

Using a solicitor?



The Law Society

New government regulations mean you must prove who you are

Why?

The UK is a major international financial and legal centre, with a high reputation for honesty and integrity.

Unfortunately that is why financial and professional businesses, like banks and solicitors' firms, are attractive to money launderers - criminals sometimes try and hide stolen money by turning it into legitimate income.

The government has introduced measures:

- To make it more difficult for criminals to make and keep money from their crimes
- To confiscate proceeds of crime

For this reason there are compulsory checks which solicitors have to make of their clients.

Being asked for identification does not mean you are under suspicion. The new identification requirements apply to all clients when they are asking their solicitors to conduct certain types of cases.

How this affects you

Banks and building societies have had to check the identity of customers for some time. Now solicitors have to. This means you will have to show your solicitor, or somebody acting on their behalf, some personal documentation that can include:

- Current signed passport
- Photo-card driving licence
- Benefit book
- And a recent gas, electricity or other household bill

If you don't have these documents, you will have to ask your solicitor to advise you on how best to prove who you are.