



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

SRA unbundled services pilot report

The SRA has published its final report into pilot research examining the use of unbundled legal services. The report has identified opportunities to expand unbundling, which will likely benefit both the profession and the public.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The SRA's news story, including a brief overview of the report, can be found at:
<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/unbundling-legal-services/>

The pilot's final report can be accessed at:
<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/unbundled-services-pilot/>

Persons at risk of financial abuse guide

The Law Society has issued a new guide to help solicitors identify clients who may be at risk of financial abuse. The guide is particularly aimed to assist solicitors advising in estate and financial planning, property transactions, execution of wills or LPAs.



FURTHER INFORMATION

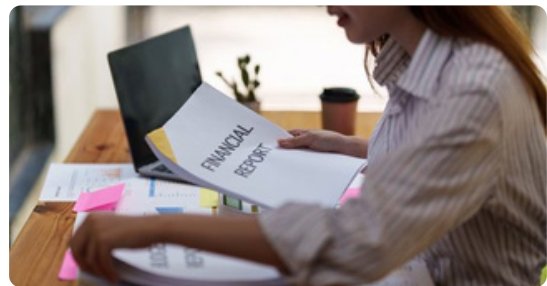
The Law Society's guide, including links to a number of useful resources and practice notes, can be found at:

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/Topics/Client-care/Guides/Financial-abuse>

Financial Health Check

The Law Society is promoting the annual Financial Benchmarking Survey 2024.

The survey is considered as an invaluable tool by many law firms and can be used to help monitor your firm's profitability, control overheads and inform business planning.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The Law Society's news release about the survey, including a link to download the questionnaire, can be read at:

<https://communities.lawsociety.org.uk/law-management-news/take-part-in-our-financial-benchmarking-survey-2024/6002649.article>

DATA PROTECTION

Funded Cyber Essentials Plus for legal aid providers

The NCSC has relaunched its 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>.

NCSC Legal Sector Cyber Threat Report

The NCSC has published a new Cyber Threat Report aimed specifically at the UK legal sector. The report helps law firms and lawyers understand current cyber security threats and the extent to which the legal sector is being targeted. The report also includes practical guidance on how organisations can ensure their resilience to such threats.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The NCSC's Cyber Threat Report can be accessed at:

https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/files/Cyber-Threat-Report_UK-Legal-Sector.pdf

Firms encouraged to report cyber-attacks

The NCSC, in collaboration with the ICO, has sought to dispel myths around reporting cyber-attacks and hopes to encourage more organisations to report when they are subject to an attack, leading to more opportunities for others to learn and prevent future attacks.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The NCSC's blog post can be read at:

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/blog-post/why-more-transparency-around-cyber-attacks-is-a-good-thing-for-everyone>

The NCSC's cyber incident reporting service can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/where-to-report-a-cyber-incident>

Information from the ICO on reporting data breaches can be accessed at:

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/report-a-breach/>

AML & FINANCIAL CRIME

UK sanctions regime guide

The Law Society has published a new guide to the UK sanctions regime. The guide provides information on:

- criminal offences under the regime
- how to carry out a risk assessment
- sanctions lists
- acting for a client on a sanctions list
- reporting obligations



FURTHER INFORMATION

The Law Society's guide can be accessed at:

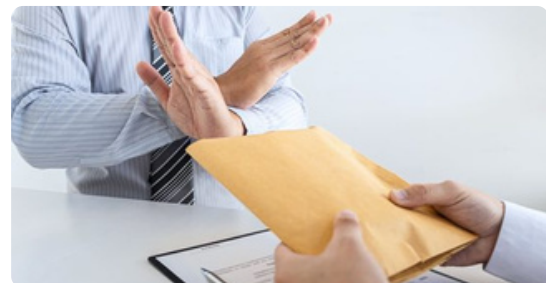
<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/Topics/Anti-money-laundering/Guides/sanctions-guide>

The UK government's Consolidated Sanctions List can be found at:

<https://sanctionssearchapp.ofsi.hmtreasury.gov.uk/>

New sanctions on legal services

HM Treasury has announced new restrictions on providing transactional legal advisory services to non-UK persons. The new restrictions prohibit the provision of legal advisory services in relation to financial or trade activity, even where this does not involve a UK person or the transaction is not taking place in the UK.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The SRA's new story can be read at:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-117-russian-services/>

The government's press release on the new restrictions can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-law-imposes-fresh-sanctions-on-russia-accessing-uk-legal-expertise>

The Russia (Sanctions) (EU Exit) (Amendment (No. 3) Regulations 2023 can be accessed in full at:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2023/713/made>

New proceeds of crime guidance

POCA was introduced to help law enforcement agencies and other investigatory bodies to tackle financial crime. The SRA has published new guidance to help law firms and solicitors to comply with POCA.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The SRA's newly published guidance can be found at:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/proceeds-crime-guidance/>.

The LSAG AML Guidance can be read in full at:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/globalassets/documents/solicitors/firm-based-authorisation/lsg-aml-guidance.pdf?version=496f8e>

LEGAL AID

New payments for pre-charge bail cases

The LAA has made changes to permit pre-charge bail matters to be billed before the case ends. Providers are now able to claim where a period of one month has passed since the last work was conducted and it is unclear if further work will be required.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The LAA's new story can be read at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/crime-news-pre-charge-bail-changes-to-speed-up-provider-billing>.

The latest version of the 2022 Standard Crime Contract Specification, including updates at paragraph 9.104 to reflect this change, can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standard-crime-contract-2022>.

The updated Guidance for Reporting Crime Lower Work can be accessed in full at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cwa-codes-guidance>

2022 Standard Crime Contract changes

The LAA has announced changes to the 2022 Standard Crime Contract, from 3 August 2023, in respect of office opening hours and supervision arrangements. The changes are designed to increase flexibility for providers and reduce administrative burden.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The LAA's news story can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/changes-to-standard-crime-contract-2022>.

The new draft version of the Specification can be accessed at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1171919/Specification_-_draft_version_3_to_be_effective_from_3_August_2023_.pdf

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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