



HM Courts & Tribunals Service

22nd May 2023

Dear Colleague,

Subject: The reduction of payment methods to Payment by account (PBA) for all Local Authority Court of Protection applications including Re-X

HMCTS has over the last few years begun to move more and more of its processes to digital and one of these is payment of court fees.

From 1st July 2023 the Court of Protection will only be accepting PBA as a payment method from all Local Authorities. I would like to make clear that this is the only payment option which is going to be available, and we will shortly stop accepting card payments over the phone and cheques for both digital and paper applications.

It should take less than a week to set up an account, and once you have set your account up on PBA, you will be able to see significant financial benefits in not having to take the phone call and make the payment by card. Our understanding is that while the vast majority of local authorities have already signed up for this payment system, some still haven't and we are therefore following up on requests made to you regarding this in 2020, 2021 and 2022 and giving a month's deadline to ensure you have sufficient time to arrange this. I am therefore writing to you to ask you to ensure that your Local Authority works with HMCTS to sign up as soon as possible so there is no interruption to service for you.

PBA provides a more efficient and streamlined service for our staff in that the application can be processed immediately rather than a member of staff trying to contact your organisation to take a payment over the telephone which can take up an hour at times per application. Also, as the court receives many urgent applications, this will ensure we are able to progress your application without inbuilt payment delays.

The Fee Account (PBA) service offers users a streamlined fee payment and management service to support the processing of court business. Benefits to court users include:

- reduced administration overhead in raising and authorising cheques
- no banking charges for each business cheque raised and processed
- control over payment method (customers can cancel the Direct Debit instruction at any time)
- reduced delays caused by re-issue of payments to replace unsigned, incorrect value or lost cheques
- refunds applied directly to a customer's account (avoiding the court administrative, postal and cheque banking delays).

Further information

The PBA system has been available nationally since the 17th November 2014.

Fee account (PBA):

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/864698/fee-account-t-cs-eng.pdf

Should you have any queries regarding setting up a Fee Account, please contact the support team on Tel: 01633 652125 (option 3) or by e-mail: MiddleOffice.DDServices@liberata.com

Once you have an account, it can be used for all types of Court of Protection applications. It is also worth mentioning that users of PBA have the provision to set up sub-accounts within their main account for different departments. Invoices will show the details under each sub-account broken down case by case, showing the customer reference, the court allocated case number, the parties names, the fee and very brief reference to what the fee is for.

If there is a reason your organisation feels it is not able to sign up to use PBA by 1st July 2023, please let us know by email Civil_and_FamilyBusinessSupport@justice.gov.uk and I would be happy to arrange to meet with you to assist you with this step.

Yours sincerely,

The Court of Protection team

The Court and Tribunals Development Directorate
HM Courts & Tribunals Service