

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

This Complaints Handling Procedure, the words “we” “our” and “us” mean Human Law, a firm with a Recognised Sole Practitioner, namely Mr Justin Patten.

Human Law is committed to providing an excellent service to all our clients at all times. Should you have a complaint, however, about any of the services provided by us to you, then please let us know as soon as possible, by telephone or in writing. We will aim to deal with your complaint promptly, fairly, courteously and proportionately, in a manner that addresses the issues raised.

The time limits for bringing a complaint are within 6 months of the end of the matter on which you instructed us or within three months of you becoming aware of the circumstances giving rise to your complaint, whichever is the later.

**We will not charge you for handling your complaint.**

### **Complaints made by telephone.**

If you wish to make a complaint by telephone, we will make a note of the details of your complaint and what you would like done about it. We will endeavour to resolve matters with you on the telephone. If after discussion you are satisfied with the outcome, we will make a note of the outcome and the fact that you are satisfied. You may also wish to record the outcome of the telephone discussion in writing.

### **Complaints made in writing.**

If your complaint is not resolved on the telephone, you will be invited to write to us about it within the following 14 days so that it can be investigated formally.

There are a number of ways in which your complaint may be dealt with:

- (a) Discussion over the telephone.
- (b) Dealt with by correspondence.
- (c) Discussion at a meeting between us.
- (d) The appointment of an independent person to investigate the complaint.

If we decide to appoint an independent person to investigate the complaint (for example, a member of the Solicitors Sole Practitioners Group or the local Law Society or another solicitor), we both would need to agree who to appoint. An independent person who has considerable experience in the area that is the subject matter of the dispute should be chosen.

**Upon receipt of a written complaint we will:**

- (a) Reply in writing, normally within 72 hours, to acknowledge the complaint and inform you how we shall be dealing with it.
- (b) Reply within 14 days responding in full to your complaint. We will offer you the opportunity to meet with you if that is appropriate. If we find later that we are not going to be able to reply within 14 days we will set a new date for my reply and inform you.

Our reply will set out:

- The nature and scope of our investigation.
- Our conclusion on each complaint and the basis for our conclusion; and
- If we find that you are justified in your complaint, our proposals for resolving the complaint.

All conversations and documents relating to the complaint will be treated as confidential and will be disclosed only to the extent that is necessary.

**Complaints to the Legal Ombudsman**

If you are not happy with our final written response and you fall within their jurisdiction, you may make a formal complaint to the Legal Ombudsman, the independent complaints handling body for complaints about lawyers, to ask it to consider the complaint further.

Unless it agrees that there are good reasons not to do so, the Legal Ombudsman will expect you to allow us to consider and to respond to your complaint in accordance with the procedure set out above in the first instance.

If at any point you become unhappy with the service we provide to you, then please inform us immediately so that we can do our best to resolve the problem for you.

If we are unable to resolve your complaint then you can have the complaint independently looked at by the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman investigates complaints about service issues with lawyers.

You can refer your complaint up to 6 months after you have received our final written response to your complaint. You can also use the Ombudsman service if we have not resolved your complaint within 8 weeks of our receiving it.

From the 1 April 2023 the Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made to them within a year of the date of the act or omission about which you are concerned or within a year of you realising there was a concern. The requirement to refer your concerns to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of our final response to you remains the same.

You can write to the Legal Ombudsman at:

Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH

Telephone number: 0300 555 0333

Email: [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)

More information about the Legal Ombudsman is available on their website:

<http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk>

### **Complaints to the Solicitors Regulation Authority**

The Ombudsman will also only deal with service-related complaints. This means that only complaints from the solicitor's clients are within their jurisdiction.

If you are not our client and are unhappy with the outcome of our investigation, then please contact the Solicitors Regulation Authority. You will find more information about how to make a complaint on the Solicitors Regulation Authority website at <http://www.sra.org.uk>

We will maintain confidentiality at all times and discuss your complaint only to the extent that is necessary for its resolution and to comply with requests for information from the Solicitors Regulation Authority discharging its monitoring functions. If we have to change any of the timescales above, we will let you know and explain why.

### **Objecting to your bill(s)**

You may have the right to object to our bill by applying to the court for an assessment of the bill under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974.

### **Non-payment of our bill(s)**

You should be aware that the firm may be entitled to charge interest if all or part of our bill(s) remain unpaid.

June 2024