

SRA Code of Conduct for Firms

[/ Guidance, changes, terms, notes and tags](#)

[\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?docId=93675896\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?docId=93675896)

Introduction

This Code of Conduct describes the standards and business controls that we, the SRA, and the public expect of firms (including sole practices) authorised by us to provide legal services.

These aim to create and maintain the right culture and environment for the delivery of competent and ethical legal services to clients. These apply in the context of your practice: the way you run your business and all your professional activities (subject, if you are a licensed body, to any terms of your licence).

Conduct does not need to take place in a workplace in order to relate to your practice - these requirements capture conduct which touches realistically upon your practice of the profession, in a way that is demonstrably relevant.

Paragraphs 8.1 and 9.1 to 9.2 set out the requirements of managers and compliance officers in those firms, respectively.

A serious failure to meet our standards or a serious breach of our regulatory requirements may lead to our taking regulatory action against the firm itself as an entity, or its managers or compliance officers, who each have responsibilities for ensuring that the standards and requirements are met. We may also take action against employees working within the firm for any breaches for which they are responsible. A failure or breach may be serious either in isolation or because it comprises a persistent or concerning pattern of behaviour.

In addition to the regulatory requirements set by us in our Codes, Principles and our rules and regulations, we directly monitor and enforce the requirements relating to referral fees set out in section 56 of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012, and provisions relating to anti money laundering and counter terrorist financing, as [set out in regulations made by the Treasury](#) [\[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2017/692/made\]](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2017/692/made) as in force from time to time.

All of these requirements are underpinned by our [Enforcement Strategy](#) [\[https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/strategy/sub-strategies/sra-enforcement-strategy\]](https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/strategy/sub-strategies/sra-enforcement-strategy), which explains in more detail our views about the issues we consider to be



serious, and our approach to taking regulatory action in the public interest.

This introduction does not form part of the SRA Code of Conduct for Firms.

Code of Conduct for Firms

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

1: Maintaining trust and acting fairly

[\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=2118829292\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=2118829292)

1. You do not unfairly discriminate by allowing your personal views to affect your professional relationships and the way in which you provide your services.
2. You do not abuse your position by taking unfair advantage of [clients](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) or others.
3. You perform all [undertakings](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#undertaking) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#undertaking\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#undertaking) given by you and do so within an agreed timescale or if no timescale has been agreed then within a reasonable amount of time.
4. You do not mislead or attempt to mislead your [clients](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client), the [COURT](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#court) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#court\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#court) or others, either by your own acts or omissions or allowing or being complicit in the acts or omissions of others (including your [client](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client)).
5. You monitor, report and publish workforce diversity data, as [prescribed](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#prescribed) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#prescribed\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#prescribed).
6. You treat those who work for and with you fairly and with respect, and do not bully or harass them or discriminate unfairly against them. You require your employees to meet this standard.

2: Compliance and business systems

[\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=1551375817\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=1551375817)

2. You have effective governance structures, arrangements, systems and controls in place that ensure:
 1. you comply with all the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA)'s [regulatory arrangements](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory_arrangements) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory_arrangements\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory_arrangements)



- [regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements)], as well as with other regulatory and legislative requirements, which apply to you;
2. your [managers](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager) and employees comply with the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA)'s [regulatory arrangements](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements) which apply to them;
 3. your [managers](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager) and [interest holders](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#interest-holder) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#interest-holder\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#interest-holder) and those you employ or contract with do not cause or substantially contribute to a breach of the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA)'s [regulatory arrangements](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements) by you or your [managers](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager) or employees;
 4. your [compliance officers](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#compliance-officer) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#compliance-officer\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#compliance-officer) are able to discharge their duties under paragraphs 9.1 and 9.2 below.
3. You keep and maintain records to demonstrate compliance with your obligations under the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA)'s [regulatory arrangements](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements).
 4. You remain accountable for compliance with the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA)'s [regulatory arrangements](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements) where your work is carried out through others, including your [managers](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager) and those you employ or contract with.
 5. You actively monitor your financial stability and business viability. Once you are aware that you will cease to operate, you effect the orderly wind-down of your activities.
 6. You identify, monitor and manage all material risks to your business, including those which may arise from your [connected practices](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#connected-practices) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#connected-practices\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#connected-practices).

3: Cooperation and accountability

[\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=983922342\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=983922342)

3. You keep up to date with and follow the law and regulation governing the way you work.
4. You cooperate with the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA), other regulators, ombudsmen and those



bodies with a role overseeing and supervising the delivery of, or investigating concerns in relation to, legal services.

5. You respond promptly to the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA>] and:
 1. provide full and accurate explanations, information and documentation in response to any requests or requirements;
 2. ensure that relevant information which is held by you, or by third parties carrying out functions on your behalf which are critical to the delivery of your legal services, is available for inspection by the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA>].
6. You act promptly to take any remedial action requested by the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA>].
7. You are honest and open with [clients](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client>]. If things go wrong, and if a [client](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client>] suffers loss or harm as a result you put matters right (if possible) and explain fully and promptly what has happened and the likely impact. If requested to do so by the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA>] you investigate whether anyone may have a claim against you, provide the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA>] with a report on the outcome of your investigation, and notify relevant persons that they may have such a claim, accordingly.
8. You notify the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA>] promptly:
 1. of any indicators of serious financial difficulty relating to you;
 2. if a [relevant insolvency event](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#relevant-insolvency-event) [<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#relevant-insolvency-event>] occurs in relation to you;
 3. if you intend to, or become aware that you will, cease operating as a legal business;
 4. of any change to information recorded in the [register](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#register) [<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#register>]
9. You provide to the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA>] an information report on an annual basis or such other period as specified by the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA>] in the [prescribed](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#prescribed) [<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#prescribed>] form and by the [prescribed](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#prescribed) [<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#prescribed>] date.
10. You notify the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA>] promptly if you become aware:
 1. of any material changes to information previously provided to the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA>], by you or on your behalf, about you or



- your [managers](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager], [OWNERS](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#owner) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#owner] or [compliance officers](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#compliance-officer) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#compliance-officer]; and
2. that information provided to the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA], by you or on your behalf, about you or your [managers](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager], [OWNERS](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#owner) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#owner] or [compliance officers](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#compliance-officer) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#compliance-officer] is or may be false, misleading, incomplete or inaccurate.
 11. You report promptly to the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA], or another [approved regulator](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#approved-regulator) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#approved-regulator], as appropriate, any facts or matters that you reasonably believe are capable of amounting to a serious breach of their [regulatory arrangements](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements] by any [person](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#person) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#person] regulated by them (including you) of which you are aware. If requested to do so by the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA], you investigate whether there have been any serious breaches that should be reported to the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA].
 12. Notwithstanding paragraph 3.9, you inform the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA] promptly of any facts or matters that you reasonably believe should be brought to its attention in order that it may investigate whether a serious breach of its [regulatory arrangements](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements] has occurred or otherwise exercise its regulatory powers.
 13. You do not attempt to prevent anyone from providing information to the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA] or any other body exercising regulatory, supervisory, investigatory or prosecutory functions in the public interest.
 14. You do not subject any [person](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#person) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#person] to detrimental treatment for making or proposing to make a report or providing, or proposing to provide, information based on a reasonably held belief under paragraph 3.9 or 3.10 above or 9.1(d) or (e) or 9.2(b) or (c) below, or under paragraph 7.7 or 7.8 of the SRA Code of Conduct for Solicitors, RELs and RFLs, irrespective of whether the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA] or another approved regulator subsequently investigates or takes any action in relation to the facts or matters in question.



4: Service and competence

[\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=416468867\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=416468867)

4. You only act for [clients](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) on instructions from the [client](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client), or from someone properly authorised to provide instructions on their behalf. If you have reason to suspect that the instructions do not represent your [client's](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) wishes, you do not act unless you have satisfied yourself that they do. However, in circumstances where you have legal authority to act notwithstanding that it is not possible to obtain or ascertain the instructions of your [client](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client), then you are subject to the overriding obligation to protect your [client's](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) best interests.
5. You ensure that the service you provide to [clients](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) is competent and delivered in a timely manner, and takes account of your [client's](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) attributes, needs and circumstances.
6. You ensure that your [managers](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager) and employees are competent to carry out their role, and keep their professional knowledge and skills, as well as understanding of their legal, ethical and regulatory obligations, up to date.
7. You have an effective system for supervising [clients'](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) matters.

5: Client money and assets

[\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=1996499040\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=1996499040)

5. You properly account to [clients](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) for any [financial benefit](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#financial-benefit) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#financial-benefit\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#financial-benefit) you receive as a result of their instructions, except where they have agreed otherwise.
6. You safeguard money and [assets](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#asset) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#asset\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#asset) entrusted to you by [clients](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) and others.

6.1-6.2: Conflict of interests



[\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=1429045565\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=1429045565)

6. You do not act if there is an [own interest conflict](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#own-interest-conflict) or a significant risk of such a conflict.
7. You do not act in relation to a matter or a particular aspect of it if you have a [conflict of interest](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#conflict-of-interest) or a significant risk of such a conflict in relation to that matter or aspect of it, unless:
 1. the [clients](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) have a [substantially common interest](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#substantially-common-interest) in relation to the matter or the aspect of it, as appropriate; or
 2. the [clients](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) are [competing for the same objective](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#competing-for-the-same-objective) and the conditions below are met, namely that:
 1. all the [clients](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) have given informed consent, given or evidenced in writing, to you acting;
 2. where appropriate, you put in place effective safeguards to protect your [clients](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client)' confidential information; and
 3. you are satisfied it is reasonable for you to act for all the [clients](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client).

6.3-6.5: Confidentiality and disclosure

[\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=861592090\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=861592090)

6. You keep the affairs of current and former [clients](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) confidential unless disclosure is required or permitted by law or the [client](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) consents.
7. Any individual who is acting for a [client](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) on a matter makes the [client](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) aware of all information material to the matter of which the individual has knowledge except when:
 1. the disclosure of the information is prohibited by legal restrictions imposed in the interests of national security or the prevention of crime;



2. the [client](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client] gives informed consent, given or evidenced in writing, to the information not being disclosed to them;
 3. the individual has reason to believe that serious physical or mental injury will be caused to the [client](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client] or another if the information is disclosed; or
 4. the information is contained in a privileged document that the individual has knowledge of only because it has been mistakenly disclosed.
8. You do not act for a [client](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client] in a matter where that [client](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client] has an interest adverse to the interest of another current or former [client](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client] for whom you hold confidential information which is material to that matter, unless:
1. effective measures have been taken which result in there being no real risk of disclosure of the confidential information; or
 2. the current or former [client](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#client] whose information you hold has given informed consent, given or evidenced in writing, to you acting, including to any measures taken to protect their information.

7: Applicable standards in the SRA Code of Conduct for Solicitors, RELs and RFLs

[\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=294138615\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=294138615)

7. The following paragraphs in the SRA Code of Conduct for Solicitors, RELs and RFLs apply to you in their entirety as though references to "you" were references to you as a firm:
1. dispute resolution and proceedings before courts, tribunals and inquiries (2.1 to 2.7);
 2. referrals, introductions and [separate businesses](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#separate-business) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#separate-business] (5.1 to 5.3); and
 3. standards which apply when providing services to the public or a section of the public, namely client identification (8.1), complaints handling (8.2 to 8.5), and client information and publicity (8.6 to 8.11).

8: Managers in SRA authorised firms

[\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=1874168788\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=1874168788)



8. If you are a [manager](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager], you are responsible for compliance by your firm with this Code. This responsibility is joint and several if you share management responsibility with other [managers](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager] of the firm.

9: Compliance officers

[\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=1306715313\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/code-conduct-firms/?contentId=1306715313)

9. If you are a [COLP](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#COLP) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#COLP] you must take all reasonable steps to:
1. ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of your firm's authorisation;
 2. ensure compliance by your firm and its [managers](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager], employees or [interest holders](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#interest-holder) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#interest-holder] with the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA]'s [regulatory arrangements](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements] which apply to them;
 3. ensure that your firm's [managers](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager] and [interest holders](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#interest-holder) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#interest-holder] and those they employ or contract with do not cause or substantially contribute to a breach of the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA]'s [regulatory arrangements](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements];
 4. ensure that a prompt report is made to the SRA of any facts or matters that you reasonably believe are capable of amounting to a serious breach of the terms and conditions of your firm's authorisation, or the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA]'s [regulatory arrangements](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements] which apply to your firm, [managers](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager] or employees;
 5. notwithstanding sub-paragraph (d), you ensure that the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA] is informed promptly of any facts or matters that you reasonably believe should be brought to its attention in order that it may investigate whether a serious breach of its [regulatory arrangements](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements] has occurred or otherwise exercise its regulatory powers,



save in relation to the matters which are the responsibility of the [COFA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#COFA) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#COFA] as set out in paragraph 9.2 below.

10. If you are a [COFA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#COFA) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#COFA] you must take all reasonable steps to:
 1. ensure that your firm and its [managers](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#manager] and employees comply with any obligations imposed upon them under the SRA Accounts Rules;
 2. ensure that a prompt report is made to the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA] of any facts or matters that you reasonably believe are capable of amounting to a serious breach of the SRA Accounts Rules which apply to them;
 3. notwithstanding sub-paragraph (b), you ensure that the [SRA](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#SRA] is informed promptly of any facts or matters that you reasonably believe should be brought to its attention in order that it may investigate whether a serious breach of its [regulatory arrangements](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/glossary/#regulatory-arrangements] has occurred or otherwise exercise its regulatory powers.

Supplemental notes

Made by the SRA Board on 30 May 2018.

Last amended 6 April 2023.

Made under section 31 of the Solicitors Act 1974, section 9 of the Administration of Justice Act 1985, section 83 of the Legal Services Act 2007, and section 57(2) and (8) of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012.

SRA Code of Conduct for Firms

You are reading current version in effect from **6 April 2023**

Guidance (28) []

Tags

[COLPs & COFAs](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/index/#12884941440) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/index/#12884941440] [Other authorised roles & bodies](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/index/#12884941449) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/index/#12884941449] [Misconduct](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/index/#12884941462) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/index/#12884941462] [Diversity data](#)



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Guidance

Guidance

[Professional duties during action taken by the Criminal Bar Association - Guidance](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/duties-during-action-criminal-bar-association/) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/duties-during-action-criminal-bar-association/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/duties-during-action-criminal-bar-association/)

Guidance - what the SRA's Standards and Regulations require when acting for clients who may be affected by industrial action taken by the Criminal Bar Association (CBA).

[Law firms carrying on insurance distribution activities - Guidance](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/law-firms-carrying-insurance-distribution-activities/) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/law-firms-carrying-insurance-distribution-activities/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/law-firms-carrying-insurance-distribution-activities/)

Guidance: To help you understand key changes introduced by the Insurance Distribution Directive (IDD).

[Responsibilities of COLPs and COFAs - Guidance](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/responsibilities-of-colps-and-cofas/) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/responsibilities-of-colps-and-cofas/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/responsibilities-of-colps-and-cofas/)

Guidance: To assist COLPs and COFAs in understanding their duties and responsibilities.

[The Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds - Guidance](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/money-laundering-terrorist-financing-transfer-funds-information-payer-regulations-2017/) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/money-laundering-terrorist-financing-transfer-funds-information-payer-regulations-2017/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/money-laundering-terrorist-financing-transfer-funds-information-payer-regulations-2017/)



Guidance: To help all those we regulate understand their obligations under the Money Laundering Regulations.

[The Insurance Act 2015 - Guidance](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/insurance-act-2015-consequential-changes-minimum-terms-conditions-professional-indemnity-insurance/)

[<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/insurance-act-2015-consequential-changes-minimum-terms-conditions-professional-indemnity-insurance/>]

Guidance: To help you understand changes to the minimum terms and conditions of solicitors' professional indemnity insurance which came into force in August 2016.

[Transparency in price and service - Guidance](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/transparency-in-price-and-service/)

[<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/transparency-in-price-and-service/>]

Guidance: To help you understand your obligations under our Transparency Rules.

[Offering inducements to potential clients or clients - Guidance](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/offering-inducements-potential-clients-clients/)

[<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/offering-inducements-potential-clients-clients/>]

Guidance: Understand your professional obligations and the issues you need to consider before offering inducements to existing or prospective clients.

[Closing down your practice - Guidance](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/closing-down-your-practice/)

[<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/closing-down-your-practice/>]

Guidance: To enable those who are closing down their practice to protect the interests of their clients and comply with our Standards and Regulations.

[Regulated financial services activities](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/financial-services-rules/regulated-financial-services-activities/)

[<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/financial-services-rules/regulated-financial-services-activities/>]

If you are a COLP or a nominated authorised signatory for a firm we regulate, you need to let us know whether or not your firm carries out financial activities for clients as part of your legal work.

[Money laundering - Case studies](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/money-laundering/)

[<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/money-laundering/>]

Case studies: These case studies illustrate the importance of having a consistent approach to compliance with the money laundering regulations throughout your entire firm.

[Money laundering and terrorist financing - Warning notice](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/money-laundering-terrorist-financing/)

[<https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/money-laundering-terrorist-financing/>]

Warning notice: This Warning Notice reminds you of the warning signs of suspicious transactions.



[How we regulate non-authorised persons](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/sra/decision-making/guidance/general-regulation-non-authorised-persons/)

[\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/sra/decision-making/guidance/general-regulation-non-authorised-persons/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/sra/decision-making/guidance/general-regulation-non-authorised-persons/)

This guidance is to help you understand your obligations and how to comply with them. We may have regard to it when exercising our regulatory functions.

[Tax avoidance your duties - Warning notice](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/tax-avoidance-duties/)

[\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/tax-avoidance-duties/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/tax-avoidance-duties/)

Warning notice: This reminds those advising clients about their tax affairs about the importance of understanding their regulatory obligations.

[Putting matters right when things go wrong, and own interest conflicts - Guidance](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/putting-matters-right-own-interest-conflicts/) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/putting-matters-right-own-interest-conflicts/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/putting-matters-right-own-interest-conflicts/)

Guidance: To outline certain key considerations for putting matters right when you identify that things have gone wrong through the fault of you or your firm.

[Money laundering and terrorist financing suspicious activity reports - Warning notice](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/money-laundering-terrorist-financing-suspicious-activity-reports/) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/money-laundering-terrorist-financing-suspicious-activity-reports/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/money-laundering-terrorist-financing-suspicious-activity-reports/)

Warning notice: This Warning Notice reminds you of some of the key requirements to have in place adequate controls to prevent, detect and report money laundering and to make suspicious activity reports (SARs).

[Reporting and notification obligations - Guidance](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/reporting-notification-obligations/)

[\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/reporting-notification-obligations/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/reporting-notification-obligations/)

Guidance: To help you understand your reporting and notification obligations to us.

[Referral fees LASPO and SRA Principles - Warning notice](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/referral-fees-laspo-sra-principles/)

[\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/referral-fees-laspo-sra-principles/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/referral-fees-laspo-sra-principles/)

Warning notice: This warning notice reminds you of your obligations if you have referral arrangements for personal injury work.

[Bringing criminal proceedings](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/sra/decision-making/guidance/disciplinary-bringing-criminal-proceedings/) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/sra/decision-making/guidance/disciplinary-bringing-criminal-proceedings/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/sra/decision-making/guidance/disciplinary-bringing-criminal-proceedings/)

This guidance is to help you understand how and when we may bring criminal proceedings

[How we gather evidence in our regulatory and disciplinary investigations](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/sra/decision-making/guidance/investigations-gathering-evidence/) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/sra/decision-making/guidance/investigations-gathering-evidence/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/sra/decision-making/guidance/investigations-gathering-evidence/)

This guidance is to help you understand how we gather evidence, the investigatory powers we have to gather evidence and how we can use those powers.

[On-site investigations \(inspections\)](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/sra/decision-making/guidance/investigations-on-site/) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/sra/decision-making/guidance/investigations-on-site/]

This guidance is to help you how we make decisions to conduct an on-site inspection and your obligations in that regard. We may have regard to it when exercising our regulatory functions.

[Confidentiality of client information - Guidance](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/confidentiality-client-information/) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/confidentiality-client-information/]

Guidance: To help you understand your obligation to keep clients' information confidential.

[Competence standard service](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/sra/corporate-strategy/sra-enforcement-strategy/enforcement-practice/competence-standard-service/) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/sra/corporate-strategy/sra-enforcement-strategy/enforcement-practice/competence-standard-service/]

This topic guide outlines our approach to individuals and firms where we have competence concerns, and the standard of service falls below what we expect.

[Identifying your client - Guidance](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/identifying-client/) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/identifying-client/]

Guidance: To help you understand your obligations in respect of identifying your client.

[Q&As on the ban of personal injury referral fees - Guidance](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/ban-personal-injury-referral-fees/) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/ban-personal-injury-referral-fees/]

Guidance: Sets out common Q and As on the ban on referral fees in personal injury actions introduced by the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012.

[Advising on leasehold provisions including ground rent clauses - Guidance](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/leasehold-provisions-including-ground-rent-clauses/) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/leasehold-provisions-including-ground-rent-clauses/]

Guidance: To help you understand what our Standards and Regulations require when acting for clients who are buying leasehold properties and to avoid possible breaches of our requirements.

[Workplace environment: risks of failing to protect and support colleagues - Guidance](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/workplace-environment/) [https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/workplace-environment/]

Guidance: our approach where we consider that individuals and firms have failed to take appropriate steps to look after colleagues' wellbeing.



[Workplace environment: risks of failing to protect and support colleagues - Case studies \[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/workplace-environment-case-studies/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/workplace-environment-case-studies/)

Case studies: to be read in conjunction with the guidance on workplace environment: risks of failing to protect and support colleagues

[Money missing from client account - Warning notice \[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/money-missing-client-account/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/money-missing-client-account/)

Warning notice: Relevant to all firms and individuals we regulate but is particularly relevant to you if you are a manager of a firm or a firm's COFA or COLP.

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