

GRANT OF PROBATE COSTS UNDERSTANDING THE RECENT INCREASES

Many people handle the administration of a deceased relative's estate themselves, particularly when it is straightforward. However, a recent change means that while the cost of obtaining probate in England and Wales remains unchanged, the price for each official copy of the grant has risen substantially.

Ordering extra copies of the grant of probate has risen from just £1.50 to £16 per copy. Extra copies may be needed to send probate to different institutions at the same time.

If the deceased did not leave a will (died intestate), then the closest living relative will have to apply for letters of administration rather than a grant of probate.

HOW MANY COPIES?

There is no hard and fast rule about how many copies are required, because each financial institution sets its own threshold for when a copy of the grant of probate is required. The institutions that might require a copy include:

- Banks, building societies and NS&I;
- Pension and insurance providers;
- Share registrars;
- Local councils to settle council tax; and
- A management company for a leasehold property.

Having spare copies also makes sense. It might be that ten copies are required, so the fee will now be £160. This is in addition to the £300 application fee for the grant of probate, although no fee is payable for very small estates of £5,000 or less.

WHEN TO GET HELP

Specialist help with probate can be expensive, but in many circumstances will be required.

- **Inheritance tax:** This can be difficult to calculate, especially if there are hard-to-value assets, or complex reliefs available.
- **The terms of the will are unclear:** This could be the case if the deceased drew up the will themselves. The executor or administrator can be held personally financially liable if the deceased's estate is not correctly distributed.
- **The will is likely to be challenged:** Current/former spouses and civil partners, along with children, could make a claim if they feel they have not been sufficiently provided for.



Other situations include where money or property has been left to a trust, assets are left to children under 18, or where the deceased owned a business.

If you are involved in a probate application, the Government's guide is a good starting point. This can be found [here](#).

WE CAN HELP

If you require further assistance with any of the issues raised in this article, contact us on **01753 888 211** or email **info@nhllp.com**. We are here to help.