

## CLIENT COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

### ***Introduction***

This procedure applies to complaints received from our clients (people for whom we act and, where the context permits, prospective and former clients). It is designed to set out the process that will be followed when a client makes contact with us expressing concern that we may not have delivered our services according to their expectations.

The complaint will be dealt with fairly and free of charge.

In order to assist clients in resolving their complaints, the Partners of Chafes Hague Lambert Solicitors have appointed Mrs Ellen Jackson ('Mrs Jackson') our Operations Manager, to handle all complaints. Mrs Jackson is not a solicitor but is trained in Client Care and is supervised by Mr Craig O'Hara ('Mr O'Hara') a Partner.

### ***Procedure***

On receipt of a complaint from a client, whether in writing or during a meeting or telephone conversation, the person receiving the complaint will notify Mrs Jackson.

Upon receipt of the notification, or as soon as possible thereafter, Mrs Jackson will send a copy of this procedure to the complainant in order that they may understand how the complaint will be dealt with and to introduce her role in the process. She will also notify the relevant Head of Department that she is reviewing the complaint.

In order to ensure that we have full details of the complaint, Mrs Jackson may write to the complainant requesting that the complainant write to us with full details of their complaint.

Upon receipt of full details of the complaint, Mrs Jackson will consider the complaint, review any relevant file and discuss the complaint with the relevant fee earner. It may be that she will also contact the complainant in order to obtain further information about the complaint.

Mrs Jackson will then present her findings to the relevant Head of Department or Mr O'Hara with suggestions for resolution and obtain their approval.

Mrs Jackson will write to the complainant within 8 weeks of receipt of the full details of the complaint, to either confirm the outcome of her investigation or to inform the complainant of how the investigation is progressing and when Mrs Jackson expects to complete the investigation. We will consider any response to our correspondence and will seek to find an agreed resolution.

Finally, if we are unable to successfully resolve the complaint then the complainant may contact the Legal Ombudsman at the address below:

PO Box 6167

Slough

SL1 0EH or

by phone: 0300 555 0333

or by email: [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)

Please note that the following time limits apply in relation to referring complaints to the Legal Ombudsman:

1. Normally, a complainant will need to bring their complaint within 6 months of receiving a final written response from us, and
2. Ordinarily, the complaint must be referred no later than one year from the act/omission complained of or one year from when the complainant should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint.

If you are concerned about matters of conduct or ethics, you should report these concerns to the Solicitors Regulation Authority ('the SRA'). Details of how to do this can be found at:

<http://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/>.

The SRA can be contacted via their website

(<http://www.sra.org.uk/contactus/>) or by the following means: -

Phone: 0370 606 2555

Fax: 0121 616 1999

Post: Solicitors Regulation Authority

The Cube

199 Wharf Street

Birmingham B1 1RN

Issue Date: 7 February 2024