

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

My complaints policy

I am committed to providing a high-quality legal service to all my clients. When something goes wrong, I clearly need to know about it. This will help me to maintain and improve my standards.

My complaints procedure

If you have a complaint about the services, you have received or the amount of your bill please contact me with the details. I will do my best to deal with your complaint in accordance with this procedure. If I have to change any of the timescales set out below, I will let you know.

What will happen next?

1. Once we receive your complaint, within 7 days I will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint and asking you to confirm or explain the details. I may suggest that we meet to clarify any details.
2. I will then record your complaint in my central register and open a file for your complaint and investigate your complaint. This may involve one or more of the following steps:
 - If I acted for you, I would consider your complaint again. I will then send you my detailed reply or invite you to a meeting to discuss the matter.
 - If someone else acted for you, I will ask them to give me their reply to your complaint. I will then examine their reply and the information in your complaint file. I may also speak to the person who acted for you.
 - I may ask another independent local solicitor to investigate your complaint and report to me.
 - I will then write inviting you to meet me and discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint.
3. At this stage I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you. I would aim to be in a position to be able to meet with you within 14 days of first receiving your complaint. If you would prefer not to meet, or if we cannot arrange this within an agreeable timescale, I will write fully to you setting out my views on the situation and any redress.
4. Within three days of the meeting, I will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions I have agreed with you. In appropriate cases I could offer an apology, a reduction of any bill or a repayment in relation to any payment received.
5. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, please contact me again. I will then arrange to review my decision within the next 10 days. This may happen in one of the following ways:

- I will review the decision myself
- I will arrange for someone who is not connected with the complaint to review my decision.
- I will ask my local Law Society or another local firm of solicitors to review your complaint. This may take longer than 10 days in which case I will let you know how long this process will take.
- I will consider whether to invite you to agree to an independent mediation. Both parties need to agree that ADR is suitable for this to go ahead, if we do not feel this is suitable, we will inform you of this. This again may take longer than 10 days and I will do my best to let you know how long this will take.

6. I will let you know the result of the review within 5 days of the end of the review. At this time, I will write to you confirming my final position on your complaint and explaining my reasons.

If following our final letter, you feel that we have been unable to resolve your complaint, you can have the complaint independently looked at by the Legal Ombudsman. You can call them on 0300 555 0333, e-mail them at enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk or write to them at PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ.

The Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made to them within a year of the date of the act or omission about which you are concerned or within a year from the date when you should have realised that there was cause for complaint. You must also refer your concerns to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of our final response to you.