

JOSEPH A JONES & CO LLP COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Our complaints policy

We are 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 complaint, please contact Mr Gary Rycroft, our Senior Partner. If we have to change any of the responsibilities or the timescales set out below we will let you know and explain why.

What will happen next?

1. Within three days we will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint and asking you to confirm or explain any details. If it seems appropriate we will suggest a meeting at this stage. We will also let you know the name of the person who will be dealing with your complaint.
2. We will then record your complaint in our central register and investigate your complaint by examining the relevant file.
3. If appropriate we will then invite you to meet Mr Rycroft to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. We would hope to be in a position to meet with you in this way no longer than 14 days after first receiving your complaint. If you would prefer not to meet, or if we cannot arrange this within an agreeable timescale, we will write fully to you setting out our views on the situation and any redress that we would feel to be appropriate.
4. Within three days of any meeting we will write to you to confirm what took place and any suggestions that we have agreed with you.
5. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, please let us know. We will then arrange to review our decision. We would generally aim to do this within 10 days. This will happen in one of the following ways.
 - We will arrange for someone in the firm who has not been involved in your complaint to review it.
 - We will ask our local law society or another local firm of solicitors to review your complaint. We will let you know how long this process will take.
 - We will invite you to agree to independent mediation. We will let you know how long this process will take.

6. We will let you know the result of the review within five days of the end of the review. At this time we will write to you confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.
7. We hope to be able to resolve all complaints internally as swiftly as possible. Where matters cannot be resolved internally you may be entitled to complain to the Legal Ombudsman, an independent complaints body established under the Legal Services Act 2007, that deals with legal services complaints. The Legal Ombudsman deal with complaints regarding the service that we have provided to, the work carried out and/or about our bill.

Alternative complaints bodies such as ProMediate (www.promediate.co.uk) exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and our firm wish to use such a scheme. We believe that the Legal Ombudsman Scheme is the most suitable for legal complaints and therefore we do not agree to use any alternative complaints bodies including ProMediate.

Complaining to the Legal Ombudsman – if your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction within 8 weeks of making the complaint, you may be able to complain to the Legal Ombudsman. However, the Ombudsman's powers are limited in certain respects as they can only accept complaints from individuals and certain small businesses and organisations. Full details of the kinds of complaints which the Ombudsman will accept can be found on their website at www.legalombudsman.org.uk.

Their contact details are as follows:-

Postal Address:- PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton WV1 9WJ

Email:- enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Telephone:- 0300 555 0333

If you are entitled to make a complaint to the Ombudsman, please note that you must normally do so within six months of receiving a final written response from us about your complaint. Complaints must be made within one year from the date of the act/omission about which you wish to complain or one year from when you should have known about the complaint. However the Legal Ombudsman does have discretion to accept complaints in circumstances where they determine it to be fair and reasonable to do so. You should also note that the Ombudsman may not consider a complaint about a bill if you have applied to the Court for it to be assessed.

8. In the event that your complaint relates to the behaviour or conduct of one of our fee earners and in particular if you have concerns that such behaviour or conduct has breached the SRA Standards and Regulations (including breaching the SRA Accounts Rules) you may be able to make a complaint to the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA). The SRA will not deal with complaints falling within the remit of the Legal Ombudsman and vice versa. The SRA can be

contacted by post at Solicitors Regulation Authority The Cube 199 Wharfside Street Birmingham B1 1RN, by telephone on 0370 606 2555 or by email to contactcentre@sra.org.uk. You can also obtain further information on their website <https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/>

Dated: January 2024

Present: GFR & JS