

A guide to becoming directly authorised

Authorisation by the FCA can be a lengthy process, but at Compliance First we endeavour to ensure that you and your business are supported through the transition to becoming directly authorised. The following support measures are therefore in place:

After completing the application and supporting documentation with your Business Development Manager, you will receive a welcome call from our Business Support team which will include providing access to the Compliance First website, allowing you to explore and familiarise yourself with how to access our support services. You will also receive a welcome email from our Agency team, which provides an overview of the agency process. It also gives you an insight into the emails you will receive at various stages of your FCA application.

Your FCA application will be prepared by your dedicated Application Manager, they will complete the final draft and return it to you to sign. Your Application Manager will then upload your application ready for you to submit to the FCA along with the online payment of the application fee which is currently £1,500. This is a non-refundable fee which the FCA require in order to process your application. NB: Once your application has been received by the FCA, authorisation is usually achieved within 4 to 6 months. All timings are estimates, and can vary depending on many factors, including FCA workload, complexity of application. Your Application Manager will assist you with any queries raised by the FCA.

Our welcome programme has been designed to guide our Clients through the authorisation process and beyond, ensuring you that have the information and support you need at every stage. The programme will keep you informed of your progress to direct authorisation and provide you with a unique opportunity to hear from many of our key people about how we can help you to get the very best from your membership. Once you join, the programme will last 13 weeks and is designed to help you to build your understanding and awareness of the many award-winning services and solutions that will be available to you as a Client Firm. The purpose of this programme is to ensure that you are best prepared to run a directly authorised adviser firm.

Once the FCA is in correspondence with you, our Agencies team will send you two emails; 'Agency Set Up Information', which provides a more detailed description of the process you will undertake to obtain agencies with the Providers we have a relationship with, this will include the completion of the Origo agency application and 'A Guide To Transferring Clients', which provides information regarding the novation process, including what you will need to know from your previous firm before you begin the novation process.

When your application has reached committee approval stage with the FCA, our Agencies team will send you an email called 'Choosing Your Authorisation Date and Agency Process Information'. This email details key points for you to consider when deciding on your preferred authorisation date.

Compliance First

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NB: Completed Agency application forms and/or Novation paperwork should not be sent to Providers until you are on the FCA's Financial Services register as being directly authorised.

On or around the time of authorisation our Business Support team will contact you to arrange your Introductory & Consultation visit which will be completed by your dedicated Compliance Consultant. This is when we familiarise ourselves with your business and commence the services which we deliver to support you.

Once authorised our Agencies team will email you a reminder of the next steps for sending your agency applications to the relevant Providers for processing.

This guide is not definitive but will provide you with an overview of the steps to take throughout the authorisation process. As your application is likely to take up to 6 months the contact outlined above will be phased throughout this period in order not to overload you with information.

However, should you require assistance at any time please find below our contact details:

- **Technical team** – 0141 616 4161 – option 1
- **Business Support team** – 0141 616 4161 – option 2
- **Business Development team** – 0141 616 4161 – option 4
- **Applications team** – 01484 439123
- **Agencies team** – 01484 439133
- **PI team** – 01484 443 877