



*Companies House*

— for the record —

# **Newspaper Libel and Registration Act**

**GB03**

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**Version 9**

# **BERR**

Department for Business  
Enterprise & Regulatory Reform

This guidance is available in alternative formats which include Braille, large print and audio tape. For further details please see our website – [www.companieshouse.gov.uk](http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk) or email our enquiries section at [enquiries@companieshouse.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@companieshouse.gov.uk) or telephone our contact centre on 0303 1234 500

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*This is a guide only and should be read with the relevant legislation.*

### **Introduction**

This guidance explains what you need to do to register a newspaper.

If you are considering registering a newspaper, you should refer to the legislation governing the registration of newspapers or seek legal advice.

You will find the relevant law in the Newspaper Libel and Registration Act 1881.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Newspaper registration**

#### **1. Who should register?**

The proprietor(s) of a newspaper published in England or Wales (or Northern Ireland) must register certain details with the Registrar of Companies in Cardiff (or Belfast). However, registration is not required if the newspaper:

- is owned by a company incorporated under the Companies Act 1985, or under one of its predecessors (or corresponding Northern Ireland Acts);
- is, or will be, published at intervals exceeding 26 days;
- is, or will be, issued free of charge (unless it consists mainly of advertisements - see below).

#### **2. What is a newspaper?**

Section 1 of the Act defines a 'newspaper' as any paper containing public news, intelligence, or occurrences, or any remarks or observations therein printed for sale, and published in England or Northern Ireland periodically, or in parts or numbers at intervals not exceeding 26 days between the publication of any two papers, parts or numbers. Also any paper printed in order to be dispersed, and made public weekly or more frequently, or at intervals not exceeding 26 days, containing only or principally advertisements.

#### **3. How do I register?**

Complete [Form NLR1](#) and send it to the Registrar of Companies at Cardiff (or Belfast) together with the registration fee of 50p (but also refer to the next paragraphs).

Usually the names of all the proprietors must be registered but, where it would be inconvenient to register all the names, the Secretary of State for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform can authorise the registration of one or more 'representative proprietors' instead. This may be, for example, where there are a large number of proprietors or where the proprietors are not present in the UK.

If you want to register a newspaper on this basis, you should write to the Registrar setting out the reasons that make it inconvenient to register the names of all the proprietors. You should also give information to show that the proposed representatives are well able to meet any claims that may arise for libel or otherwise in connection with the management of the newspaper. If a registration is made on this basis, the registration fee is £1.

Form NLR1 can be obtained from the Registrar in Cardiff or Belfast - addresses are shown in chapter 2 under [Further Information](#).

#### **4. What other documents have to be filed?**

None on registration, but a return on Form NLR1 has to be filed annually in July. A filing fee of 25p is payable on this return, or 50p if there has been a change either in the proprietors or in the name of the publication. The Registrar sends a blank return to each registered newspaper shortly before the due date.

If there is any change of registered proprietors at any other time of year, this should be notified on [Form NLR2](#). This form can be obtained from the Registrar in Cardiff or Belfast - addresses are shown in chapter 2 under [Further Information](#).

#### **5. How are fees paid?**

Cheques or Postal Orders should be made payable to 'Companies House' and sent with the form(s) to the relevant address shown in [chapter 2](#).

#### **6. What if the newspaper ceases publication?**

If a newspaper ceases publication, or becomes the property of a company – (see [question 2](#) above) - you should notify the Registrar. No fee is payable.

#### **7. Do any other details have to be published?**

Irrespective of registration under this Act, the business name used by a publisher who is not:

- a registered company trading under its corporate name;
- an individual trading under his/her own name; or
- a partnership trading in the true names of all the partners;

is subject to the restrictions on names imposed by the Business Names Act 1985 (see our guidance on ['Business Names'](#) for more information). The proprietors of such businesses are also required to disclose their identities under the same Act.

#### **8. Is the name of the newspaper protected?**

Registration under the Act does not protect the name of the newspaper; any number of registrations could be made using the same name. A name may be protected by registering it as a trade mark. Further details may be obtained from the Trade Marks Registry of the UK Intellectual Property Office on:

Tel: 08459 500505

E-mail: [enquiries@ipo.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ipo.gov.uk)

Website: [www.ipo.gov.uk](http://www.ipo.gov.uk)

**The Patent Office changed its name to UK Intellectual Property Office (UK- IPO) on 2nd April 2007**

## **Chapter 2**

### **Further information**

#### **1. Where can returns be inspected?**

Returns of newspapers currently registered under the Act may be inspected at:

Companies House,  
Crown Way,  
Cardiff  
CF14 3UZ.

They may also be inspected by giving two days' notice at the:

London Search Room,  
Companies House,  
21 Bloomsbury Street,  
London  
WC1B 3XD  
(all enquiries Tel: 0303 1234 500).

Similar arrangements apply to Northern Ireland where any enquiries should be addressed to the:

Registrar of Companies,  
1st Floor, Waterfront Plaza,  
8 Laganbank Road, Belfast,  
BT1 3BS,  
Tel: 0845 604 88 88,  
Fax: 028 9090 5353,  
DX 481NR.

#### **2. Where do I get forms and guidance?**

This is one of a series of Companies House guidance which provide a simple guide to the Companies Act.

Statutory forms and guidance are available, free of charge from Companies House. The quickest way to get them is through this website or by telephoning 0303 1234 500.

Forms can also be obtained from company law stationers, accountants, solicitors and company formation agents - addresses can be found in business phone books.

### 3. How do I send information to the Registrar?

You may deliver documents to the Registrar by hand (personally or by courier), including outside office hours, bank holidays and weekends to Cardiff, London and Edinburgh.

You may also send documents by post or by the Document Exchange Service (DX). If you send documents, please address them to:

<b>For newspapers incorporated in England &amp; Wales:</b>	<b>For newspapers incorporated in Scotland:</b>	<b>For newspapers incorporated in Northern Ireland:</b>
The Registrar of Companies Companies House Crown Way Cardiff CF14 3UZ  DX33050 Cardiff 1	The Registrar of Companies Companies House 4th Floor Edinburgh Quay 2 139 Fountainbridge Edinburgh EH3 9FF DX ED235 Edinburgh 1 LP 4- Edinburgh 2	The Registrar of Companies Department of Economic Development 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor, Waterfront Plaza 8 Laganbank Road Belfast BT1 3BS  DX48 1NR

If you are sending documents by post, courier or the Document Exchange Service (DX) and would like a receipt, Companies House will provide an acknowledgement if you enclose a copy of your covering letter with a pre-paid addressed return envelope. We will barcode your copy letter with the date of receipt and return it to you in the envelope provided.

**Please note:** an acknowledgement of receipt does not mean that a document has been accepted for registration at Companies House.

**Please note:** Companies House does not accept accounts or any other statutory documents by fax.

## **how to contact us**

Contact Centre: 0303 123 4500\*  
Mini-com: 029 2038 1245  
[enquiries@companieshouse.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@companieshouse.gov.uk)  
[www.companieshouse.gov.uk](http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk)

\*For training and quality purposes  
your call may be monitored

### **Cardiff:**

Companies House  
Crown Way, Cardiff CF14 3UZ  
Fax: 029 2038 0900

### **Edinburgh:**

Companies House  
4th Floor  
Edinburgh Quay 2  
139 Fountainbridge  
Edinburgh EH3 9FF  
Fax: 0131 535 5820

### **London:**

Companies House  
21 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3XD  
Fax: 029 2038 0900