



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

Warning over impersonation of law firms and employees

The SRA has issued an alert to firms regarding the prevalence of scams purporting to be law firms or their employees.

The SRA has published 87 scam reports from 1 February – 30 April 2024.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The SRA's news story can be read at:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-127-scam-alerts/>

A summary of February – April 2024 scam alerts published by the SRA can be found at:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/scam-alerts/scams-round-up/>

All recent scam alerts can be viewed and searched at:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/scam-alerts/>

Guidance and warning over conduct in financial services claims

The SRA has issued a warning to firms about their conduct when working on financial compensation claims. The warning has stemmed from concerns that solicitors are not always working in their clients' best interests, particularly when dealing with high volumes of claims of similar natures.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The SRA's news release can be read at:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/mass-claims/>

The claims management guidance can be found at:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/claims-management-activity/>

The high-volume financial service claims warning notice can be accessed at:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/high-volume-financial-service-claims/>

DATA PROTECTION

Information security questionnaire updated & new affirmation created

The Law Society and The Bar Council's questionnaire was updated following feedback from users to include 9 new questions. It is hoped this will enhance its effectiveness for law firms to understand the information security arrangements put in place by barristers' chambers.



They have also now produced a Cyber and Information Security Affirmation. Barristers and solicitors can voluntarily use the affirmation to define and agree their specific information security roles and responsibilities.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The Law Society's update, and links to download the updated questionnaire and affirmation, can be found at:

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/Topics/Cybersecurity/Tools/Information-security-questionnaire>.

AML & FINANCIAL CRIME

New Law Society economic crime guidance

The Law Society has published five new guides on some of the economic crime regimes with which solicitors and law firms must comply.



These guides include the following topics:

- consequences of not preventing economic crime: firm case studies
- consequences of not preventing economic crime: solicitor case studies
- professional enablers
- suspicious activity reports
- UK sanctions regime.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The firm case studies on the consequences of not preventing economic crime can be found at:

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/Topics/Anti-money-laundering/Guides/Professional-enablers-case-studies-firms>

The solicitor case studies on the consequences of not preventing economic crime can be read at:

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/Topics/Anti-money-laundering/Guides/Professional-enablers-case-studies-individuals>

The professional enablers guide can be accessed at:

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

The guide to suspicious activity reports can be found at:

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/Topics/Anti-money-laundering/Guides/Suspicious-activity-reports>

The UK sanctions regime guide can be read at:

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

OFSI general licence for legal fees

In anticipation of the expiration of the previous licence on 28 April 2024, OFSI issued a new general licence for legal fees. The general licence is designed to make it easier for firms to receive fees for legal advice where they are working with clients from Russia and Belarus, who are subject to financial sanctions regime.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The general licence, the publication notice and forms for reporting use of the general licence can be found on OFSI's website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/legal-services-general-licence>

LEGAL AID

LAA announces intentions for 2025 Crime Contract

The LAA has published its headline intentions for the 2025 Standard Crime Contract. This will replace the current 2022 Standard Crime Contract that will come to an end on 30 September 2025.



The procurement opportunity is intended to open in September 2024.

A number of contractual changes are also proposed as part of the 2025 Standard Crime Contract.

FURTHER INFORMATION

At the present time, little information has been released about this tender opportunity, with more detail to be available in time for the procurement window opening.

The LAA's news story can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/headline-intentions-for-the-2025-standard-crime-contract>.

The headline intentions document and, in due course, further tender documentation can be accessed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/crime-contract-2025-tender>

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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Services for Lawyers



T. 01509 214 999 E. admin@dglegal.co.uk W. www.dglegal.co.uk

39 The Rushes, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 5BG