

Statement

SRA Statement: Increase to our fining powers

15 July 2022

Following a change to legislation, our fining powers will increase on 20 July 2022. From that date, the maximum fine we can impose for solicitors, traditional firms (recognised bodies or recognised sole practices) and the individuals who work in them will be £25,000.

We will apply this change to all cases where we consider a fine is appropriate, except for those where we have already sent a notice to the respondent proposing to refer the case to an SRA adjudicator or the SDT. For fairness and consistency, those cases will continue to be dealt with as set out in the notice - unless we are able to agree a regulatory settlement in which the respondent agrees the case against them, including the appropriate level of fine, up to the new level.

We will continue to apply our Enforcement Strategy [<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/corporate-strategy/sra-enforcement-strategy/>] , our approach to financial penalties guidance [<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/financial-penalties/>] and any relevant topic guides [<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/corporate-strategy/sra-enforcement-strategy/enforcement-practice/>] in determining the appropriate level of fine in each individual case.

As now, if we consider that a higher fine is justified, we can refer the matter to the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal (SDT) for it to consider imposing a financial penalty of an unlimited amount. We may also refer a matter to the SDT in the public interest, even where a fine within our powers is appropriate. This might, for example, be because there is a material dispute over the facts that can only be resolved by a hearing, or because there are connected allegations that are more serious.