

Deputyship fee refunds scheme launched

Refunds are being offered to those who were charged more than was necessary for certain deputyship fees charged for any period between 1 April 2008 and 31 March 2015.

Current deputies acting for existing clients do not need to apply. The Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) will be in touch with deputies in the coming weeks to arrange any refunds due.

Due to difficulty in predicting costs as the number of deputyships rose faster than expected, the fees charged did not match how much it cost OPG to supervise. Since 1 April 2015, clients have not been overcharged.

The Ministry of Justice, which sets OPG's fees, has now launched a refund scheme for those who paid higher fees for the qualifying period. The scheme will be run by OPG and does not apply to fees paid to either OPG Scotland, the Office of Care and Protection in Northern Ireland or the Court of Protection.

Former clients where the deputyship has ended

If you are a former client now able to make all your own decisions, the former client's attorney or acting on behalf of someone who has died, then you will need to apply for a refund.

Only one application form needs to be completed for each former client; OPG will then find all qualifying fees paid by them during the period.

Full guidance for those applying is available online and there is a dedicated refunds helpline for those who need it. If you, or someone you are acting for, thinks they may be eligible please visit www.gov.uk/deputyship-refund for more details and to apply.

For those who don't have internet access or need help with their refund please contact OPG on 0300 456 0300* and select option 6 to speak to a member of the refunds team. The scheme is open for 3 years so there's plenty of time to apply.

*Lines are open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9am to 5pm and Wednesday from 10am to 5pm. Please select option 6 if calling. Visit www.gov.uk/call-charges for call charges.