

# Chivers Walsh Family Law

## Solicitors

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### COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

#### OUR POLICY IS TO PROVIDE A HIGH-QUALITY LEGAL SERVICE TO ALL OUR CLIENTS

We take pride in our service and invite our clients to provide us with feedback about the way in which we have dealt with their instructions, to enable us to monitor our work so that we maintain high standards and, where possible, improve them.

If something goes wrong, we need you to let us know. We wish to ensure we deal with your matter properly and put right any problems at the earliest opportunity. We also wish to learn from problems to the advantage of all our clients.

#### OUR COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If you have a complaint or concern about our service to you, please tell us about it. We aim to resolve it quickly and simply to your satisfaction.

In our client care information provided to you when you first instructed us, we encouraged you to discuss any concerns about our service with the particular lawyer dealing with your case. In most situations this should be all that is needed to sort out the problem.

The fact that we are sending you this leaflet suggests we have not managed to deal with your concern informally.

#### WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint and asking you to confirm the details. We will also let you know the name of the person who will be dealing with your complaint. You can expect to receive our letter within two working days of us receiving your complaint.
2. We will create a record of your complaint in our central register of client complaints.
3. We will acknowledge your reply to our acknowledgement letter and explain what will happen next. You can expect to hear from us within two working days of your reply.
4. We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve the following steps:
  - Our complaints officer, Tony Chaplin, a director in the firm, will take charge of the investigation (unless the complaint is about him, when it will be handled by another of our directors)
  - He will ask the lawyer concerned to make a report to him in response to your complaint within a working week.
  - He will then consider their report and the information in your file. Where necessary, he will also discuss your

- complaint with the particular lawyer. This will be done within a working week of receiving their report and the file.

5. Within 3 days of completing the investigation Tony Chaplin will contact you about your complaint, either:

- to invite you to a meeting to discuss the matter. Within two days of the meeting we will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions agreed with you.

or

- where you do not wish to attend a meeting, where this is not possible or where the situation is capable of being resolved satisfactorily in correspondence, by sending you a detailed written response including our proposals to satisfy your complaint.

6. Following any meeting or written response if you are still not satisfied, you are invited to contact us again, with any further information about your complaint or in response to the solution we have proposed. We will then review our decision within a working week of hearing from you. Mr Chaplin will undertake the review and another director may be involved. Within that working week Mr Chaplin will let you know the result of the review, writing to you confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons. We will also confirm the contact details of the Legal Ombudsman (you can phone the Legal Ombudsman on 0300 555 0333 or write to PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton WV1 9WJ or e-mail enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk). If you are still not satisfied, you can contact the Legal Ombudsman about your complaint. The Legal Ombudsman's website is at [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk). Normally, you will need to bring a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within:

- 6 months of receiving a final written response from us about your complaint; or
- 6 years of the act or omission about which you are complaining occurring (or, if outside of this period, within 3 years of when you should reasonably have been aware of it).

If we have to change any of the indicated timescales above, we will let you know and explain why.