

DICKINSON PARKER HILL – Complaints Handling Procedure

We at Dickinson Parker Hill are committed to providing a high quality legal service, and strive very hard to maintain a good relationship between ourselves and our clients.

We acknowledge that we may not always get it right so if something is wrong, we ask that clients tell us.

Fundamentally, it is vital that we handle complaints promptly, fairly, openly and effectively.

This policy describes how we handle complaints and ensure we comply with our regulatory obligation.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an oral or written expression of dissatisfaction which alleges that the complainant has suffered (or may suffer) financial loss, distress, inconvenience or other detriment.

How do I make a complaint?

You can contact us in writing (by letter, fax or email), or by speaking with our complaints partner, whose contact details are:

Miss Alexandra Kenyon

Senior Partner

Dickinson Parker Hill

01695 574201

ajkenyon@dphlaw.co.uk

To help us understand your complaint, and in order that we do not miss anything, please tell us:

Your full name and contact details

What you think we have got wrong, and

What you hope to achieve as a result of your complaint

Your file reference number (if you have it).

If you require any help in making your complaint we will try to help you.

How will you deal with my complaint?

Any complaint will be dealt with quickly and all reasonable efforts will be made to respond to your concerns.

What we will do

We will record your complaint centrally.

We will write to you within 10 working days acknowledging your complaint, enclosing a copy of this policy.

We will investigate your complaint. This will usually involve:

- a. reviewing your complaint
- b. reviewing your file(s) and other relevant documents
- c. speaking with the person who dealt with your matter

We may also need to ask you for further information or documents. If so, we will ask you to provide the information within a specific period of time.

We may also, if appropriate, invite you to a meeting to discuss your complaint. You do not have to attend if you do not wish to or if you are unable. We will be happy to discuss the matter with you on the telephone.

We will update you of the progress of your complaint and we aim to reply substantively within 10 working days from the date of our letter of acknowledgement, or write to explain why we cannot address your concerns within that timescale, and explain when we anticipate being able to do so.

We have, however, 8 weeks to resolve a complaint, after which you may refer the complaint to the LeO for resolution.

Communication

Good communication is key. We will :

1. use plain English
2. present information clearly
3. be alert to communication challenges, eg hearing difficulties or language barriers etc
4. keep you updated on progress

Confidentiality

As with all client matters we treat complaints and any information received during the course of dealing with the complaint, with utmost confidentiality.

Vulnerable clients

Our complaints handling procedure is sensitive to individual differences and the needs of our clients

What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our complaints handling procedure, please first let us know and we will then review the matter.

If you are still unhappy you can ask the Legal Ombudsman to look into your complaint. You can contact the Legal Ombudsman:

1. By post : PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ
2. by telephone: 0300 555 0333
3. by email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

The time limits for the Legal Ombudsman accepting a complaint is six years from the date of act/omission, or three years from when the complainant should have known about the complaint.

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

The time limit for you to complain to the Legal Ombudsman is usually six months from the end of our complaints process (ie. after our final response letter to you).

What will it cost?

We will not charge you for handling your complaint.

Please note that if we have issued a bill for work done on the matter, and all or some of the bill is not paid, we may be entitled to charge interest on the amount outstanding.

The Legal Ombudsman service is free of charge.