribunal hearing and time spent preparing for the hearing. Costs for expert reports can vary and are estimated between £2,000 to £4,000 plus VAT charged at 20%, dependent on the expert and their level of expertise.

What does the fee estimate cover?

The fee estimates set out above cover the work being undertaken by the Firm (not disbursements and other third party costs) and include the following:

- Taking your initial instructions, reviewing the papers and advising you on merits and likely compensation (this is likely to be revisited throughout the matter and subject to change);
- Entering into pre-claim conciliation where this is mandatory to explore whether a settlement can be reached;
- Preparing the response to the claim and any counter-claim;
- Reviewing and advising on claim or response from other party received and providing continuing advice on this;
- Exploring settlement and negotiating settlement throughout the process;
- Considering a schedule of loss/preparing counter schedule of loss;
- Preparing for (and attending) a Preliminary Hearing, including instructions to Counsel if required;
- Considering documents;
- Exchanging documents with the other party and agreeing a bundle of documents;
- Taking witness statements, drafting statements and agreeing their content with witnesses;

- Preparing document bundles;
- Reviewing and advising on the other party's witness statements and documents;
- agreeing a list of issues, a chronology and/or cast list; and
- Preparation and attendance at a Final Hearing, including instructions to Counsel if required.

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 between 12 to 24 months from date of instruction for the matter to be heard; we will keep you updated regularly on the position of your matter and anticipated timescales as the matter progresses.

3. Debt Recovery (Up to £100,000)

Pathfinder Legal Services Limited 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 the debt, whatever the nature and size, and provide support and guidance on all options available.

Pathfinder Legal Services Limited understands the need for recovery of outstanding debt and we personalise 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 debt recovery team have years of experience in dealing with debt recovery disputes. Our Principal Lawyer for Litigation leads a team of solicitors and paralegals that have been working in this area for more than 18 years. The team has a proven track record in this area resolving high value cases leading to successful recovery of monies owed. The solicitors working on these matters have between 5 and 18 of experience in this area. The team has 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 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 these cases and although they are not legally qualified, they have between them 2 and 17 years' experience. They each work under the direct supervision of a qualified solicitor 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 or have degrees in law.

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://www.pathfinderlegal.co.uk/our-people/>

Salma Kantharia – Joint Chief Executive

Zena Wroe – Head of Service

Anticipated Costs

The following information applies to the recovery of a straightforward, undisputed debt of up to £100,000, where enforcement action is not required.

Our fees are calculated by reference to the time spent on the matter depending on the experience and seniority of the fee earner carrying out the work.

The table below provides an indication of the professional fees that may be incurred, based on the estimated hours typically required for matters within each debt value band.

Debt value	Estimated hours	Indicative professional fees*
Up to £5,000	10 hours	£590 – £1,000 plus VAT charged at 20%
£5,001–£10,000	25 hours	£1,475 – £2,500 plus VAT charged at 20%
£10,001–£100,000	60 hours	£3,540 – £6,000 plus VAT charged at 20%

* These fees are indicative only and are not fixed or capped fees. The actual amount charged will depend on the time spent on the particular matter and the hourly rates applicable to the individuals carrying out the work. The work may be carried out by more than one fee earner, and different hourly rates may therefore apply.

The estimated hours are based on our experience of typical matters falling within each debt value band. The actual time required may be more or less, depending on the circumstances of the matter.

These indicative professional fees apply to a straightforward, undisputed debt where enforcement action is not required. If the debtor disputes the debt, raises a defence or counterclaim, or the matter otherwise becomes contested, additional work is likely to be required and the costs may be higher. We will discuss the further work required and provide revised costs information before undertaking significant additional work, where reasonably practicable.

The indicative professional fees above **exclude disbursements**, including court fees and any other third-party costs. These are dealt with separately below.

VAT

The professional fees set out above are subject to VAT at the prevailing rate, currently 20%.

The VAT treatment of disbursements varies depending on the nature of the disbursement. Court fees, for example, do not attract VAT, whereas VAT may apply to other third-party costs.

Disbursements

Disbursements are costs payable to third parties in connection with your matter. They are separate from our professional fees and are payable in addition to those fees.

The disbursements that may apply will depend on the circumstances of the matter. These may include:

- court issue fees;
- process server fees;
- Counsel's fees, where appropriate; and
- other third-party costs reasonably incurred in connection with the matter.

The applicable disbursements will be discussed with you before they are incurred, where reasonably practicable. Details of the likely disbursements and their current costs are set out separately below.

Court issue fees

If court proceedings are required, a court issue fee will be payable. The fee depends on the value of the claim, including any interest claimed.

For claims up to £100,000, the current court issue fees are:

<u>Amount claimed</u>	<u>Court issue fee</u>
Up to £300	£35
£300.01–£500	£50
£500.01–£1,000	£70
£1,000.01–£1,500	£80
£1,500.01–£3,000	£115
£3,000.01–£5,000	£205
£5,000.01–£10,000	£455
£10,000.01–£100,000	5% of the value of the claim

Court issue fees do not attract VAT.

Court fees are subject to change. The fee applicable at the time the claim is issued will apply.

Process server fees

A process server may be required in certain circumstances, for example where documents need to be personally served.

As an indication, process server fees are typically in the region of **£250 plus VAT charged at 20%**, although the actual cost will depend on the service required and may be higher where priority service, multiple attendance attempts or other additional services are required.

Counsel's fees

In some matters, it may be appropriate to instruct Counsel (a barrister), for example to provide specialist advice, assist with drafting or conduct advocacy.

Counsel's fees vary depending on the nature and complexity of the work and the experience of Counsel. As an indication, Counsel's fees for attending a hearing, may be in the region of **£500 – £2,500 per day plus VAT charged at 20%** which will be charged for time spent attending a hearing and time spent preparing for a hearing.

We will provide a more specific estimate where Counsel is likely to be required and will seek your approval before incurring Counsel's fees.

Other disbursements

Other third-party costs may arise depending on the circumstances of the matter. We will discuss these with you and provide details of the likely cost before they are incurred, where reasonably practicable.

The disbursements set out above are **in addition to our professional fees**. We do not add a percentage or other mark-up to the cost of disbursements.

What does the estimated fee cover?

The indicative professional fees set out above apply to a straightforward, undisputed debt recovery matter where enforcement action is not required.

Our fees may include the following work:

- taking your initial instructions and reviewing the relevant documents and information;
- advising you on the appropriate debt recovery strategy;
- undertaking appropriate searches;

- preparing and sending a letter demanding payment and/or a letter before claim;
- corresponding with the debtor or their representatives;
- considering and responding to any correspondence received from the debtor in relation to the debt;
- negotiating payment where appropriate;
- preparing and issuing a court claim where payment is not received;
- dealing with an acknowledgement of service where appropriate;
- applying for judgment in default where the debtor has not acknowledged or defended the claim;
- notifying you of the outcome and, where appropriate, requesting payment following judgment; and
- advising you on the next steps if payment is not received.

The precise work required will depend on the circumstances of the particular matter.

What is not included in the indicative fees?

The indicative professional fees above do not include work which falls outside the scope of a straightforward, undisputed debt recovery matter. This includes:

- dealing with a substantive dispute or defence;
- dealing with a counterclaim;
- contested court applications;
- preparing for or attending a contested hearing or trial;
- enforcement action following judgment, including enforcement agent action, charging orders or other enforcement procedures;
- statutory demands;
- winding-up or bankruptcy proceedings;
- appeals; and
- specialist advice or other work which falls outside the scope of the debt recovery service described above.

If any of these matters arise, we will discuss the additional work required with you and provide revised costs information before undertaking significant additional work, where reasonably practicable.

How long will my matter take?

The time required to recover a debt will depend on the circumstances of the matter, including whether the debtor pays following initial contact and whether it is necessary to issue court proceedings.

The key stages and typical timescales are as follows:

a) Initial review and pre-action recovery

We will take your instructions, review the relevant documentation and advise on the appropriate recovery strategy. Where appropriate, we will send a letter demanding payment and/or a letter before claim.

Typical timescale: 2 to 4 weeks.

If the debtor pays at this stage, the matter can usually be concluded without the need for court proceedings.

b) Court proceedings and judgment

If the debt remains unpaid, we may advise issuing court proceedings. If the debtor does not acknowledge the claim or file a defence, we may apply for judgment in default.

Typical timescale: 8 to 12 weeks from issue of the claim to judgment, subject to the court's timetable and the debtor's response.

c) Payment following judgment

Where judgment in default is obtained, we will notify you and request payment from the debtor.

If the debtor pays, the matter can then be concluded.

If payment is not received and enforcement action is required, this will fall outside the scope of the indicative fees set out above. We will discuss the available options and provide further costs information before undertaking enforcement work.

Disputed or defended claims

The timescales above apply to straightforward, undisputed debt recovery matters. If the debtor disputes the debt, files a defence or raises a counterclaim, the matter is likely to take longer and will fall outside the scope of the indicative fees and timescales set out above.

We will discuss the further work required and provide revised costs information as soon as reasonably practicable.

The timescales given above are estimates only. The timing of court proceedings is outside our control and may be affected by the court's timetable, the actions of the debtor and other factors specific to the matter.

4. **Residential Conveyancing**

Work Covered

Pathfinder Legal Services Limited's Property & Housing team provides a residential conveyancing service for its clients, which covers the following areas of transactional work:

- Freehold and Leasehold acquisitions
- Freehold and Leasehold disposals
- Acting for Local Authorities under the 'Right to Buy' Scheme
- Leasehold Enquiries

Who will work on my case?

We have an experienced team of lawyers with over 35 years of knowledge/experience of both commercial and residential property. Our dedicated Housing sub-team deals with the majority of our residential instructions, with one of our Principal Lawyers overseeing the work of a small team of Lawyers and Paralegals to ensure quality and excellent client service. When the team is busy, they are supported by the wider commercial property team to ensure that deadlines and client's expectations are met.

The following people oversee the work of the Housing team:

Anne Holton – Head of Service for Property & Housing and Planning & Highways

Katie Hobson – Principal Lawyer (Property & Housing)

Legal Fees

Pathfinder Legal Services Limited charges its clients on a time spent basis, so the legal fees in dealing with residential property transactions will vary depending on the complexity of the instruction.

To assist in understanding the overall level of legal fees likely to be charged for each type of transaction, the following table can be used as a guide:

Transaction	Typical Fee Estimate (Plus VAT at 20% and any Disbursements)
Freehold Purchase	£2,000 (£2,500)

Leasehold Purchase	£3,000
Freehold Sale	£1,500
Leasehold Sale	£2,500 (£3,000)
Right to Buy	£1,860
Leasehold Enquiries	£1,235 (£785 seller & £450 buyer)

Once we have received complete instructions, we will assess the matter and provide you with a fee estimate. If the matter is particularly complex, the legal fees may be higher than those indicated above. However, where the matter is more straightforward, we may be able to give a lower fee estimate.

All our fee estimates are subject to VAT at the prevailing rate, currently 20%.

There are several factors that could lead to a higher initial fee estimate, and these include:

- If there is a long and complex history associated with the matter/site;
- If the terms of the transaction have not been fully agreed before we are instructed on the matter and commercial terms require negotiation;
- If the title to the property is particularly complicated, for example if there are numerous Restrictions or Covenants recorded on the registers of title to the property or missing title documents;
- If the property is unregistered;
- If there are any boundary disputes or discrepancies with the red line of the boundary to the site; and
- If there are probate issues to resolve.

We always reserve the right to increase our fee estimates, because they are determined at the start of a transaction and based on the information that is available to us at the time. As matters progress, it might be necessary to increase our fee estimate. For example, if it becomes apparent that further documentation is required or that the title to a property needs further investigation.

Disbursements

Disbursements are costs incurred by the Firm on your behalf which are payable to a third party, such as Search fees, Land Registry fees, Court fees and Counsel fees. The Firm will charge any disbursement costs to you.

We will always seek to agree the costs of any third-party disbursements with you before the costs are incurred.

Typical disbursements which may be incurred on residential property transactions (depending on the nature of the instructions) are as follows:

- Search Fees (Local Search, Environmental Search, Water & Drainage Search, Utilities Search, Coal Search, Chancel Repair Search). These typically range from £300 - £500 per property.
- Land Registry Fees (for ordering title documents and/or dealing with Land Registry Applications). The cost of ordering official copies from the Land Registry is typically between £3 - £20 but will vary depending on the number of documents and plans required. The Land Registry Fees for applications will depend on the nature of the transaction and the value of the property in question and you will be notified of the cost prior to completion of your matter.

Stamp Duty Land Tax may also be payable (for certain types of transactions), and you will be notified of the amount payable to HMRC before completion of your matter.

What does the fee estimate cover?

Our fee estimates cover the work expected to be undertaken by the Lawyers/Paralegals in the team on each matter (not disbursements and other third-party costs) and include the following:

- Taking initial instructions and reviewing agreed Heads of Terms, reviewing papers and providing initial advice;
- Preparing draft documentation (if appropriate to do so);
- Negotiating the terms of the draft documents;
- Reviewing title to the property;
- Reviewing search results;
- Preparing a report on the title, search results and terms of the agreed documents;
- Arranging for documents to be signed/sealed;
- Exchanging contracts (where relevant)
- Completing the transaction;
- Dealing with post completion requirements such as the payment of Stamp Duty Land Tax and registration.

We do not provide tax advice to our clients and although we will assist with the preparation of the Stamp Duty Land Tax Return, this is a personal tax return and our clients need to check the contents and confirm to us that it is accurate (and that they approve the submission of the Return to HMRC by Pathfinder Legal Services Limited on their behalf). We do not provide advice on VAT, Capital Gains Tax, Corporation Tax or any other form of tax.

VAT

The professional fees set out above are subject to VAT at the prevailing rate, currently 20%.

The VAT treatment of disbursements varies depending on the nature of the disbursement. Court fees, for example, do not attract VAT, whereas VAT may apply to other third-party costs.

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

The length of time it will take to complete your matter will depend on the nature of the instruction, but it is also dependent on a number of factors outside of Pathfinder Legal Services Limited's control, for example the response times of third-party solicitors, the time taken for search results to be returned to us and in some cases, delays with the Land Registry in processing applications. We will keep you updated regularly on the position of your file and anticipated timescales as the matter progresses.

Typically, we would expect acquisitions and disposals to be completed within 3-4 months. The Land Registry can have delays of up to 2 years to process registration applications.