

### Our Complaints Policy

We are committed to providing high quality legal advice to all our clients. When something goes wrong we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve the level of service to clients.

### What is a complaint?

A complaint means an oral or written expression of dissatisfaction which a client alleges has led to them suffering (or may suffer) financial loss, distress, inconvenience or other detriment (definition used by the Legal Ombudsman).

### Our Complaints Procedure

If you have a complaint, please contact Karishma Mohindra, Client Services Manager, who is the person responsible for dealing with client care issues.

You can contact her by post at PLS House, 2 Aegean Road, Atlantic Street, Altrincham WA14 5UW, via email at [kmohindra@pls-solicitors.co.uk](mailto:kmohindra@pls-solicitors.co.uk), or via telephone on 01615377688.

### What will happen next?

1. We will endeavour to resolve a verbal complaint when it is initially made, however, where this is not possible it will be handled in line with the full complaints process outlined in stages 2-7 below.
2. We will send you a letter or email acknowledging receipt of your complaint within a maximum of two days of us receiving the complaint, enclosing a copy of this procedure.
3. We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve reviewing your file and speaking to the member of staff who acted for you. If your complaint relates to a matter where the file has been closed we may need to obtain your file from our archive storage facility, which may take 1-2 days.
4. We will send you a detailed reply to your complaint, including our suggestions for resolving the matter, within 5 weeks of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
5. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact us again and we will arrange for a partner who has not had any dealing with your matter to review the initial decision.
6. 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 have been unable to settle your complaint using our internal complaints process you have a right to complain to the Legal Ombudsman, an independent complaints body, established under the Legal Services Act 2007, that deals with legal services complaints. You have six months from the date of our final letter in which to complain to the Legal Ombudsman.

In addition, there are time limits relating to the date you first became aware or should have become aware of the problem which is the cause of your complaint. 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 these time limits may only be extended by the Legal Ombudsman in exceptional circumstances.

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.

Legal Ombudsman Contact Details

- Postal address: Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ.
- Telephone: 0300 555 0333.
- Email: [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk).
- Website: [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk)

8. Alternative complaints bodies such as Ombudsman Services, ProMediate and Small Claims Mediation exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and our firm wish to use such a scheme. As a firm we have decided that unresolved complaints will be handled only by the Legal Ombudsman as we believe the Legal Ombudsman is better equipped to resolve complaints against legal firms.
9. Complaints (such as reporting someone's behaviour) may also be made directly to the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA). See [www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor.page](http://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor.page) for more details.

### Objecting to you bill(s)

You may have the right to object to our bill by applying to the court for an assessment of the bill under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974.

### Non-payment of our bill(s)

You should be aware that the firm may be entitled to charge interest if all or part of our bill(s) remain unpaid.

\*If we have to change any of the timescales above, we will let you know and explain why.