



CLIENT COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. POLICY

Our aim is to provide you with a quality service. If you feel you have not received the service you hoped for, you should tell us. This will help us to improve our standards.

We take very seriously all expressions of dissatisfaction from our clients. If we feel we have fallen below the high standards we set ourselves, we will endeavour to put matters right quickly.

We aim to look into any complaint promptly, thoroughly, and in accordance with this document.

We do not make any charge for investigating a complaint.

If you have received this document, it is likely that you have already expressed your concerns verbally or in writing to your lawyer, their Supervisor or to Andrew Hill, who is the Partner responsible for dealing with complaints. This document explains our procedures for handling complaints to ensure that each complaint is dealt with swiftly in an attempt to reach an amicable and satisfactory solution.

Andrew Hill is the Partner responsible for this Policy, and he will ensure that it is reviewed annually, to verify that it is in effective operation throughout the Firm.

2. REPORTING & INVESTIGATION RESPONSIBILITIES

If you have a complaint, please contact us with the details. This can be by letter, email, fax, or telephone. Informal verbal complaints should be addressed to your lawyer in the first instance.

If you are not satisfied with their proposals, then the matter should be taken up with Andrew Hill.

If the matter cannot be resolved informally with your lawyer, it would assist investigations if you were to fully detail your concerns in writing so that there is less room for misunderstanding your concerns and requirements.

3. RESPONSE TIMES

Written complaints will be acknowledged in writing within 2 days of receipt, when the name of the person responsible for handling the complaint will be confirmed.

We have a period of 8 weeks in which to investigate and resolve a complaint.

In any case, we will always endeavour to provide a full response within 21 days. If that is not possible, an interim response will be given explaining why it is not possible to meet this deadline, and when we expect our investigations to be completed and a response finalised.

As soon as the matter has been investigated we will write to you confirming our final position on your complaint, and explaining our reasons.

4. UNRESOLVED ISSUES

4.1 We are regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority and are bound by the high standards set by them. They can help you if you are concerned about our behaviour. For further information you should refer to the Solicitors Regulation Authority (www.sra.org).

4.2 In the unusual event that we are unable to resolve the matter to your satisfaction, or if we take more than 8 weeks to resolve a complaint, you may take the matter up with the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman is an independent and impartial complaints handling body for members of the public who wish to make a complaint about a solicitor who has acted for them. The Legal Ombudsman can help you if you are not happy with our work or service, and

we are unable to resolve your complaint ourselves. Its role is to look at complaints in a fair and independent way. It will not take sides, and is unable to provide legal advice.

4.3 Before accepting a complaint for investigation, the Legal Ombudsman will check that you have tried to resolve your complaint with us first. If you have, then you must take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:-

- (a) within six months of receiving our final response to your complaint
and
- (b) no more than six years from the date from the act/omission; or
no more than 3 years from when you should reasonably have known that there was cause for complaint

4.4 For further information, you should refer to the Legal Ombudsman, whose contact details are:
PO Box 6806
Wolverhampton
WV1 9WJ

Telephone: 0300 555 0333.
Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk

4.5 If your complaint is in relation to our charges you should contact us with relevant details.

You may be entitled to object to an invoice by:

- (a) applying to the court for an assessment under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974: or
- (b) making a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman, whose details are set out in 4.4 above.

Please note that the Legal Ombudsman may not deal with a complaint about a bill if you have applied to the court for assessment.

4.6 Alternative dispute resolution bodies exist, such as ProMediate (details of which can be found at www.promediate.co.uk), which are competent to deal with legal complaints should both you and our firm agree to use such a scheme.

We do not agree to use ProMediate (or any other alternative dispute resolution body) as we believe that the Legal Ombudsman's scheme is the most appropriate method for dealing with legal complaints.

5. **MANAGEMENT**

All complaints (written or verbal) are recorded and logged centrally to enable us to detect recurring problems and trends. As necessary, we will implement corrective action in response to individual complaints and improvement measures to prevent adverse trends and correct recurring problems. In this manner, we aim to constantly improve the service we provide.

This Policy was last reviewed in February 2022.