

Charges and Information Employment Disputes

Our charges

Our overall fees vary depending upon how complex your case is and what you would like us to do. For a free quote specifically tailored to your circumstances please email savvas@southgateandco.co.uk. We would be more than happy to discuss your case.

To give you an idea of how we charge however, and to comply the SRA price transparency rules, we have set out below details of our typical hourly rates and fees for unfair and wrongful dismissal claims.

Our charges are made up of:

- a) our fees for the legal work;
- b) 'disbursements' - disbursements are costs related to your matter that are payable to other people, such as fees for a barrister's opinion or help at Court. We handle the payment of the disbursements on your behalf to ensure a smoother process.

Where VAT is referred to below please note that this will be charged at the applicable rate, which is currently 20%.

Our fees

Our fees will either be agreed with you as a fixed sum at the start of your case or based on how much time it takes to deal with your case. Our standard hourly rates are £250.00 plus VAT for a solicitor.

To give a very general idea of how much our fees (excluding 'disbursements' – see below) tend to be for making or defending an unfair or wrongful dismissal claim the ranges tend to be:

- Simple cases: £1,500 to £3,000 (excluding VAT);
- Medium complexity cases: £3,000 to £4,500 (excluding VAT);
- High complexity cases: £4,500 to £10,000 (excluding VAT).

As can be seen from the above, the time spent on a case and our costs can vary significantly depending upon how complex a case is. A case is likely to be more complex (and so incur more time) if:

- It is necessary to attend a long hearing;
- it is necessary to make or defend applications to amend claims or to provide further information about an existing claim;
- it is necessary to defend claims that are brought by litigants in person
- it is necessary to make or defend a costs application
- there are complex preliminary issues such as whether the claimant is disabled (if this is not agreed by the parties)

- the number of witnesses and documents is high
- it is an automatic unfair dismissal claim e.g. if you are dismissed after blowing the whistle on your employer
- there are allegations of discrimination which are linked to the dismissal

Similarly, though, other employment law cases such as employee settlement agreements would be much simpler and cost much less (and may be paid by the employer). Call us on 020 8809 0010 if you are not sure what sort of case yours is and we can guide you further.

Disbursements

You will need to pay for ‘disbursements’ in addition to our fees as described above. In an unfair or wrongful dismissal claim the most common disbursements are for barrister’s fees. A barrister is often used to deal with a Tribunal hearing if your case is not settled before this time (which can often occur). Barrister’s fees tend to be in the region of £1,000 to £2,000 exclusive of VAT per day.

You may also need to obtain Counsels opinion as to the merits of your case, such an opinion will be between £1,200 to £2,500 exclusive of VAT.

We will however guide you on this as and when external costs need to be incurred.

Other costs to consider

Normally you do not have to pay your opponent’s costs in an employment claim but we will guide you further if we feel that you are at risk of this at any stage.

Key stages of your claim

The examples of typical costs above cover all of the work in relation to the following key stages of an unfair dismissal or wrongful dismissal case:

- Taking your initial instructions, reviewing the papers and advising you on your prospects of success in the claim or defence and the likely value of the claim, although this is likely to be revisited throughout the case and subject to change.
- Entering into pre-claim conciliation with ACAS where this is mandatory and to explore whether a settlement can be reached.
- Preparing your claim or response.
- Reviewing and advising on the claim or response from the other party.
- Exploring settlement and negotiating a settlement throughout the process.
- Preparing or considering a schedule of loss.
- Preparing for and attending a Preliminary Hearing.
- Exchanging documents with the other party and agreeing a bundle of documents.
- Taking witness statements, drafting statements and agreeing their content with witnesses.
- Preparing bundles of documents for the final hearing.
- Reviewing and advising on the other party's witness statements.
- Agreeing a list of issues, a chronology and/or case list.
- Preparation and instructions to the barrister (if this is not being done in-house by us) for the final hearing.

The stages set out above are an indication only and if some of the stages are not required, the fee may be reduced. Some clients may wish to attempt to handle some parts of a very straight-forward matter themselves and only have our advice in relation to some of the stages. This can also reduce the cost if your case is one where we're comfortable that this is a sensible approach to take.

It would not normally be necessary to undertake other work or incur other costs other than those described above. However, we would be very happy to provide you with a more tailored quote for all stages of your particular case once we know about your specific circumstances.

How long will my case take?

The time it takes from your initial instructions to the end of your case depends largely on the stage at which it is resolved. If a settlement is reached during pre-claim discussions, your case is likely to take 3 - 4 weeks. If your claim proceeds to a final hearing, your case is likely to take 18 - 50 weeks. This is just an illustration and we will be able to give you a more accurate timescale once we have more information from you and as the case progresses.

Who will be dealing with my case?

Your case will be handled by a solicitor with over 8 years appropriate experience and qualifications. Full details of which, including details of their supervisor, if appropriate, will be given before any action is taken.