

The Rt Hon Liam Byrne MP
Chair, Business and Trade Committee
House of Commons
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Dear Liam,

The Companies and Limited Liability Partnerships (Protection and Disclosure of Information and Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2024

The Unique Identifiers (Application of Company Law) Regulations 2024

The Limited Liability Partnerships (Application of Company Law) (No. 2) Regulations 2024

I write to inform you that my Department will this week, on 31 October, lay the above statutory instruments (SIs) before Parliament. These instruments implement changes introduced by the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act 2023 (the Act) which came into force in October 2023.

Since the Act came into force, there has been a programme of work underway to implement the changes to strengthen Companies House's role in preventing corporate abuse and improving the integrity of the companies register. From March, Companies House has been able to query and remove certain information from the register and request supporting evidence. Stronger checks are now possible on company names, as well as the ability to share data with law enforcement agencies. Since May, Companies House has also been able to charge higher incorporation and annual fees to fund their new investigation and enforcement functions.

These instruments represent the next phase in the reforms, specifically to lay the ground for the verification of identities, to ensure consistency in the application of company law to limited liability partnerships, and to offer protection to certain individuals from their information remaining public on the register. Below is an outline of the purpose of each instrument:

The Companies and Limited Liability Partnerships (Protection and Disclosure of Information and Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2024

This instrument will enable individuals to 'protect' their usual residential address, where the address appears on the companies register, in more circumstances than is currently possible. This means the Registrar must not display the address publicly following a successful application to withhold the address from view.

This SI will help those who are at risk of fraud, identity theft or for personal reasons (e.g. as a domestic abuse victim) because of their residential address appearing on the public register as a registered office address. Recent high-profile examples of people finding their residential address on the public register include MPs, Ministers, Judges and individuals affected by the Police Service of Northern Ireland leak.

However, the SI will allow the Registrar to disclose a protected address that was used as a registered office address by a dissolved company at the point of its dissolution. This is for practical reasons, to allow a person to input that address in a court form needed in a restoration application.

The SI will also make consequential amendments to ensure a consistent application of the law to Limited Liability Partnerships (LLP) and that information is protected accordingly for LLP members.

The Unique Identifiers (Application of Company Law) Regulations 2024

Under the Companies House Reforms, individuals involved in setting up and running business entities will be required to have their identity verified. Any verified individual will have a unique number (UID) allocated to them. These regulations will ensure that UIDs can be allocated to all business entities, not just companies (e.g. limited liability partnerships (LLPs) and limited partnerships). This ensures the identity verification regime operates effectively for all entities in scope of the reforms.

The Limited Liability Partnerships (Application of Company Law) (No. 2) Regulations 2024

This instrument applies certain company law provisions from the Act to the law governing LLPs. This ensures the law applies in a consistent way to both entity types. The SI also applies the financial penalties regime, which is already in place for companies, to LLPs. The SI also gives Companies House a power to 'strike off' an LLP registered on false basis from the register. Both these measures will add to the compliance tools available to Companies House, helping to improve the integrity of the register and deterring unlawful activity.

Finally, I would like to draw the Committee's attention to two recent publications; firstly, from Companies House's outlining the [timeline for implementing the remainder of the reforms](#). The second publication reveals the findings from research commissioned by my Department into the [value of Companies House information for tackling crime](#). The findings are positive and suggest that there will be a significant increase in the value of the Companies House register following the implementation of the Act.

If you have questions on any of the points in this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me or my officials who stand ready to answer any questions or provide further information if necessary.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Justin Madders', with a stylized flourish at the end.

JUSTIN MADDERS MP

Minister for Employment Rights, Competition and Markets
Department for Business and Trade