



Onboarding & Going Live



Onboarding – Engagement documentation

The formal onboarding process will begin once a Service proposal has been accepted. This will be as follows:

- 1 Invitation to Ascentant MyDocSafe portal.**
- 2 Issue of formal Engagement letter and Terms of Business.**
This can be signed electronically in our portal.
- 3 Issue of Electronic New Client form.**
- 4 Issue of Electronic KYC/AML form.**

The ID from this form should be uploaded to our portal.

On completion of this process, the formal onboarding process will be complete. We cannot work with clients without undertaking due diligence AML checks.

If the Engagement Letter is not signed, the new client form or KYC/AML form are not completed or satisfactory ID is not uploaded to our portal, Ascentant will not be able to proceed with the engagement.



Onboarding – Financial reports review

As part of our due diligence and to ensure that records have been kept compliantly and that we are able to receive a full handover, we need to see a copy of:

- Last Client Account **bank reconciliation** (including reconciliation page, bank statement, cash book and matter balances along with outstanding items).
- Last Office Account bank reconciliation (including reconciliation page, bank statement and cashbook long with outstanding items).
- A copy of your **matter balance** report.
- Ideally where possible a copy of your **breach log**, identifying potential issues.

As part of the onboarding process, we need to ensure that records are handed over in a well kept and compliant state.

Where we find issues with matter balances, incomplete records or missing information, we reserve the right to rescind our engagement or levy additional charges to rectify issues.



Onboarding – PMS System Access

Accounting System (PMS)

Depending on the nature of your PMS and whether this is Cloud Hosted, Server hosted or Supplier hosted, we will need to be able to access your PMS system for day to day working.

Cloud - The PMS maybe hosted online via a Cloud platform such as LEAP or Clio– In which case, we should be easily able to access the system via a web browser or online program. We will require a license, username and password to be able to access the system and undertake postings.

Supplier Hosted – The PMS maybe hosted by the Software Supplier on their own servers. Permission will be required by the Software Supplier to provide access to the supplier hosted version of the PMS and possible Citrix connection. You will need to liaise with your supplier to provide access to us for this system, a license, username and password.

Locally Hosted – If the PMS software is stored locally on the firms server or a single desktop computer – A connection into your network is required. There are various ways of doing this that vary depending on your current setup and what the best approach for us to be able to connect is. Your IT provider will need to set up a VPN connection or suchlike for access to a local server hosted PMS. We will also require a license, username and password.



Onboarding – Bank Account Access

We will need access to your Bank Account to be able to undertake our Legal Cashiering duties. The level of access will depend on the duties required.

Read only access will be required to view bank statements and have no other access to input payments for approval by management.

Read and input access will be required to view bank statements and input payments for checking and release by management.

We should never be provided with access to approve or release payments.

Onboarding – Email Account Access

We routinely manage the Internal Accounts email address for clients (IE – Accounts@ClientName.com). Where we manage this on your behalf, we will need access to the username and password to set this up.

We are able to provide an Ascentant email account for staff to contact Ascentant Legal Cashiers if needed – We need to be notified if this is required for set up (IE – Client.Name.Cashiering@ascentant.co.uk)



Onboarding – Document Exchange Access

We will need to be able to receive documents from you such as Supplier invoices, chits and financial documentation.

We will need to be able to send you Month End bank reconciliations and financial reports.

Ascentant Portal – Clients are able to use our secure client portal for upload and exchange of documents, signing of payment requests or e-chits or completing electronic forms.

Email – If provided with an internal email address as above, we are able to receive and forward documents using this.

Internal document storage – We can use a variety of options such as:

- VPN to a local drive
- Hosted Remote Desktop access,
- Sharepoint, GoogleDrive or Dropbox,

We are able to utilise shared Accounts spaces in the above for sharing Accounts documents.



Service “Pre” Go Live – Questionnaire

Once we have completed the onboarding process and have access to the PMS Accounts system, email access, bank access and document exchange, it is important to define how the service will operate day to day.

We will issue our Service Questionnaire to define this. Questions include:

- Who is the assigned Accounts contact?
- Who is the COFA?
- Do you issue cheques?
- Who will bank cheques and cash received?
- Do you utilise Petty Cash or credit cards?
- Who should be notified of Client Account receipts?
- How are receipts documented and posted?
- How are payment requests dealt with?
- How does the billing process work?
- Do you use paper chits or system generated posting requests?
- Who approves payment requests?

This service questionnaire allows us to define the roles and responsibilities between yourself and our Legal Cashiers, so there is no confusion on how processes work.



Service “Pre” Go Live – Production of guide to Accounts Department

Following completion of the service questionnaire, we will prepare a guide to the Accounts Department for issue to your staff which details how the service will operate.

This will include screenshots where possible of how to request payments, deal with receipts or request a bill.

This should be finalised and signed off before the service goes live.

Go Live

Once the above has been set up and completed, the service is ready to go live.



Final follow ups

There will be a few further items that we may need to follow up on or request such as:

- **Government Gateway Access**

Where you hold or submit information via your own Government Gateway, we may need access to this to ensure that returns can still be filed without interruption.

- **64-8 Agent Access for VAT and Payroll**

We will require Agent Access where we make filings on your behalf such as VAT or Payroll.

- **MTD Access**

Where you re signed up for Making Tax Digital, we may need to obtain MTD Authorisation to file VAT returns on your behalf.

- **Payroll**

If undertaking payroll on your behalf, we will need access to the last payroll reports, P32, Payroll summary, P11 and payslips where we are required to set up payroll on our payroll system.

- **Auto Enrolment**

Where processing Automatic Enrolment Pensions on your behalf, we will need access to your Pension scheme.