

Choosing a solicitor

Only people we approve can call themselves solicitors. There are several other types of legal advisor however. These are clearly explained in full on the Legal Choices website under [Types of Lawyers](https://www.legalchoices.org.uk/types-of-lawyers) [<https://www.legalchoices.org.uk/types-of-lawyers>], and are both regulated and unregulated.

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What is a solicitor

Solicitors are professionals who provide legal services across a wide range of areas. Only people we approve can call themselves solicitors. They must be qualified, behave ethically and follow our rules.

When you have to use a solicitor

You may need a solicitor for certain services which involve handling your money or protecting your freedom. These are called reserved activities and they include:

- buying/selling property
- administering wills
- representing you in court

You may not need a solicitor for other types of legal advice. Other options available include mediators, paralegals and will writers to name a few.

For these other options, you should contact law firms directly to discuss potential prices and services they offer.

How solicitors work

- Within an SRA regulated law firm - this is how most solicitors work or
- Within different types of organisation such as a will writing company, charity or local authority or
- As a freelance solicitor - this means they work on their own. To be able to offer reserved services freelance solicitors must first meet certain qualifying criteria.

Check your protection level

How you are protected will differ depending upon which type of solicitor you use. This guide will show you where you stand on getting your money back, insurance and making complaints with a regulated law firm and other types of organisations.

Within a regulated law firm

- We set the minimum insurance cover
- You can complain to us or the Legal Ombudsman
- You can apply to us for compensation
- We can help you get your documents back

Within a non-regulated organisation

- No specified level of insurance
- You can complain to us or the Legal Ombudsman
- You can apply to us for compensation
- We can help you get your documents back

Within a not-for-profit organisation offering reserved legal services

- Must have adequate level of insurance
- You can complain to us or the Legal Ombudsman
- You can apply to us for compensation for certain issues
- We can help you get your documents back

As a freelance solicitor who offers reserved services

- Must have adequate and appropriate level of insurance
- You can complain to us or the Legal Ombudsman
- You can apply to us for compensation for certain issues
- We can help you get your documents back

As a freelance solicitor who offers non reserved activities

- No specified level of insurance
- You can complain to us or the Legal Ombudsman
- You can apply to us for compensation for certain issues
- We can help you get your documents back

[Solicitors Register](#)

[Check if a solicitor or firm is regulated by us.](#)

[<https://guidance.sra.org.uk/consumers/register/>]

[Instructing a solicitor](#)

[Find out how to work with your solicitor.](#)

[<https://guidance.sra.org.uk/consumers/instructing/>]