



## **Complaints Handling Procedure**

### **Introduction**

Providing our clients with a good service is important to us. Continuously improving the service we provide, is also our objective. If despite our best efforts something goes wrong and you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the advice or service we have provided, including any fees we have billed, we invite you to tell us so that we may try and resolve the matter fairly, effectively and as promptly as possible. You may use the procedure described below to raise a concern about our advice or service and/or an issue relating to our fees or an invoice we have delivered.

Our complaints procedure is as follows:

### **Stage 1**

Please tell us the full nature of the problem. Ideally, we would prefer that your complaint be confirmed in writing in order that any scope for misunderstanding can be avoided. However, this is not obligatory and you are welcome to provide the details to us over the telephone or face to face. If you are setting out your concerns in writing then you can do this by emailing at [ravinder@rkb-law.co.uk](mailto:ravinder@rkb-law.co.uk) or writing to me at Suite 2 Ground Floor, Stirling House, 7 Ashford Road, Maidstone, Kent ME14 5BJ.

### **Stage 2**

We will write to you acknowledging your complaint within five working days of receipt. In this letter, we shall confirm what happens next.

### **Stage 3**

We shall then investigate the matter by reviewing the matter file and speaking to the member of staff concerned within five working days of acknowledging receipt of your complaint. If, for some reason, the matter cannot be investigated in this timeframe, then we will write to you notifying you of this together with the reason why and giving a revised timescale.

Once the investigation has been completed, we shall invite you to discuss the issue(s) you have raised and hopefully resolve the complaint. This could be a meeting or telephone call and will take place within fourteen days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.

We shall write to you within five working days of any meeting or phone call to confirm our discussion and the solution agreed upon and/or any final redress that is offered.

Alternatively, if you do not want to or are unable to attend such a meeting or you would prefer to continue to correspond by letter or email (or if a meeting is not required), we will send you a detailed,



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written response, including our proposed solution, within fourteen working days of sending you the letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint.

#### **Stage 4**

If you are satisfied with our response following the above steps, that will be the end of the matter. However, if you are not satisfied, you should contact us again and we will review our decision or, depending on the circumstances, will arrange for another local solicitor to review the decision. We will write to you within fourteen days of receiving your request with confirmation of the firm's final position in relation to your complaint, outlining the reasons and any final redress that is offered.

#### **Stage 5 (other avenues):**

If having exhausted our own internal complaints handling procedure as described above you are still not satisfied with our final written response to your complaint, or with the manner in which we handled the complaint, you may ask the Legal Ombudsman to consider the matter. We are permitted a minimum of eight weeks to consider the complaint. You must always try complaining to us first. In most cases you will not be able to take your complaint further without allowing us the opportunity to put things right.

#### *Legal Ombudsman*

You 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 you having received a final written response from us about your complaint. Complaints to the Legal Ombudsman must usually be made within six years of the act or omission about which you are complaining occurring; or within three years from when you should have known about or become aware that there were grounds for 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 you think a solicitor might be dishonest or you have concerns about their ethics or integrity, you also 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 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>