

## **POTTER REES DOLAN** **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

We are committed to providing you with a high quality legal service but if something goes wrong we want you to tell us about it so we can try and put things right. It will also help us improve our standards and services to clients in the future.

### **OUR COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

If you have a complaint, tell us about it in whichever way you feel suits you. This can be by telephone, email or letter. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction which alleges that you have suffered (or may suffer) financial losses, distress, inconvenience or other detriment.

#### **Stage 1**

If you are unhappy with the service we have provided, you should usually tell the individual who has had day to day conduct of your case. **Within 14 days** he/she will try to resolve your complaint as smoothly and quickly as possible and will consider a face to face meeting. A note of the matter will be made on your case file.

#### **Stage 2**

If you remain dissatisfied, the individual who has day to day management of your case will refer your complaint to the Complaints Manager – Vicky Griffin. If Vicky Griffin is unavailable, your complaint will be passed to Hugh Potter. (However, if Hugh Potter is the individual you are complaining about then your complaint will be referred to Rachel Rees.) This referral will take place as soon as possible after you have made it clear that you remain dissatisfied and/or that your complaint remains unresolved, this usually means **the same or next working day**.

#### **Stage 3**

We will then start to investigate your complaint. This will normally involve the Complaints Manager (or Hugh Potter / Rachel Rees) carrying out the following steps:

- **Within 3 days** he/she will contact you to inform you that they have taken over the conduct of dealing with your complaint;
- He/she will examine any correspondence received from you and the information in your file;
- He/she will speak with the individual who has had day to day conduct of your case;
- He/she will consider a face to face meeting or telephone conversation with you

**Within 14 days** the Complaints Manager (or Hugh Potter / Rachel Rees) will send you either:

- A final, written response which adequately addresses your complaint; or
- A holding response, which explains why we are not yet in a position to resolve your complaint, the progress made and will indicate a time scale when further contact will be made with you.

#### **Stage 4**

We will endeavour to resolve your complaint **fully within 8 weeks** of receiving your original complaint and the firm will send you either:

- A final written response which adequately addresses the complaint; or, in the unlikely event that this is not possible;
- A response which:
  - Explains why we are still not in a position to make a final response, giving the reason for the further delay and indicating when we expect to be able to provide a final response; and
  - Informs you that you may refer the handling of the complaint to the Legal Ombudsman if you are dissatisfied with the delay

#### **Stage 5**

If, you remain dissatisfied with our final response or if your complaint is not resolved within **8 weeks** you may refer your complaint to: -

The Legal Ombudsman  
P O Box 6806  
Wolverhampton  
WV1 9WJ

Tel: 0300 555 0333

[www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk)

Ordinarily, you must refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within **6 months** following receipt of our final response.

If you have a complaint about the firm's bill, you should let us know by following the procedure above in the first instance, but you may also have the right to object by making a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman (as detailed above) and/or by applying to the court for an assessment of the bill under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974.

The firm is entitled to charge interest on all or part of a bill that remains unpaid.

If you have any questions or queries regarding this complaints procedure, please contact Vicky Griffin, Hugh Potter or Rachel Rees on 0161 237 5888.

At all stages of this procedure, where a conflict has arisen, you are advised to take independent advice.

**At no stage throughout this procedure will you be charged for the firm's handling of your complaint.**