

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 about our service or a bill that we have rendered, or interest rates, please contact us in writing with the details.

What is a complaint?

The Legal Ombudsman defines a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction with a service.

To come within the jurisdiction of the Legal Ombudsman, the complaint must relate to an act or omission about a service which an authorised person (or their employee) provided to:

- a) the complainant; or
- b) another authorised person who procured the service on behalf of the complainant; or
- c) a personal representative / trustee where the complainant is a beneficiary of the trust / estate; or
- d) offered, or refused to provide, to the complainant.

We would like to attempt to resolve the complaint initially with the case handler so in the first instance complaints should be sent to the case handler's supervisor. The name of their supervisor will be contained in the client care letter. If their supervisor cannot be contacted, then the Supervising Partner should be contact by email.

In the event this is not possible then the person to contact is Bhupendra Khetia, our Complaints Partner, who can be reached at:

Premier Solicitors (Bedford) Limited, Premier House, Lurke Street, Bedford MK40 3HU or by E-mail: info@premiersolicitors.co.uk

What will happen next?

1. We will 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. We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve passing your complaint to the Supervising partner or Manager of your case handler who will review your file and speak to the member of staff who acted for you. The investigation stage can take up to twenty working days.
3. The Supervising Partner or Manager may at their sole discretion invite you to a meeting to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. This will be done within two working days of completing our investigation.

4. If you do not want a meeting or a meeting does not take place, the Supervising partner or manager will send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including his suggestions for resolving the matter, within five working days.
5. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact us in writing with detailed reasons why you are not satisfied and we will arrange for Bhupendra Khetia or someone unconnected with the matter at the practice to review the decision.
6. We will write to you within ten working days of receiving your request for a review, confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.
7. If we have to change any of the timescales above, we will let you know and explain why.
8. If you are still not satisfied, you can then contact the Legal Ombudsman at:

PO Box 6806

Wolverhampton

WV1 9WJ

Tel: 0300 555 0333

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

There are time limits within which complaints must be made to the Legal Ombudsman, as indicated below.

Generally speaking, your complaint should be made to the Ombudsman no later than six months from when the problem occurred or from within six years of the act or omission about which you are complaining occurring (or if outside this period within 3 years of when you should reasonably have become aware of the problem).

Additionally, you should make your complaint to the Ombudsman within six months of receiving a final response from us following the complaint that you have made to us.

Normally, your complaint needs to fall inside both rules if the Ombudsman is going to investigate it. You also need to be aware that in addition to individuals and companies, the Ombudsman also deals with complaints from the following:

- a) an enterprise which, at the time that the complaint is made, is a micro-enterprise within the meaning of arts.1, 2(1) and (3) of the Annex to Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC, as that Recommendation had effect at the date it was adopted;
- b) a charity with an annual income net of tax of less than £1 million at the time at which the complainant refers the complaint to the respondent;
- c) a club, association or organisation, the affairs of which are managed by its members or a committee or committees of its members, with an annual income net of tax of less than £1 million at the time at which the complainant refers the complaint to the respondent;
- d) a trustee of a trust with an asset value of less than £1 million at the time at which the complainant refers the complaint to the respondent;
- e) a personal representative of an estate of a person; or
- f) beneficiary of an estate of a person.

You may also have the right to object to the bill by making a complaint to the Legal Complaints service, and/or by applying to the court for an assessment under Part 111 of the Solicitors Act 1974.