

Information for clients

Complaints Handling Policy

Introduction

We want to give you the best possible service. However, if at any point you become unhappy or concerned about the service we have provided, or about the bill, then you should inform us immediately, so that we can do our best to resolve the problem. In the first instance, it may be helpful to contact the person who is working on your case to discuss your concerns and we will do our best to resolve any issues at this stage.

If you would like to make a formal complaint then please contact the Principal, Anthony Branley, who is responsible for client care and the handling of complaints. You can contact him at 18 Friern Park, North Finchley, London, N12 9DA, telephone 0208 446 8474 or email solicitors@galbraithbranley.com.

What will happen next

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint; confirming the name of the person who will be dealing with your complaint (this will normally be Anthony Branley) and when you may expect to receive a full response to your complaint. You can expect to receive our initial letter together with a copy of this complaints handling policy within five days of us receiving your complaint.
2. We will record your complaint in our central register and open a file for your complaint.
3. We will then start to investigate your complaint. This may involve one or more of the following steps:
 - i. We will ask the member of staff who acted for you to prepare a report responding to your complaint and to submit it to the person dealing with your complaint, normally within five days.
 - ii. We will examine the report and the information in your file. We may then ask you or the member of staff in question for more information.
4. We will send you a detailed, written response to your complaint within 21 days of the receipt of your complaint, in the absence of exceptional circumstances. If there are such circumstances, you will be told what they are and when you may expect to receive our response.
5. If, having received our response to your complaint, you remain dissatisfied, you may request a meeting with the person dealing with your complaint (who may decline a meeting if it is considered that it is unnecessary or unlikely to help resolve the complaint) to request a review of the response.
6. If you ask for a review of our response to your complaint that review will be conducted by the person who investigated and responded to your complaint together with a senior solicitor who was not previously involved in your case or in the investigation of your

complaint. 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.

7. If we are unable to resolve the complaint with you then you can have the complaint independently looked at by the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman investigates problems about poor service from lawyers.
8. Before accepting a complaint for investigation, the Legal Ombudsman will check that you have tried to resolve your complaint with us first. If you have, then you must take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:
 - Within six months of receiving a final response to your complaint
and
 - Six years from the date of act/omission; or three years from when you should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint (only if the act took place more than six years ago).
9. Further information can be obtained from the Legal Ombudsman who can be contacted by post at PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton WV1 9WJ; by telephone on 0300 555 0333, website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk or by email at enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk.

Complaints in relation to bills

The complaints procedure also includes complaints arising concerning our bill. There may also be a right to object to the bill by applying to the court for an assessment of the bill under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974. If all, or part, of a bill remains unpaid, the firm may be entitled to charge interest.

Alternative dispute resolution

We are obliged to inform you that alternative complaints bodies exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and our firm agree to use such a scheme.

Raising concerns with our regulator

The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) 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. You can find information about raising your concerns with the SRA at www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor.