

News release

Information gap to be addressed as SRA confirms that law firms to publish prices and protections

14 June 2018

Law firms must publish information on the prices they charge for certain public-facing services and also display a new badge showing the protections their regulated status gives customers, under new measures we have confirmed.

This comes as new research suggests that 85 percent of people want information on price, protections and quality of service before choosing a legal services provider. The two most important factors in choosing a provider are reputation followed by price.

Announced as part of the its wider Looking to the Future programme, our 'Better Information, more choice' reforms are designed to improve public access to legal services by making information on price, protections and services more easily available.

Key measures include:

- From December 2018, all regulated law firms will be required to publish information on prices they charge, and what these cover, across a number of common services:
 - For members of the public: conveyancing, probate, motoring offences, employment tribunals (claims for unfair or wrongful dismissal) and immigration (excluding asylum).
 - For small businesses: debt recovery (up to £100k), employment tribunals (defending claims for unfair or wrongful dismissal) and licensing applications for business premises.
- A new searchable register will be developed providing information on all solicitors and regulated law firms in England and Wales, including details on the areas of law they practise and any regulatory matters.
- We will develop a digital badge scheme. This will be displayed on regulated firms' websites and promote the public protections being regulated provides customers.

As part of our wider regulatory reforms, new rules will also be introduced requiring solicitors working outside regulated law firms, or on a freelance basis, to proactively provide clients with information on the regulatory protections and insurance arrangements that apply. We engaged with more than 21,000 members of the public and profession on its proposals.

Following feedback, we no longer plan to publish details of client complaints to law firms. This is based on concerns that without appropriate context, complaints data could be difficult to understand.

Paul Philip, SRA Chief Executive, said: "People with legal problems often struggle to find clear, understandable information to help them choose the right service. All the evidence shows that they do not necessarily want the cheapest provider, but they do find having information on price helps with their choices.

"Better information will not only help the public and small businesses, but also provide opportunities for firms to promote their individual offer and the extra customer protections you get using a regulated law firm. It is a win-win for everyone."

Alongside these reforms we have also published the findings of its Better information in the legal services market research report, produced by Economic Insight. This found:

- The majority of people (85 percent) want information about legal services providers to be more readily available, especially in relation to price, quality and protections.
- People would be more confident when buying services from a website with a 'regulated by the SRA' badge.
- Protections and price are both important factors when buying legal services, and people do not necessarily simply want the cheapest option.

This research can be found here:

Go to the research [\[sra/how-we-work/reports/better-information/\]](#)

The Better Information reforms will be submitted to the Legal Services Board for formal approval over the coming months. Subject to this, the changes are expected to be implemented on a phased basis from the end of 2018 onwards. Ahead of implementation we will be working closely with the profession to explain the reforms and help them prepare for any changes.

Further information on Looking to the future is available here:

Go to the Looking to the future page [\[sra/policy/future/looking-future/\]](#)

Further information on the Better Information consultation is here:

Go to the consultation [\[sra/consultations/consultation-listing/ltf-better-information-consultation/\]](#)