



## Claim your papers from us

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If you need this guidance in a language other than English or in alternative formats, please [contact us](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/home/contact-us/) [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/home/contact-us/] and we will provide it for you.

If your solicitors has been closed down by us and you believe they held documents and files for you, please [read the below](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/claim-papers/#heading_af0b) [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/claim-papers/#heading\_af0b] then download and complete the form.

**[Download: Intervention archives, document request form \(DOC 8 pages, 129KB\)](#)**

[\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/globalassets/documents/consumers/document-request-form---intervention-archives..docx\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/globalassets/documents/consumers/document-request-form---intervention-archives..docx)

Please note, this form is only for clients of firms that have been closed down by the SRA. If you are unsure if the firm was closed down by us, you can check the [Solicitors Register](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/consumers/register/) [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/consumers/register/] to search for the firm.

Please send your completed form to us with the relevant identification. We will log your request and send you an acknowledgement.

## Axiom Ince

We normally aim to deal with all requests within 8 weeks of receipt of completed information. However, because of the volume of files from the intervention into Axiom Ince, it will take us some time to collect and process files. This will impact on how quickly we can return documents to clients and former clients of all firms.

If you have been affected by the Axiom Ince intervention, we have [further information available](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/axiom-ince-intervention-information/) [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/axiom-ince-intervention-information/] that might help you.

## How long will you store my files or documents?

We cannot keep all files and documents forever. We have a policy which explains how long we will keep files and documents for, and what we will destroy after a certain period of time.

### Policy



1. No files will be destroyed in the first 12 months following an intervention.
2. All files received following an [intervention will be sorted into categories](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/claim-papers/intervention-archives-file-retention-policy/) [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/claim-papers/intervention-archives-file-retention-policy/].
3. The minimum period for retention of any client file is seven years from the date the matter was concluded.
4. The minimum period for retention of any accounts file is seven years from the date of the intervention into the firm where it was actively trading prior to the intervention, or, in cases where the firm had closed down prior to the intervention, seven years from the date of closure of the firm.
5. The minimum period for retention of any administration file is three years from the date of the intervention into the firm where it was actively trading prior to the intervention, or, in cases where the firm had closed down prior to the intervention, three years from the date of closure of the firm.
6. All files relating to an intervention on which we are still trying to return monies to clients will be kept until these issues are resolved.
7. Prior to the destruction of any file, it will be sifted in to ensure the removal of all original documentation which shall be retained as set out in Appendix 2. Such documentation will be stored separately.
8. All destruction of files will be conducted in accordance with the SRA's policy on confidential destruction.

Read a list of [how long we will keep files and documents before destroying them](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/claim-papers/intervention-archives-file-retention-policy/) [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/claim-papers/intervention-archives-file-retention-policy/].

## Completing your document request form

[Open all \[#\]](#)

### **Before you start**

[Download the form](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/globalassets/documents/consumers/document-request-form---intervention-archives..docx) [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/globalassets/documents/consumers/document-request-form---intervention-archives..docx], complete it, giving us all the information requested and return it to the address listed in the form.

When sending us your form, please do not include any original documents. We cannot be held responsible for any documents that may get lost within the postal system. Instead, please give us copies of original documents on A4 paper.

Any files or documents we find will be sent out via Royal Mail Special Delivery or secure courier, and a signature will be required on delivery.

### **First page of the form**



Please give us the name of the solicitor or law firm intervened (closed) by us.

## **Part 1 - Requesters Details**

We will need proof of your identity as the requester and signed authority (see sections 7 and 8).

If you need the documents and or files to be sent to someone other than the person making the request, please give us their name and address. We do not require any proof of identity or signed authority from this person.

## **Part 2 - Files/Documents requested**

Please tell us the specific files/documents you want us to search for.

We need to know the name(s) on the files/documents you are looking for. We will also need proof of identity and signed authority from everybody named on the files/documents (see sections 7 and 8).

If the files are in a company or other legal entity name, please give us their details (see sections 7 and 8).

If any of those named on the files/documents are deceased, we will require a copy of the death certificate (see section 5).

Please tell us what the requested files are about, ie purchase of a property, litigation matter etc.

When requesting a file concerning an immigration matter, we will need your full date of birth and country of birth. This will help us to match the file to the request.

We will send all files held in the names requested.

## **Part 3 - Property Files/Leases/Deeds**

We need the address of the property/properties you are requesting files for. This can be a full postal address or a plot number. Without this information your request may be delayed.

If there has been a mortgage on the property, we will need either:

- the mortgage lenders authority to send the correspondence file, or
- proof the mortgage has been repaid from the mortgage lenders.

We ask for the mortgage lenders authority because part of the file may belong to the lender. If it gives authority, we can send the file in its entirety.



## **Part 4 - Wills**

If you are requesting your own will, please confirm the date it was made. If it is not your will, please tell us whose will you are requesting.

Please give us the address included in the will at the time it was made as this can help us to find the correct one.

## **Part 5 - Deceased Persons**

If your request related to a deceased person(s), we will require a copy of their death certificate.

We will also need:

- grant of probate, or
- letters of administration, or
- copy of the deceased's will to prove executorship.

Executors must give us their names, signature and date in this section. They must also provide a form(s) of identification (see section 7).

Executors only need to sign this section if the will is in the name of a deceased person.

## **Part 6 - Acting on a Power of Attorney**

When acting on a power of attorney for the person(s) named on the files/documents, we require a copy of the full power of attorney.

When acting on a power of attorney, we cannot send you an original will and instead you would receive a copy. This will be explained further when we send you the copy document.

## **Part 7 - Identification**

We will require current identification for those who have:

- requested files/documents
- are named on any files/documents.

Please make sure your identification is current and/or dated within the last three months or is a yearly statement.

If you have a current passport or UK photocard driving licence or EEA identity card, you need only send a photocopy of that document. If you do not have any photo ID, we will require two forms of identification from list B on the form.



For businesses, a company director/secretary must complete this form and provide identification. Proof of your position must be provided on company headed paper (see section 7 for full details).

## **Part 8 - Authorities**

A handwritten signature of authority must be provided by all individuals:

- requesting files/documents
- named on the files/documents being requested.

We do not accept electronic signatures, typed signatures or stamped signatures (see section 5 for deceased persons).

Companies must give us their company number or entity name.

## **Additional information**

- There is no fee to request files and/or documents.
- Any missing information may delay your request.
- Once we have received everything we need to process your request, you will receive an acknowledgement letter, including your case reference.
- We aim to process all requests within 12 weeks once we have all the information needed. If files/documents are being held in secure storage, we will be unable to give you a specific timescale until they have been collected. If this is the case, we will update you every four weeks as necessary.
- Acknowledgment of a request does not guarantee we have the files/documents requested. If they were not with the solicitor/at the law firm or subsequent storage locations at the time of an intervention, we will not have them. If this is the case, we will advise you to seek independent legal advice.
- Not all files/documents are held forever. We have a destruction policy which can be given to you upon written request.
- You may be contacted by an assigned case worker for further information.
- We will send all files/documents held in your name(s). If you only wish to receive the files you are specifically asking for, please tell us this when making your request.

If you have any queries, please [contact us \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/contactus\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/contactus).

Please note, we cannot provide legal advice. We advise all clients to seek independent legal advice if necessary.