

Trading disclosure requirements for companies

Corporate & Commercial

The trading disclosures required to be made by companies are governed by the Company, Limited Liability Partnership and Business (Names and Trading Disclosures) Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/17).

All displays and disclosures must be in characters that can be read by the naked eye. Categorisation of a communication (email, compliments slip, business card etc) depends on its content, i.e. a compliments slip could be a business letter for the purposes of the regulations.

The registered name of the company must be displayed at the registered office, as well as at any location at which the company keeps its records available for inspection and at every location where it carries on business. The registered name must be easily visible to any visitor. An exemption applies if the company has never traded or if the location is primarily domestic. When a business premises is shared by 6 or more companies, each company is only required to display its registered name for at least 15 continuous seconds at least once every three minutes, or provide that the registered name is on a register that is available for inspection on request.

Every company must disclose the following information about itself on business letters and emails, order forms and websites (it need not be on every page of the website but must be easy to find and readable):

- a. the part of the UK in which the company is registered, for example "registered in England and Wales";
- b. the registered number;
- c. the company's registered office address; and
- d. if the company is exempt from the obligation to use the word 'limited' as part of its name, the fact that it is a limited company should also be disclosed.

This requirement applies whether such documents are in hard copy, electronic or any other form.

The main requirements for disclosing details of the company are as set out in the paragraph above. In addition, the registered name of the company (but not the other information) must appear on the following:

- a. notices and other official publications;
- b. cheques;
- c. orders for money, goods or services;
- d. invoices and other demands for payment and receipts; and
- e. all other forms of business correspondence and documentation.

In practice, it is easier to include the number and registered office on all of the above (other than cheques), although this is not obligatory.

Please note that the information contained in this fact sheet does not constitute legal advice. This fact sheet is not intended to be a full summary of the law and advice should be sought on individual situations. All statements of law are applicable to the laws of England and Wales only.