

# COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE FOR CLIENTS

## 1. Overview

- 1.1. Whilst the firm strives to ensure the highest levels of client care, we recognise that we may occasionally fall below those high standards. If it's felt we have not met those high standards then, we take complaints very seriously.
- 1.2. We aim to respond to and resolve your complaint as promptly, fairly and effectively as possible. We aim to agree a resolution which is satisfactory to you and achieves an ongoing mutually beneficial relationship between us.
- 1.3. Wherever possible, our complaints handling is not intended to intrude upon the ongoing lawyer/client relationship, which includes any attempts to resolve problems.
- 1.4. Complaints can be made in writing or orally. They can be made direct to the Managing Partner, to the fee earner handling the case or his/her supervisor.
- 1.5. Some complaints have proven to be a valuable source of feedback concerning the quality of our service, and we endeavour to learn from them and tailor our services accordingly.
- 1.6. Complaints are handled by our Risk & Compliance Partner Sarah Martin, although if the complaint concerns her, then the complaint will be handled by the Senior Partner, Robert Curry.

## 2. Who can make a Complaint?

We will respond to your complaint if you:

- 2.1. Are a client of the firm;
- 2.2. Are a beneficiary of an estate in which we either represent the Executors/administrators/trustees, or we are the appointed Executors;
- 2.3. Have instructed us through another legal services provider;
- 2.4. If you feel that we have unreasonably refused to provide you with a service.

If we do not consider your complaint to fall within these categories, we will explain why.

## 3. Making a Complaint

- 3.1. You can make a complaint orally or in writing. If orally, it would be helpful if you subsequently set the detail out in writing, although we do not insist on this.
- 3.2. If you are unhappy with our bill, your concerns will be treated in the same way as a complaint about service. However, you may also have a right to object to the bill by applying to the Court for an assessment. Please see the reverse of our bill for more details of your rights.

## 4. Procedure

- 4.1. We aim to acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 48 hours of receiving it but will acknowledge receipt by no later than 7 days. Upon receiving a complaint, we will forward this procedure to you.
- 4.2. We are required to respond within 56 days; typically, we aim to respond within 14 days of receiving a complaint, although for more complex matters, the timescale may be between 14 and 56 days.

- 4.3. Following receipt of your complaint, our investigation will involve reviewing the contents of your file(s) and discussing your concerns with your Lawyer(s). It is possible that, in order to fully investigate your complaint, we may seek further information from you.
- 4.4. Complaints will normally be responded to in writing, to include any proposals we have for resolving it. However, where appropriate, we do encourage a telephone discussion or face to face meeting to endeavour to resolve your concerns.
- 4.5. We aim to ensure that this complaints procedure will be fair and effective and comply with our professional rules in relation to equality and diversity.
- 4.6. We aim to deal with complaints promptly, courteously and with the intention of resolving the complaint to the mutual satisfaction of the client and the firm.
- 4.7. There may be situations where it may be professionally inappropriate for us to provide all information requested in a complaint.
- 4.8. We will not charge you for the cost of handling any complaint made.
- 4.9. We have chosen not to adopt an Alternative Dispute Resolution process. If, therefore, following conclusion of our investigation, you wish to take the complaint further, then you should contact the Legal Ombudsman-see below.

## 5. Legal Ombudsman (“LeO”)

- 5.1. If upon the conclusion of the complaint’s procedure, we are still unable to resolve matters satisfactorily, or you are unhappy with the outcome, you may ask the LeO to become involved. The Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made to them within one year of the date of the act or omission about which you are concerned or within one year of you realising there was a concern. You must refer your concerns to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of our final response to you if you are unhappy with the outcome of the complaint’s procedure. The contact details are:

Legal Ombudsman  
PO Box 6167  
Slough SL1 0EH  
Telephone: 0300 555 0333  
Minicom: 0300 555 0333  
Website: [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk)  
[enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)

## 6. Solicitors Regulation Authority | What to do if you are unhappy with our behaviour

The Solicitors Regulation Authority can help if you are concerned about our behaviour. This could be for things like dishonesty, taking or losing your money or treating you unfairly because of your age, a disability or other characteristic. [Visit their website to see how you can raise your concerns with the SRA.](#)

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