



## Complaints Handling Procedure

We are authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA). We are committed to high quality legal advice and client care and aim to offer all our clients an efficient and effective service. However, if our clients would like to discuss how the service to them could be improved, the level of their bill, or should there be any aspect of our service with which they are not satisfied, we ask them to please contact the person in our firm responsible for complaints handling: Pam Halladay Legal Support Manager on 0116 2999199 or by post to DWS Legal, 14 Friar Lane, Leicester, LE1 5RA or email to [pam.halladay@d-w-s.co.uk](mailto:pam.halladay@d-w-s.co.uk)

We are committed to high quality legal advice and client care and are keen to resolve any concerns as soon as possible and in order to do this, will follow our complaints handling procedure.

Our complaints procedure is as follows:

### Step One:

If you have not already done so, we ask our clients to let us know the full nature of the problem in writing.

### Step Two:

Our Complaints Handling Representative will write to the client acknowledging their complaint within seven working days. In this letter, we shall confirm what happens next.

We will also open a separate sub-file for correspondence and notes.

### Step Three:

Our complaints Handling Representative shall then investigate the matter by reviewing the matter file and speaking to the member of staff concerned. We will aim to complete the investigation within eight weeks of acknowledging receipt of the complaint. If, for some reason, the matter cannot be investigated in this timeframe, then we will write to the client notifying them of this together with the reason why and giving a revised timescale.

The Investigation may involve one or more of the following steps:

- a) Examine the relevant file.
- b) A member of staff, the head of department or the Client Care Representative will telephone you to discuss the matter further.

- c) Ask you for more information.
- d) Write to you in detail
- e) Invite you to the office to discuss the matter further

We will proceed to providing the client a detailed, written response, including the proposed solution.

#### Step Four:

If the client is satisfied with our response following the above steps, that will be the end of the matter.

However, if the client is not satisfied, they will be invited to contact our Complaints Handling Representative again and she will arrange for a Partner or other senior member of staff who is unconnected with the matter to review the decision. He/She will write to the client within fourteen days of receiving the request with confirmation of the firm's final position in relation to the complaint, outlining the reasons and any final redress that is offered.

#### Step Five: Other avenues

Clients must always try complaining to us first. In most cases they will not be able to take their complaint further without allowing us the opportunity to put things right.

#### *Legal Ombudsman*

We are permitted a minimum of eight weeks to consider the complaint. If for any reason we are unable to resolve the problem between us within that timeframe, then our clients are advised that they may ask the Legal Ombudsman to consider the complaint.

Clients are free to refer any complaint about our work, fees or level of service but there are some conditions and time limits. Please be aware that any complaint to the Legal Ombudsman must usually be made within six months of the client having received a final written response from us about their complaint.

The Legal Ombudsman will not accept complaints where the act or date of awareness was before 6 October 2010.

For further information, please contact:

The Legal Ombudsman on 0300 555 0333 or visit [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk).

The Legal Ombudsman may be contacted at PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton WV1 9WJ.

#### *Solicitors Regulation Authority*

If someone wants to make a complaint about a solicitor they have the right to notify our regulator, the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA). There are no time limits for making a report but there are limits on what the SRA will consider. Please note that the SRA is not able to deal with issues of poor service (complaints of this nature should instead be referred to our Complaints Handler Pam Halladay and thereafter, if no resolution is reached to the Legal Ombudsman). For further information about the SRA's role, please contact the SRA or visit:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor.page#report>

### Further Information

For further information about our complaints handling procedures, please do not hesitate to contact Pam Halladay on 0116 2999199 , email [pam.halladay@d-w-s.co.uk](mailto:pam.halladay@d-w-s.co.uk) or by post to 14 Friar Lane, Leicester, LE1 5RA.