

Nicholls

solicitors

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Our Complaints Policy

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 then you should inform us immediately, so that we can do our best to resolve the problem.

In the first instance it would 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. If you would like to make a formal complaint, then this will be dealt with following this formal complaints procedure. Making a complaint will not affect how we handle your case. We make no charge whatsoever for investigating your complaint. We are required to investigate your complaint and we will do our best to resolve it.

We define a complaint as being ‘a statement or expression of dissatisfaction’ in relation to the service that a client has received or is receiving from us which alleges that they have or may suffer detriment as a result.

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

Our Complaints Procedure

If you have a complaint, please contact us setting out the details as soon as possible.

When we receive a complaint, what will happen next?

1. We will send you a written acknowledgement of your complaint and ask you to confirm or explain the details of it if you have not already made it clear what the complaint is or if we need to clarify anything. At this time we will also let you know the name of the person who will be dealing with your complaint. You can expect to receive our letter within five working days of us receiving your complaint.

2. We will record your complaint in our central register and open a separate file for your complaint. We will do this within five working days of receiving your complaint.
3. We will then start to investigate your complaint. This will normally involve the following steps.
 - 3.1. We will notify Sarah Birdsey or Patrick Nicholls, our Directors of your complaint; these are our complaint handlers, within five working days.
 - 3.2. If the person you make the complaint about is not the complaint handler, the complaint handler will ask the member of staff who you are complaining about for your file of papers and their response to your complaint.
 - 3.3. Within 20 working days of us having been notified of your complaint, the complaint handler will then respond to you in writing with notification of the result, and their decision in response to your complaint. This may include their suggestions for resolving the matter.
4. If you are not satisfied with the complaint handler's decision he or she will then invite you to a meeting and discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. This will be done within 10 working days of you notifying the complaint handler you are not satisfied with their decision as set out in 3.3 above.
5. Within 10 working days of the meeting the complaint handler will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions he has agreed with you. The complaint handler will do this within five days of completing the investigation.
6. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied you should please contact us again. We will then arrange to review our decision. This will happen by another Director of the Firm investigating your complaint by considering all the details of it and reviewing the decision of the person who dealt with it as set out above. This Director, the second complaint handler will then respond to you in writing with notification of the result, and their decision in response to your complaint. This may include their suggestions for resolving the matter. This will happen within 10 working days of you notifying us that you are not satisfied with the decision of the first claims handler.

Note: If we have to change any of the timescales or procedures as set out above, we will let you know and explain why.

7. If you are still not satisfied, you can contact the Legal Ombudsman about your complaint in the following circumstances:
 - Within six months of receiving a final response to your complaint

and

 - No more than six years from the date of act/omission; or

- No more than three years from when you should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint.

Contact details

Visit: www.legalombudsman.org.uk

Call: 0300 555 0333 between 9.00 to 17.00.

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Legal Ombudsman PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ

Further information (including an explanation of time limits) may be obtained by you from the Legal Ombudsman (details above). Please note that only copies of documents should be sent to the Legal Ombudsman's Office to avoid the original documentation being lost or destroyed.

If you have any complaint about insurance matters you have a right to complain to the Financial Ombudsman Service, although the complaint should be made (as above) to us first. The Financial Ombudsman Service can be contacted 0300 1239123 or by e-mail to complaint.info@financial-ombudsman.org.uk

What to do if you are unhappy with our behaviour

The Solicitors Regulation Authority can help 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.

Visit their website to see how you can raise your concerns with the Solicitors Regulation Authority <https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/>

For further information you can contact the SRA contact centre as follows

The Cube
199 Wharfside Street
Birmingham
B1 1RN
DX 720293 BIRMINGHAM 47
0370 606 2555
contactcentre@sra.org.uk