

News release

SRA issues more fixed penalties

09 January 2024

Updated 22 January 2024

We have published more fixed penalties issued as part of our new financial penalty regime.

£750 fines have been issued to seven firms for not complying with the our transparency rules. This follows three firms being issued with fines for such breaches in November 2023. The first fixed penalty for a firm failing to submit its diversity data was also issued in December 2023.

Firms are sent notices of potential fines, with the opportunity to put the issue right. In many cases, the threat of penalties is resulting in firms becoming compliant. If those firms who have been fined continue not to comply with the rules, they could potentially face a further fixed penalty of £1,500.

Paul Philip, Chief Executive of the SRA, said: 'We brought in fixed penalties so we could deal with non-complex breaches of our rules more swiftly. That saves everyone time, cost and stress.

'We are here to promote the public interest and it's essential firms comply with our transparency rules. They help people compare law firms' services and make informed choices. Those firms that are publishing the correct information rightly expect that we will take action against those who don't.

'Similarly, collecting diversity data helps everyone. A diverse, inclusive legal sector that represents the communities it serves is a strong legal sector. Firms' diversity data not only helps us understand the progress the sector is making, but enables firms to benchmark themselves against others. Providing that data is not difficult to do, but it is a regulatory requirement.'

The other area where we could potentially issue fixed penalties - and has seen a resultant increase in compliance – is the request for firms to complete mandatory anti-money laundering data.

When we take disciplinary action, such as fining a firm, we will publish our decision on the Solicitors Register [<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/register/>] , which enables the public to look up the record of the solicitors and law firms we regulate.

Our new fixed penalty regime was introduced as part of wider reforms to our approach to issuing financial penalties. Under the reforms, we introduced a schedule of fixed penalties

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/link/18de3563f0b949a08c2b26f00f097dc8.aspx#rule-11>] for firms of up to £1,500. These apply to a small number of lower-level breaches of our rules enabling them to be dealt with more effectively and in a timely way.

The changes to our fining approach also saw the maximum level of fine that we can issue directly rise from £2,000 to £25,000 for traditional law firms.

The fines can be seen here:

Transparency rules

- Evans Harvey Limited [<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/register/organisation/?sraNumber=389105>] – 389105
- Johnsons Solicitors Limited [<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/register/organisation/?sraNumber=569070>] – 569070
- Jury O'Shea LLP [<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/register/organisation/?sraNumber=541952>] – 541952
- Adams Hetherington [<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/register/organisation/?sraNumber=073946>] – 073946
- Waugh & Musgrave [<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/register/organisation/?sraNumber=057403>] – 057403
- Fadiga & Co Limited [<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/register/organisation/?sraNumber=562462>] – 562462
- Abbey Solicitors Limited [<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/register/organisation/?sraNumber=567317>] – 567317

Diversity data

HG Legal [<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/solicitor-check/8001397/>] – 8001397