

K&L GATES LLP

COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

1. OUR COMPLAINTS POLICY

We endeavour to provide a service which meets the reasonable expectations of our clients and we are always disappointed when, for whatever reason, that does not happen. We encourage clients who have any problem with any aspect of our service to let us know immediately so that we may deal with the problem in accordance with our established internal procedures for handling complaints. These are set out below.

A complaint may include a complaint about our bill or the level of our costs.

2. HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

2.1 Before making a complaint as set out in 2.2, we would encourage you, if you are unhappy with any aspect of our service, to raise the matter first informally outside our complaints procedure with the partner in overall charge of the matter concerned. The name of this partner should have been given to you at the outset of the matter but, if it was not, please ask the member of staff dealing with the matter to let you know the name of the partner in overall charge of it.

2.2 If you prefer, or if you are unhappy with our initial response to the problem, you should make your complaint to our London Managing Partner, Tony Griffiths (or, on one of his matters, with Jonathan Lawrence, the Assistant General Counsel).

3. INVESTIGATION OF YOUR COMPLAINT

3.1 Once your complaint has been raised with our Managing Partner, he will ask another partner, normally our Assistant General Counsel or the partner in charge of the department concerned, to deal with your complaint.

3.2 Within 3 working days (i.e. excluding weekends and Bank Holidays) we will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint and, if necessary, asking you to confirm or explain the details of your complaint. We will also let you know the name of the person who will be dealing with your complaint. We will maintain a file for your complaint.

3.3 We will examine the relevant file and if we need any information from you in order to investigate the complaint, we will request you to provide it.

- 3.4 If it seems appropriate, we will suggest a meeting with you to discuss the complaint with you and, if possible, to resolve it.
- 3.5 At the conclusion of our investigation, we shall send you a letter setting out our findings. If the matter has been resolved by a meeting between you and the partner dealing with your complaint, our letter will confirm to you what took place and any solutions we agreed with you.
- 3.6 Our aim will be to conclude our investigation within 20 working days of receiving the complaint or, if we need more time before we can conclude our investigation, we shall write to you within that time to tell you of the likely timescale.

4. **REVIEW**

- 4.1 If, after we have concluded our investigation and written to you, you are still not satisfied, you can write to ask us to review our response. Our Managing Partner will then review our response to your complaint, or arrange for a partner in the firm who has not been involved in your complaint to review our response.
- 4.2 We may (but are not required to) invite you to agree to independent mediation, in which case we will let you know what this process involves and how long it may be expected to take.
- 4.3 Once these steps have been carried out, we will write to you confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons. We would generally aim to do this and write to you within 15 working days of receiving your request to us to review our response to your complaint. If the review is going to take longer, for example because further investigation is required or because we are inviting you to a mediation, we will write to you within that time to tell you of the likely timescale.

5. **LEGAL OMBUDSMAN SCHEME**

- 5.1 If you are still not satisfied, you may be entitled to refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman, if you fall into one of the following categories: an individual, a very small business (a micro enterprise), charity, club or trust, or if although not a client you are a beneficiary of an estate the firm is administering; if in doubt whether you fall into one of those categories, you should contact the Legal Ombudsman.

5.2 The contact details for the Legal Ombudsman are as follows:

Address: PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, W1 9WJ
Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
Phone: 0300 500 0333
Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk

5.3 The Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made to them within one year of the date of the act or omission about which you are concerned or within one year of you realising there was a concern. You must also refer your concerns to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of our final response to you.

6. COSTS ISSUES

As indicated above, you have a right to complain about our bill or the level of our costs by raising the issue with us, and (if entitled to do so) by making a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman. Alternatively, you may have a right to apply to the Court for an assessment of our bill under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974. If the services we have provided relate to proceedings in a Court or tribunal, you may alternatively be entitled to have the amount of our fees checked or assessed under Rules of Court or regulations applying to the particular proceedings, or under the inherent jurisdiction of the Court or tribunal before which the proceedings have taken, or are taking, place. If you exercise a right to have our costs assessed by the Court, you cannot refer the issue to the Legal Ombudsman. If all or part of our bill remains unpaid whilst you dispute it, the firm may be entitled to charge interest.

7. SOLICITORS REGULATION AUTHORITY

You may complain to the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) if your complaint relates to our professional conduct. Further information is available on the SRA's website, <https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/>, or by calling 0370 606 2555.

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K&L Gates LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales under number OC309508 and is authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority. A list of members' names and their professional qualifications may be inspected at our registered office at the above address.