

The Paris Smith LLP Complaints Process

We at Paris Smith LLP are committed to understanding and delivering the outcomes that our clients require. We aim to do this by providing a professional, efficient service that leaves you feeling positive about your experience of using the firm. If for any reason you feel that we have failed to achieve this we invite you please to tell us.

Any expression of dissatisfaction about our service will be taken very seriously and we will carefully consider the particulars and will respond promptly. It is our aim to learn from any such situations and continually improve the way we provide our service to ensure we can meet all our clients expectations.

What to do if dissatisfied?

At the outset of the matter you will be advised in a Terms of Business letter of the following information:

- the name of the person to whom you should refer in the event of a problem;
- your right to complain and how a complaint can be made;
- your right to complain to the Legal Ombudsman and the time frame for doing so and contact details.

If at any time you are not happy with an aspect of the service please, in the first instance, raise your query by email or letter with the Lawyer who is handling your case. Your Lawyer will send you an acknowledgement with full details of the complaints process and relevant contact details. After that you should receive an answer to your problem within 7 days.

Most problems can be resolved at this early stage but if you are not satisfied by the response to your problem then the next stage is to send an email or letter to the Head of Department.

Within 3 days the Head of Department will send a letter to you confirming that he/she is dealing with the complaint, providing a timetable in which the complaint will be dealt with. The complaint will be investigated and responded to within 14 days. This will allow time for the Head of Department to consider the file, interview the Lawyer(s) concerned and then write to you with a response.

If the matter is complex it may take longer to deal with your complaint. If this is the case the Head of Department will contact you within 14 days to give you an approximate timescale of when you can expect a response. If we believe it will be helpful, we may suggest a meeting with you.

If, following the investigation by the Head of Department, you remain dissatisfied with the response then you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the Senior Partner who will follow the same method and timescales to consider your complaint as mentioned above.

If there are any circumstances which make it difficult for you to make a complaint in writing, please call the firm on 02382 146849 for assistance.

If the bill is in dispute you can, after following the above internal complaints procedure, apply for an assessment of the bill under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974.

Referral to The Legal Ombudsman (LO)

If you are not satisfied with the final response of the Senior Partner you may refer your complaint to the LO. The LO expects complaints to be made to them within six years from the date of the act/omission about which you are concerned, or three years from when you should have known about the complaint. The LO will usually only consider a complaint if the firm's own complaints procedure (as outlined above) has been exhausted within the last six months.

The LO contact details are:

PO Box 6806
Wolverhampton
WV1 9WJ

Telephone: 0300 555 0333

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk

Referral to the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRO)

If you are concerned about our behaviour the SRO can help. This could be for things like dishonesty, taking or losing your money or treating you unfairly because of age, a disability or other characteristic. Visit their website to see how you can raise your concerns with them (<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/>).

The SRO contact details are:

The Cube
199 Wharfside Street
Birmingham]B1 1RN

Telephone: 0370 606 2577 (Professional ethics helpline)

Website: www.sra.org.uk



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