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This page introduces you to the lawyers who will be working for you on employment matters here at Waterfront, before explaining the basis for our charges.

### **Our employment team**

Anthony Purvis is a Waterfront partner and Head of Employment. He qualified as a solicitor in 2008 and has around 17 years' experience in the field. You can read more about him [here](#).

Matthew Hodson is a partner who qualified as a solicitor in 2015 having worked in employment law since 2011. He was promoted to partner in 2024 after 8 years at Waterfront and his profile is [here](#).

Jamie Webster is an associate who qualified as a solicitor in 2021 when he joined Waterfront. His profile is [here](#).

Our employment team also benefits from paralegal and trainee solicitor support.

Together our team has nearly 30 years of experience of advising clients on the complexities of employment law. We are proud of having achieved great results. In fact, a lot of our new clients come to us thanks to referrals from existing clients, which for us is the ultimate sign of a job well done.

### **Our pricing**

We usually charge on the basis of hourly rates.

Our standard rates are as follows:

- £460 plus VAT per hour for partners, consultants and heads of department.
- £390 plus VAT per hour for senior associates.
- £340 plus VAT per hour for associates.
- £235 plus VAT per hour for trainee solicitors.
- £155 plus VAT per hour for paralegals.

However, our hourly rates provide only part of the picture when it comes to cost.

In some cases we can agree fixed or capped fees depending on the work involved, particularly in relation to non-contentious matters such as employment contracts, staff handbooks and bonus or commission schemes.

If you are an employee (or ex-employee) we may be able to represent you at no upfront cost to yourself if you have legal expenses insurance or we agree to represent you on the basis of a "no win, no fee" arrangement.

More details on pricing in relation to employment tribunal litigation are set out below.

### **How much will it cost to bring or defend a claim in the employment tribunal?**

If you ask us to act for you, we will discuss costs in more detail once we know more about your case. We will also give you an estimate of how much it will cost and keep you updated as your case progresses.

Experience tells us that some matters can be resolved in just a few hours, whilst others can take many months, if not years.

Consulting a specialist employment solicitor will help you to avoid making costly mistakes. With our wealth of experience, we can help you understand the true value of a claim, together with its strengths and weaknesses and help you with the tactics required to get the right result.

The claim process is often preceded by letters between the parties or their lawyers, known as “pre-action correspondence”. The cost of this stage depends on the complexity of the matter but typically costs between £1,500 plus VAT to £10,000 plus VAT. Sometimes a resolution can be reached at this early stage, meaning there is no need for further costs to be incurred.

If the matter proceeds to an Employment Tribunal claim an estimate of our pricing for bringing and defending claims for unfair or wrongful dismissal – assuming the parties cannot agree a resolution before the case proceeds to a final hearing - is as follows:

- **Simple case:** £10,000 to £15,000 (plus VAT)
- **Medium complexity case:** £15,000 to £50,000 (plus VAT)
- **High complexity case:** £50,000 to £100,000 (plus VAT)

You can see what the above costs cover under the heading “Key Stages” below.

Other types of claim, such as unlawful discrimination or whistleblowing, are often more factually or legally complex and therefore tend to take more time and mean higher cost. However, as indicated above it very much depends on the circumstances of each case and when it is resolved, which could be relatively quickly or after many months.

### **What makes a case more complex than others?**

No two cases are the same. However, these factors usually add to the complexity / or lead to greater cost:

- If it is necessary to make or defend applications to amend claims or to provide further information about an existing claim.
- Defending claims (or dealing with defences to claims) which are brought by litigants in person.
- Making or defending a costs application.
- Complex preliminary issues such as whether the claimant is disabled (if the point is in dispute).
- A requirement for expert evidence.
- The number of witnesses and documents.
- The other party’s approach to disclosure.
- Associated or related claims of unlawful discrimination, whistleblowing or bonus/commission disputes.

## **Disbursements**

In addition to the fees set out above, it may be necessary for you to incur third party costs, known as disbursements. They include court fees, the fees of an expert witness and the fees of a barrister to represent you at a hearing. We handle the payment of the disbursements on your behalf to ensure a smoother process.

If it's appropriate to use a barrister to represent you at a tribunal hearing, you can expect their fee to be from £750 plus VAT to £10,000 plus VAT per day, depending on the experience of the barrister and the complexity of the case.

Barristers usually charge a higher fee to represent you at the first day of a hearing as it includes the time they spend reading through your case and preparing for the entire hearing. This is known as the "brief fee". They usually charge a lower fee for the following days of the hearing and this is called a "refresher".

## **Key stages**

The estimate of our fees set out above covers all of the work in relation to the following key stages of a claim:

- Taking your initial instructions, reviewing the papers and advising you on the merits of the case and likely compensation.
- Entering into pre-claim conciliation to explore whether a settlement can be reached.
- Preparing the claim or the response to the claim.
- Reviewing and advising on the claim or the response.
- Exploring settlement and negotiating settlement throughout the process.
- Preparing or considering a schedule of loss.
- Preparing for (and attending) a preliminary hearing.
- Exchanging documents with the other party and agreeing a bundle of documents.
- Taking witness statements, drafting statements and agreeing their content with the witnesses.
- Reviewing and advising on the other party's witness statements.
- Agreeing a list of issues, a chronology and/or cast list.
- Preparing and attending a final hearing, including preparing instructions to a barrister.

The stages set out above are an indication only and if some of stages above are not required, the fee will be reduced. You may wish to handle the claim yourself and only have our advice in relation to some of the stages. Sometimes it will be appropriate to use our junior lawyers for some stages of your claim, which may mean a reduced fee.

## **Can you represent me on a "no win, no fee basis"?**

Yes, in some cases we are able to represent claimants on this basis.

Known as a Damages Based Agreement, we can agree to represent you for no upfront cost but in return you agree that we can keep 35% of any compensation or settlement we recover for you. However, this type of arrangement is not suitable for some cases or it may not be the right option for some clients, so we will always discuss the pros and cons with you first.

**Can insurance cover my legal costs?**

If you are a claimant you may have legal expenses insurance as part of your home contents or buildings insurance. Sometimes we can act for you with your insurer meeting the cost. If you think you might have insurance, please contact one of the team.

**Can I get my legal costs back from the other side if I win?**

The usual rule in the Employment Tribunal is that both parties pay their own legal costs, win or lose. However, there are some exceptions to this rule and we will discuss these with you when advising on your case.

**How do you charge me if I have a settlement agreement?**

If you are an individual, the norm is that your employer will cover the cost of you taking legal advice on a settlement agreement, usually by making a capped contribution. We will always see if we can fix our fees to no more than the contribution from your employer, but this may not be possible if the matter is complex or you require us to negotiate on your behalf. If that's the case, then typically we would try to negotiate an increase to the contribution your employer is prepared to make to your costs. Another option in some cases is for us to represent you at no upfront cost but in return you agree that we can keep 35% of any increase in the compensation or severance payment we secure for you.

When you instruct us to advise you on a settlement agreement we will always discuss costs with you at the start and set out clearly the choices available to you. We will find the best option for you and keep you updated so that there are no surprises at the end of the matter.

**How long will my matter take?**

The time that it takes from taking your initial instructions to the final resolution of your matter depends largely on the stage at which your case is resolved. If a settlement is reached during pre-claim conciliation, your case might take 4-8 weeks. If your claim proceeds to a final hearing, your case is likely to take 12-36 months to resolve. Many cases fall somewhere between these two extremes. These are of course just estimates and we will be able to give you a more accurate timescale once we have more information and as the matter progresses.

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