



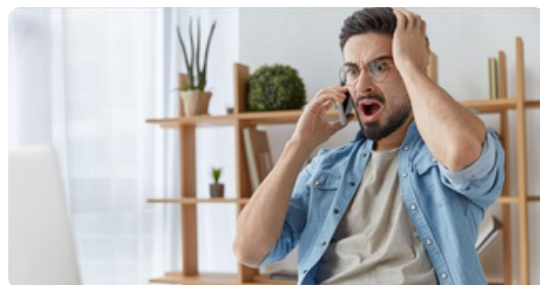
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Each month we provide our Retainer clients with a highly rated compliance bulletin covering what they need to know and what action they must take. Below is a summary of our compliance bulletin.

COMPLIANCE & MANAGEMENT

Statement on referrals to the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal (SDT)

Following the increase in SRA fining powers in July 2022, the SRA and SDT have released a joint statement outlining a share expectation of the types of case that would be referred to the SDT, and those the SRA alone would deal with.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The joint statement from the SRA and SDT can be read in full at:
<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-sdt-statement-2023/>.

The SRA's referral test can be viewed at:
<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/disciplinary-issuing-solicitors-disciplinary-tribunal-proceedings/>.

The proposed Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Bill can be considered in full at <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3339>. The current stage of parliamentary approval can also be viewed.

Legal Choices website success

Legal Choices aims to provide independent and factual information to help the public and small businesses navigate the legal sector, services and providers. The SRA has published a report on the success of Legal Choices throughout 2022.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The SRA's news release can be read at:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/legal-choices-report-2021-22/>.

The full report can be accessed at:

<https://publications.sra.org.uk/legal-choices-2022/>.

DATA PROTECTION

Funded Cyber Essentials Plus for legal aid providers

The NCSC has announced a new scheme for small legal aid providers, with less than 50 employees, to obtain Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation free of charge.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The NCSC's news release can be reviewed at:

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/information/funded-cyber-essentials-programme>.

Firms that wish to find out more, or would like to register their interest, should visit the IASME's website at:

<https://iasme.co.uk/cyber-essentials/funded-programme>.

The IASME has provided a free online tool for firms to determine their readiness for Cyber Essentials accreditation. This tool can be accessed at:

<https://getreadyforcyberessentials.iasme.co.uk/>.

AML AND FINANCIAL CRIME

To discuss how we can help your firm with **AML**, please call **01509 214 999**, send us an **email** or complete our **free enquiry form**.

SRA issues record fine for AML breaches

The SRA has issued a record fine of £20,000 to a small firm for AML compliance breaches. The main finding was a failure to put in place a practice-wide risk assessment compliant with the MLR 2017.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The full report can be read at:

<https://www.lawgazette.co.uk/news/sra-imposes-record-20000-fine-for-aml-failings/5114831.article>.

The Law Society's report and response can be accessed at:

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/anti-money-laundering/sra-fines-small-firm-20000-for-aml-breaches>.

2020-2022 AML supervision report

The Law Society has reported on HM Treasury's Anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism: supervision report 2020-2022, which was published on 19 December 2022.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The Law Society's news story, with a link to download the full HM Treasury report, can be accessed at:

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/anti-money-laundering/aml-cft-supervision-report-2020-2022>.

SRA guidance on complying with UK sanctions regime

The SRA has published guidance designed to help firms understand their obligations and how to comply with them. The SRA says it will have regard to the guidance when exercising its regulatory functions.



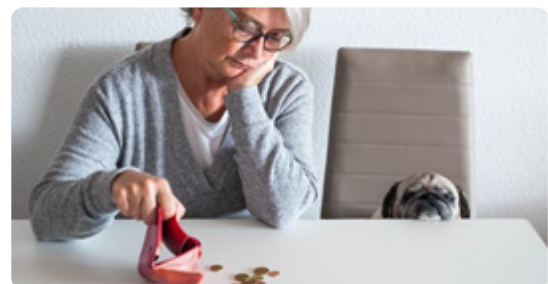
FURTHER INFORMATION

The SRA's detailed guidance can be accessed at:
<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/financial-sanctions-regime/>.

LEGAL AID

Changes to legal aid eligibility rules for cost of living payments

Support payments are being offered by the government to help vulnerable people during the cost of living crisis. The LAA has made changes to ensure that clients receiving cost of living payments are not disadvantaged when applying for legal aid.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The full news story can be accessed at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/civilcrime-news-eligibility-rules-for-cost-of-living-payments>.

The Legal Aid (Financial Resources and Contribution Orders) Regulations 2022 can be reviewed at:
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2022/1376/contents/made>.

Updates to reporting of financial circumstances changes for legally aided clients

The LAA is updating the process for submitting a change in financial circumstances, so providers will no longer be required to enter interests of justice information.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The LAA's news release can be read at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/crime-news-change-in-financial-circumstances-reports-now-easier>.

The LAA's guidance and demonstration video can be accessed at:

<https://legalalearning.justice.gov.uk/course/view.php?id=207>.

DG LEGAL RETAINER SERVICE

Most of our clients prefer to use our services on a retainer basis simply because the cost is far cheaper than instructing us on an hourly rate or fixed fee basis. The scope and nature of the services provided tends to vary from firm to firm, as each organisation has different needs and priorities.

In addition to our monthly compliance bulletins, all of our retainer clients benefit from:

- assistance with quality assurance accreditations and audits, including Lexcel, SQM, CQS and WIQS
- drafting a suite of compliance documents and provision of templates
- telephone and email support
- guidance in relation to UK GDPR and data protection
- assistance with communications from the SRA, whether these relate to audits, thematic reviews or investigations
- assistance with LAA audits
- COLP & COFA compliance software
- discounted rates on premier training courses.

FURTHER INFORMATION

More information about our popular retainer service can be found at:
<https://dglegal.co.uk/services/retainer-service/>.

To arrange a discussion with our team about how our retainer service may benefit your firm, please contact us using the details at the bottom of this newsletter.



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