

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Our complaints handling policy

As a practice, we are committed to providing a high quality legal service to all of our clients. When something goes wrong, we want you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our standards.

Our complaints handling procedure

If you have a complaint, please contact us as soon as you are aware of the problem so that it can be addressed. Initially, you should contact the caseworker who has been dealing with your case. This person's details will have been supplied to you at the outset of the case. He or she will then see whether they can deal with the complaint to your satisfaction without the need for the matter to go any further.

Who will deal with your complaint?

Where the complaint cannot be resolved to your satisfaction by the caseworker dealing with your case, you may ask for the matter to be referred as a complaint to the head of the relevant department within the firm.

There are currently three departments within the firm, the mental health law department, the Court of Protection department, and the Care Planning and Advice department. Catrin Blake is the allocated complaints handler for complaints for all departments

If the complaint is about Catrin Blake then the matter will be referred to Chris Heery.

Acknowledging the complaint

Once the matter has been referred to Catrin, she will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint within seven days of the complaint having been received. In the letter, she will:

- provide a short summary of the complaint as she understands it;
- where appropriate, request further information;
- identify any remedy that you have requested;
- provide a date by which a full response to the complaint will be provided (usually 21 days from the receipt of the complaint);

- where appropriate, highlight any action that has already been taken in response to your complaint.

Investigating the complaint

Catrin will then investigate the complaint, gathering information from whichever source seems appropriate. This may involve speaking to you, speaking to the member of staff responsible for dealing with your case, and/or reviewing the case file.

Providing you with a response

Catrin will then provide a full response to your complaint within 21 days of the original complaint. In this full response, she will:

- restate the details of the complaint;
- outline the investigations undertaken;
- state the finding resulting from the investigation;
- where appropriate make any offers of remedy and explain how you can accept those remedies;
- explain any improvements the firm has made as a result of the complaint;
- outline any appeal avenues available to you if you remain dis-satisfied.

Where, due to the complexity of the complaint or other reasons, it is not possible to provide a full response within 21 days, Catrin will try to agree a different timescale with you.

Complaint to the Legal Ombudsman

If you remain dissatisfied notwithstanding our investigation of the complaint we will remind you of your right to complain to the Legal Ombudsman at the following address:

Legal Ombudsman
PO Box 6167
Slough
SL1 0EH

Telephone: 0300 555 0333

E mail: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

www.legalombudsman.org.uk

Any complaint to the Legal Ombudsman must usually be made within six months of receipt by you of our final written response to the complaint.

In addition, you should be aware that the Legal Ombudsman will not accept your complaint if:

- more than one year has elapsed from the date of the alleged act/omission giving rise to the complaint; or
- more than one year has elapsed from when you should have known about the complaint; or
- the date of the alleged act/omission giving rise to the complaint was before 6 October 2010.

Queries

If you have any question in relation to this complaints procedure, please raise it with the member of staff dealing with your case. If he or she cannot help, the question will be referred to the relevant head of department.

Butler and Co Solicitors