



GUIDANCE NOTE 5

Searches

Updated January 2022

This guidance note describes the search services and facilities that Companies House Gibraltar (“Companies House”) provides, including details of the applicable fees.

Companies House has three main statutory functions: -

1. To incorporate and dissolve companies;
2. To examine and hold documents delivered under the Companies Act and related legislation; and
3. To make this information available to the public.

Every company has a legal obligation to provide Companies House with up-to-date information on the company. This includes the filing of an annual return, which includes the registered office address, directors’, secretaries and shareholders’ details.

In turn, Companies House makes this information available to anyone who requires it. The availability of such information to the public increases confidence in the workings of companies and helps to provide protection for the individual consumer, creditor or shareholder.

How to conduct a search.

Companies House provides for searches to be carried out in any of the following ways:

▪ **Standard Personal Search**

A person can attend the offices of Companies House and request to search the file of a company. Alternatively, it is also possible to send a search request form by email to search@companieshouse.gi with a list of the companies you wish to search. In both cases the file(s) will be available for inspection on the following day.

If a person requests a file, it will only be held for twenty-four hours for inspection. If the file is not inspected within this time, it will be returned to the records room and a new request will have to be made and the search fees paid again. This procedure is necessary to ensure the availability of files for other users of the registry.

The fee for conducting a standard personal search is £20.00 plus an additional £2.50 handling fee. A person making a search will be able to obtain copies of the documents on the company's file, subject to payment of the pertinent fees.

The hard copy of a company file is brought up to date once a document has been delivered to the registry and that particular document has been entered on the database and electronically scanned. The procedure results in the computer record of a company being updated before the paper file. All documents of a

company are placed in the paper file of the company **WITH ONE IMPORTANT EXCEPTION:**

If a company is pending striking off under section 411, 412, or 413, or has been struck off pursuant to any of these three sections of the Companies Act. This information will not appear in the paper file of the company.

This information is, however, readily and instantly available by consulting any of the public computer terminals at Companies House, or by searching the records via the e-Registry. The company will appear flagged with a status indicating that the company is either pending striking off, or struck off.

▪ **Electronic Personal Search at Companies House**

Registry users can choose between viewing the record in hard copy (i.e., the standard physical search), or in electronic form at the registry. Choosing the electronic personal search has various advantages over the standard personal search.

The user can view the file without delay and will have access to the latest documents filed for the company (including those filed in electronic form). The user will also benefit from a reduced fee of £10.00, instead of the £20.00 total fee payable for a Standard Personal Search.

▪ **e-Search**

Subscribers to Companies House's e-Registry can conduct electronic searches of all active companies registered in Gibraltar since 1931 remotely from their own office or other chosen location. They are able to inspect in electronic form all statutory documents filed with the Registrar of Companies.

The electronic file will sit on their very own e-Shelf for a period of 30 days before expiring. The fee for carrying out an e-Search is £10.00.

Subscribers are able to search a company file in this way at a time and place of their choice, at a reduced cost and without having to wait for the company file to be brought to the registry's office.

▪ **Company profile**

A company profile is a summary of the latest information on a company. This includes:

- Registration number;
- Name of company;
- Incorporation date;
- Date on which the last annual return was filed;
- Financial year-end date of the last accounts filed;
- Registered office address;
- Status of the company (e.g., whether it is in liquidation, pending striking-off or has been struck off);
- Details of share capital;
- Details of shareholders;
- Details of directors;
- Details of secretary; and
- Details of any charges registered against the company.

In order to obtain a company profile, a user will need to complete a profile request form and send or deliver this to Companies House to the address shown at the end of this guidance note. Email requests should be sent to profile@companieshouse.gi

Further details regarding fees and payment may be found on the profile request form.

N.B. When making a request please ensure the full name of the company, including initials, is provided. If you can quote the company number, this will also help us to process your request.

Company Mortgage Profile

This shows all mortgages and charges registered against a company and gives details of that particular charge which is of interest to the person making the search. The cost is £20.00 per charge.

Opening an Account with Companies House

Companies House has a facility that allows a user of Companies House to deposit monies for the exclusive use and for the debit only, of any services offered by the registry requiring payment. See Companies House Guidance Note No. 3 for more details on how to open an account.

Guidance only

These notes are intended for general guidance only. Companies House Gibraltar does not assume legal responsibility for the accuracy of any particular statement. In the case of a specific problem, we recommend that you seek professional advice

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