

*This Complaints Handling Procedure tells you how we will deal with your complaint and how long it is likely to take. It also provides important information about what you can do if you are not happy with the way in which we are dealing with your complaint, or about our final decision.*

## **Making a complaint**

If you have any concerns about our service, our work, or our charges, you should discuss these first with the individual who has day-to-day control of your matter.

If this person cannot satisfactorily address your concerns and you wish to make a complaint, please contact our client care partner, Jennifer Renshaw.

You can write to her at Derbyshire Legal Services Limited, Sherwood House, 1 Snitterton Road, Matlock DE4 3LZ or send an email to [j.renshaw@lovedays-solicitors.co.uk](mailto:j.renshaw@lovedays-solicitors.co.uk).

## **What will happen next**

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within five days of our receiving the complaint, enclosing a copy of this procedure.
2. We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve passing your complaint to our client care partner, Jennifer Renshaw (unless the complaint is against her then Richard Roberts will deal with the complaint), who will review your matter file and speak to the member of staff who acted for you.
3. Jennifer Renshaw will then invite you to a meeting to discuss and, it is hoped, resolve your complaint. She will do this within 14 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
4. Within three days of the meeting, Jennifer Renshaw will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions she has agreed with you.
5. If you do not want a meeting or it is not possible, Jennifer Renshaw will send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including her suggestions for resolving the matter, within 21 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
6. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact us again to explain why you remain unhappy with our response and we will review your comments. Depending on the matter we may at this stage arrange for another partner to review the decision.
7. We will write to you within 14 days of receiving your request for a review, confirming our final position on your complaint, and explaining our reasons.

## **The Legal Ombudsman**

If you are still not satisfied, you can then contact the Legal Ombudsman about your complaint provided you do so within six months of the end of our Internal Complaints Handling Procedure.

In addition, there are time limits relating to the date you first became aware or should have become aware of the problem. The relevant time limits are set out in the version of the Legal Ombudsman's Scheme Rules in force from time to time (which can be accessed at: <https://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/information-centre/corporate-publications/scheme-rules> / or by contacting the Legal Ombudsman using the contact details provided below) and may only be extended by the Legal Ombudsman in exceptional circumstances.

You must take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:

- Within six months of receiving a final response to your complaint, and
- No more than one year from the date of act/omission; or
- No more than one year from when you should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint.

Ordinarily, you cannot use the Legal Ombudsman unless you have first attempted to resolve your complaint using our internal Complaints Handling procedure, but you will be able to contact the Legal Ombudsman if:

- The complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction within eight weeks of first making the complaint to us; or
- The Legal Ombudsman decides that there are exceptional reasons why the Legal Ombudsman should consider your complaint sooner, or without you having to use our internal Complaints Handling Procedure first; or
- The Legal Ombudsman considers that your complaint cannot be resolved using our internal Complaints Handling Procedure because the relationship between you and us has broken down irretrievably.

If you wish to make a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman, you must be one of the following:

- An individual;
- A micro-enterprise as defined in European Recommendation 2003/361/EC of 6 May 2003 (broadly, an enterprise with fewer than 10 staff and a turnover or balance sheet value not exceeding €2 million);
- A charity with an annual income less than £1 million;
- A club, association or society with an annual income less than £1 million;
- A trustee of a trust with a net asset value less than £1 million; or
- A personal representative or the residuary beneficiaries of an estate where a person with a complaint died before referring it to the Legal Ombudsman.

If you are not, you should be aware that you can only obtain redress by using our Complaints Handling Procedure or by mediation or arbitration, or by taking action through the Courts.

## **Legal Ombudsman Contact Details**

Address: Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH

Telephone: 0300 555 0333

Email: [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)

Website: [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk)

## **Complaining to the Solicitors Regulation Authority**

The Solicitors Regulation Authority can help you if you are concerned about our behaviour. This could be for things like dishonesty, taking or losing your money or treating you unfairly because of your age, a disability or other characteristic.

Address: Solicitors Regulation Authority, The Cube, 199 Wharfside Street, Birmingham, B1 1RN

Telephone: 0370 606 2555

Email: [report@sra.org.uk](mailto:report@sra.org.uk)

Website: [www.sra.org.uk](http://www.sra.org.uk)

## **Alternative Dispute Resolution**

Where we are not able to settle your complaint using our internal complaints process, there are alternative complaints bodies (such as the Ombudsman Services [www.ombudsman-services.org](http://www.ombudsman-services.org)) which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and our firm wish to use such a scheme.

Please let us know if you would like to consider using an alternative complaints body to resolve your complaint.