

News release

Updated resources to help firms comply with transparency rules

30 September 2024

We have issued a suite of [new and updated resources](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/transparency-in-price-and-service/) to help law firms further improve the information they provide to the public, to in turn help them make more informed decisions when they need legal support.

The publication of these materials comes as the number of warnings and fines we have issued in relation to our transparency rules has passed 400 since 2023.

Our research along with findings from others has consistently found that the easier the public find it to access key information on the services law firms offer, including on costs and the customer experiences of others, the more likely they are to seek professional support when they have a legal need.

To further support law firms in making sure this continues to happen, we have issued updates to guidance and support first published when our transparency rules were launched in 2018. This includes new, even more accessible [pricing templates](https://examples.sra.org.uk), that are compliant with our requirements and firms can easily adapt for use on their own websites.

Since May 2023 we have issued 439 official warnings, and 36 fixed penalty fines, to law firms in relation to its transparency rules. These actions largely result from the SRA's ongoing proactive checking of firm websites and asking firms to complete declarations that they are compliant with the rules, work which has directly resulted in changes being made to over 500 previously non-compliant sites.

Following a previous pilot scheme we have also announced, in collaboration with the Council for Licensed Conveyancers (CLC) and CILEx Regulation, the launch of a [new voluntary code for comparison websites](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/fees/voluntary-code-conduct/). With a number of leading providers already signed up, the code ensures tools are transparent about commercial relationships, provide accurate and up-to-date information on legal service providers and offer opportunities for consumers to give feedback through a fair and transparent review process.

Supporting the launch of the code, we have also [updated our guidance \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/fees/engaging-online-reviews/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/fees/engaging-online-reviews/) to law firms on dealing with customer reviews generally, and review websites specifically.

Paul Philip, Chief Executive of the SRA, said:

'Transparency is a key aspect of trust in legal services. By providing clear, accessible pricing information, firms not only comply with regulations but also empower consumers to make informed choices. Our new resources aim to help firms realise the tangible business benefits of transparency and the positive impact it can have on their client relationships.'

In 2021 we worked with the CLC and CILEx Regulation on a year-long pilot with over 70 law firms and multiple comparison websites to explore the use of quality indicators and comparison websites within the legal market. The pilot aimed to understand and test how comparison websites and quality indicators could better work together to benefit both consumers and the firms.

Results indicated that while customer reviews and comparison websites helped the public choose legal services providers, barriers remain in making factual information on services and performance more accessible. This suite of materials aims to support firms in providing understandable and accessible information to help consumers make more informed choices.

For further information on our Transparency Rules and the resources available, read [the guidance \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/transparency-in-price-and-service/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/transparency-in-price-and-service/). More information on comparison websites is [available \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/fees/customer-reviews/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/fees/customer-reviews/), along with guidance on the rules themselves, the clickable logo and dealing with complaints.