

ELDER RAHIMI

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

To be read in conjunction with Section 17 of Office Manual

1. What is a Complaint

A formal complaint, which triggers the complaint procedure, can be made either orally or in writing. All clients are advised in writing in the instruction letter of their right to complain the name of the person to whom they should complain and of the existence of the Complaints Procedure. If a client expresses dissatisfaction as to the level of service provided by the fee earner or the Firm, regardless of the fee earners own view, this should be taken seriously and the client reminded of the complaints procedure and their right to make a formal complaint.

Ali Rahimi has overall responsibility for complaint handling within the firm.

When a Complaint is Made

- a. The recipient of the complaint, whether the fee earner concerned, another fee earner, member of staff or a partner, must within 24 hours of the complaint complete the Client Complaint Report [IDX2.14A].
- b. The Client Complaint Report and the file are then to be passed to the Supervisor of the individual about whom the complaint has been made. The Supervisor will within 24 hours write to the client confirming the Complaints Procedure has been initiated and informing the client of what will happen next and the time scale within which it will happen.
- c. At this stage it is essential that the exact terms of the complaint are clarified with the client, either in writing, or if necessary by a personal attendance on the client with an interpreter (if appropriate). This is to be done by the Supervisor investigating the complaint.
- d. Once the exact terms of the complaint have been established, the Supervisor will seek the views of the individual against whom the complaint has been made with a view to the well-foundedness of the complaint.
- e. If appropriate the views of the person about whom the complaint has been made will be put to the client at this stage for comment.
- f. The process for investigating the complaint is to be completed within a period of 8 weeks from the initial notification of the complaint to the firm.

2. Once the Complaint has been Investigated

- a. The Client will be notified as to the outcome of the investigation and the Supervisors view as to the well foundedness of the complaint.

- b. If the complaint has been found to be well founded, consideration will be given to whether it is appropriate for the Disciplinary Procedure to be activated.
- c. If appropriate, the client will be advised of other remedies available i.e. The Office for the Supervision of Solicitors.
- d. The client's views as to what should happen after the complaint has been investigated will be sought. Consideration will be given as to whether the relationship with the client has been irreparably damaged. If so, the client will be offered assistance in obtaining alternative suitable representation.

Legal ombudsman

The legal ombudsman has responsibility for resolving complaints against lawyers. If after contacting us about a complaint you want to take the matter further, the contact details for the legal ombudsman are as follows:

Visit: www.legalombudsman.org.uk

Call: 0300 555 0333 between 9am to 5pm.

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Legal Ombudsman PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ

Clients are advised as to the time limits for making a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman in the client care letter sent to them at the outset of their matter.

Legal Ombudsman Time limits:

- *six years from the date of act/omission, or*
- *three years from when the complainant should have known about the complaint.*

However, the Legal Ombudsman will not accept complaints where the act or date of awareness were before 6 October 2010.

The time limit for a client to complain to the Legal Ombudsman remains six months from the end of the complaints process if we provide full information about the client's right to take a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman at that point. Therefore, it is important to ensure that we provide complainants with the following information prominently in writing at the end of the complaints process:

- *their right to take a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman*

- *the timeframes for doing so, and*
- *the contact details for the Legal Ombudsman.*

CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE SRA:

The contact centre can help with most queries.

0870 606 2555 (inside the UK), 09.00 to 17.00, Monday to Friday

Main postal address

Solicitors Regulation Authority, Ipsley Court, Berrington Close, Redditch, B98 0TD
([map of location](#)) or DX 19114 Redditch

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