

FULCHERS

CLIENT COMPLAINTS POLICY

A complaint can be any expression of dissatisfaction. Formal complaints are letters or emails that clearly state that they are a complaint, however, many complaints are initially made informally by a person telephoning to say that a minor matter has not been dealt with within a stated timescale.

Although a person may not be making a formal complaint, they are expressing dissatisfaction about the element of service that they have received. Staff should try to pick up on these cues and deal with these issues promptly if possible. An explanation should be given to the Client how the problem might be resolved informally as well as highlighting the formal complaints process where necessary.

Our Complaints Policy

Fulchers is 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 concern or a complaint, please contact the fee earner responsible for your matter as soon as you are aware of the problem so this can be addressed. If you remain unsatisfied, then please feel free contact a Partner in the Firm. You should contact Kevin Izod (unless he was the Partner dealing with the matter, in which case, please contact his Partner, Noelle Dimmick).

What Will Happen Next?

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within five days of our receiving the complaint, enclosing a copy of this procedure.
2. We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve passing your complaint to a Partner (Kevin Izod, unless he is the fee earner who dealt with the matter, in which case, Noelle Dimmick) who will review your matter and speak to the fee earner who acted for you.
3. A Partner will introduce himself to you and will then invite you to a meeting to discuss and, it is hoped, resolve your complaint. He will do this within 14 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
4. Within three days of the meeting, the Partner will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions he has agreed with you.

5. If you do not want a meeting or it is not possible, the Partner will send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including his suggestions for resolving the matter, within 21 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
6. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact the Partner again to explain why you remain unhappy with our response and we will review your comments. Depending on the matter we may at this stage review the decision.
7. We will write to you within 14 days of receiving your request for a review, confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.
8. If you are still not satisfied, or the complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction within eight weeks of the date of your complaint, then you can:-
 - (a) refer the complaint to Citizens Advice Consumer Service for Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), which would be competent to deal with your complaint and also this Firm agrees to appoint and be bound by its decision; and
 - (b) the Legal Ombudsman at P.O. Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ or call 0300 555 0333. Any complaint to the Legal Ombudsman must usually be made within six months of your receiving a final written response from us regarding your complaint. The Legal Ombudsman has provided further guidance on its service at www.legalombudsman.org.uk.

Effective 1st April 2023, the Legal Ombudsman Scheme rules state that they can only look at complaints if;

- It happened within one year of the problem happening; or it happened within one year from when you found out about it;
- And
- You refer the complaint to the Legal Ombudsman Service within six months of our final response to you.

What to do if you are unhappy with our behaviour

The Solicitors Regulation Authority can help if you are concerned about our behaviour. This could be for things like dishonesty, losing your money or treating you unfairly because of your age, a disability or other characteristic.

Visit their website to see how you can raise your concerns with the [Solicitors Regulation Authority](http://www.sra.org.uk).

With the exception of the legal ombudsman and SRA requirements, If we have to change any of our timescales above, we will let you know and explain why.