Complaints Handling Procedure

Our complaints policy

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 with the details. We will try to resolve the issue immediately but if this is not possible, the complaint will be recorded and progressed.

What will happen next?

1. We will aim to send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within **three** working days of us receiving the complaint, enclosing a copy of this procedure.

2. In some circumstances we may ask you to explain your concerns in more det*ail.*

3. We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve passing your complaint to our client care partner, Geoff Bell, who will review your file and speak to the member(s) of staff who dealt with you. If the complaint is about Geoff Bell, we will appoint a different partner to deal with your complaint.

4. We will send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including our suggestions for resolving the matter, within **fifteen** working days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.

5. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact us again to request a review and we will then invite you to a meeting to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. We will do this within **ten** working days of receiving your request.

6. Within **three** working days of any meeting, we will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions we have agreed with you.

7. If you do not want a meeting or it is not possible to arrange one, we will consider any further issues you may have raised and will reply to you further within **five** working days of receiving your request for a review, confirming the final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.

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

9. We would always expect to have dealt with your complaint within **eight** weeks of your first drawing the matter to our attention. If for any reason we are unable to resolve the problem between us within that timeframe, then you may ask the **Legal Ombudsman at P.O. Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH** to consider your complaint. Any complaint to the Legal Ombudsman must usually be made within six months of your having received a final written response from us about your complaint.

   Complaints to the Legal Ombudsman must usually be made within six years of the act or omission about which you are complaining occurring or within three years from when you should have known about or become aware that there may be grounds for

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

10. Please note the matter will be treated as resolved if there is no follow up from you within three months of any letter of substantive response.

11. You will not be charged for any costs we incur in investigating your complaint.

For further information, you should contact the Legal Ombudsman at the address above or on **0300 555 0333** or email at enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Further information is available on the Legal Ombudsman website www.legalombudsman.org.uk

If it is that you are concerned about **our behaviour,** then **The Solicitors Regulation Authority** may be able to help you. 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 raise your concerns with the Solicitors Regulation Authority, and can contact them here:

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

Phone: 0370 606 2555 inside the UK. Phone lines are open 9.00 to 17.00.

Or visit: www.sra.org.uk

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries.

Stevens Defence LLP
Head Office
Union House
Uttoxeter Road
LONGTON
Stoke on Trent
ST3 1NX

Phone: 01782 343353

Or visit: www.stevensdefence.com

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