

Complaints Procedure

Hunt & Coombs Solicitors are committed to providing a high quality legal service to all our clients. We recognise however that we may not always get it right, so if something has gone wrong, including in relation to the bill, we need you to tell us.

If you are unhappy with any aspect of the service you have received, we would encourage you to discuss it with the lawyer who is acting for you. If your concern relates solely to your bill, you may wish to discuss this with our Finance team, who can be contacted on 01733 882800. If however your concerns cannot be resolved, or if you prefer, please follow the procedure below. We will always take your complaint seriously, deal with your concerns fairly and try to resolve the problem quickly.

How do I make a complaint?

You can contact us in writing (by letter or email) or by speaking with our Partnership Administrator, Andrea Whiston, who will deal with issues in the first instance. Her contact details are:

t: 01733 882800

e: andrea.whiston@hcsolicitors.co.uk

p: 35, Thorpe Road, Peterborough, PE3 6AG

To help us to understand your complaint, please tell us:

- Your full name and contact details
- What you think we have got wrong
- 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 or have any special needs which we should take into account, please let us know.

How will you deal with my complaint?

1. We will record your complaint centrally.
2. We will write to you within 5 working days acknowledging your complaint, confirming our understanding of your concerns and enclosing a copy of this procedure.
3. We will ask you to let us know, as soon as you can, if our understanding of your concerns is correct or whether there are any further points you want us to consider.
4. On receipt of your confirmation we will start to investigate your complaint. This will usually involve:
 - Reviewing your complaint
 - Reviewing your file(s) and other relevant documents
 - Speaking with the person who dealt with your matter
5. 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.

6. We will update you on the progress of your complaint at appropriate times.
7. 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 to. We will be happy to discuss the matter with you on the telephone.
8. We will write to you at the end of our investigation to tell you what we have done and what we propose to do to resolve your complaint. Where possible, we will aim to do this within 15 working days of receiving confirmation from you that our understanding of your complaint is correct.

What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?

8. If you are unhappy with the outcome of our complaints process, you can ask the Legal Ombudsman to look into your complaint. You can contact the Legal Ombudsman:
 - By post at PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ
 - By telephone: 0300 555 0333
 - By email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
9. You must usually refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within 6 months of our final written response to your complaint and within 6 years of the act or omission about which you are complaining occurring (or within 3 years of you becoming aware of it). Further details are available on the website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk. Do not send original documents to the Legal Ombudsman. They will scan any documents you send to make computer copies and then destroy the originals.
10. Alternative complaints bodies exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and our firm wish to use such a scheme. We have, however, chosen not to adopt an alternative process. If, therefore, you wish to complain further, you should contact the Legal Ombudsman.
11. In relation to your bill, you may also apply to the Court for assessment of the bill under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974. If you have already applied to the Court for assessment of your bill, please be aware that the Legal Ombudsman cannot then consider it.

What will it cost?

We will not charge you for handling your complaint. The Legal Ombudsman service is free of charge. Please note that if we have issued a bill for work done, and all or some of the bill is not paid, we may be entitled to charge interest on the amount outstanding. The Court may make a charge for assessment of your bill.