

## Bartletts Solicitors Complaints Procedure

### Our complaints policy

We are committed to providing a high-quality legal service to all of our Clients. Consequently, it is essential, when something goes wrong or any client believes they have reason to complain, that we have an effective procedure in place to ensure an early resolution of any problem. Only by doing so can we hope to maintain the quality standards we have set, and improve them by learning from what may have gone wrong and what our clients tell us.

### Initial concerns

In most cases, an informal chat with the person responsible for your matter will resolve your concerns.

If it does not, you can formalise your concerns to someone other than the person responsible for your matter. Our Complaints Manager, Trevor Morris can review why you are unhappy and recommend the best solution for you. You can contact Trevor Morris at [complaints@bartlettslaw.co.uk](mailto:complaints@bartlettslaw.co.uk).

### What we need to know

To deal with your complaint correctly, it would be helpful when contacting us if you could provide the following information: -

- Your name, contact details and preferred contact method
- File reference number
- Details of your concerns
- How you would like us to put things right.

### What will happen next?

1. If you telephone the person dealing with your matter, then they will endeavour to resolve the issue in that call.
2. If you email or write to us, or if your complaint cannot be resolved in a phone call, we will acknowledge receipt of your complaint in writing within five working days of receiving it.
3. We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve our Complaints Manager, or an appointed director, reviewing your file and speaking to the member of staff who is acting for you.
4. Within 14 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter we will contact you to try and resolve your complaint. We may need to discuss further with you if we require more information.
5. We will aim to send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including our suggestions for resolving the matter, within 28 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
6. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact us again and we will consider if another director or someone unconnected with the matter within the firm should review their decision or an appropriate alternative such as review by another local solicitor or mediation, (if they are willing to do this) to 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 reasoning.
8. If we have to change any of these timescales, we will let you know, explain why and seek your agreement before proceeding.

### What to do if we cannot resolve your complaint

1. If you have exhausted our internal escalation process yet remain dissatisfied, or a period of eight weeks has expired since we acknowledged your complaint without our final response being received, you are entitled to refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman will look at the complaint independently and any investigation by them will not affect how we handle your case. Before accepting a complaint for investigation, the Legal Ombudsman will check that you have tried to resolve the complaint with us in the first instance. We will always be happy to discuss your issues further, prior to you going down this route, if you wish to do so.
2. For complaints about our service, including billing issues, you may contact the Legal Ombudsman via one of the methods below:
  - Phone: 0300 5550333
  - Email: [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)
  - Post: Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV19 9WJ
3. Any complaint to the Legal Ombudsman must usually be made within six months of the date of our final written response to your complaint. Other time limits to be aware of are:
  - The Ombudsman will consider your complaint if you refer it on to them within either of the following: **six years** of the problem happening **or three years** from when you found out about it.
  - The Ombudsman will not accept complaints where the act/ omission or the date of awareness was before 5 October 2010.
4. Note that the Legal Ombudsman service cannot be used by businesses or most other organisations unless they are below certain size limits. Further details are available from the Legal Ombudsman.

### What to do if you are unhappy with our behaviour

1. The Solicitors Regulation Authority ('SRA') can help if you are concerned about our behaviour. Visit their website to see how you can raise your concerns with the SRA at: <https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/>

### What to do if your complaint remains unresolved

1. If a complaint cannot be resolved, you may also be able to ask for it to be referred to a process of alternative dispute resolution using a certified provider. We are not required to agree to such a request. In any case this is not available to businesses, only consumers. We will give you more information about that right if it becomes relevant.

### Revision History

<b>Date created:</b>	18 June 2010
<b>Date reviewed:</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> June 2022

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