

News release

SRA wants views on suite of support for in-house solicitors

08 March 2024

We have developed a raft of new resources to support the 34,500 plus solicitors working in-house in England and Wales. And views are now being sought on the guidance and advice before they are formally adopted.

Developed in conjunction with the regulator's virtual in-house solicitor reference group, the materials build on issues which arose from our 2023 thematic review in working in-house [<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2023-press-releases/in-house-thematic-review/>] and wider feedback from in-house solicitors over the past 12 months.

The resources include a new document aimed specifically at employers which outlines a solicitor's professional obligations and the benefits of employing a regulated professional. The resource is also designed to help solicitors establish a mutual understanding of what this means they can - and cannot - do for their employer

Other newly published guidance covers areas such as identifying your client when working in-house, handling internal investigations, and reporting wrong-doing by your employer. Alongside the guidance, we have published a number of case studies illustrating how it can be put into action.

The documents are being published ahead of our second annual in-house solicitors conference, which is being staged next week and will bring together more than 250 in-house practitioners. The materials are also being published on our website, with feedback being invited by 19 April.

Juliet Oliver, General Counsel at the Solicitors Regulation Authority

said: 'As well as ongoing feedback from the those working in the sector, recent high-profile cases such as the Post Office case have really shone a light on the unique challenges and issues which in-house solicitors can encounter.

'We have been working closely with the in-house community over the past year to consider what support we can offer to address some of these challenges. We believe these resources will provide valuable support and guidance to in-house solicitors across a range of important issues. But to make sure this is the case, we want to take this opportunity to invite those working in the sector to input'

The number of in-house solicitors in England and Wales continues to grow year-on-year and now accounts for more than one-fifth of all practising

solicitors and work across more than 6,000 employers.

Our in-house solicitor conference, with expert speakers from across the private, public, and charity sectors, is being staged in London on 14 March. As well as the new guidance, issues to be discussed will include what it means to be an in-house leader, how to maintain and develop professional competence in an in-house setting, and an in-house solicitor's role in providing environmental, social and governance direction.

Final copies of the new in-house resources will be published later in 2024.

Read our draft guidance:

- Guidance for employers [<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/understanding-in-house-solicitors-professional-obligations-employer/>]
- Identifying your client when working in-house [<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/identifying-client-working-in-house-guidance/>]
- Reporting concerns about wrongdoing when working in-house [<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/reporting-concerns-wrong-doing-working-in-house-guidance/>]
- Running internal investigations [<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/internal-investigations/>]