

COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

We pride ourselves on providing a high-quality legal service to all our clients. In the unlikely event that something does go wrong, we want to put it right.

Step 1

If for any reason you are not satisfied with the service received or the costs which you have been charged, please discuss this with your fee earner or Supervisor / Head of Department in the first instance who will do their best to resolve the issue. Full details of these individuals are provided in our retainer documentation sent to you at the outset of your matter.

Step 2

If the issue is not resolved or you wish to raise with a more senior person, please raise your concerns in writing providing full details including:

- Your full name and preferred contact details;
- The file reference number relating to the matter which has given rise to your complaint;
- Details of your concerns / grievances / complaints where you feel that Emsleys have failed to act properly; and
- The outcome you hope to achieve as a result of your complaint.

Complaints about Costs

If your complaint relates to or is an objection to our bill then you may first raise the issue with us using this Complaints Handling Policy, and if you are not satisfied with our response, you have the option to refer it to the Legal Ombudsman, as below. Alternatively, you may have a right to apply to the Court for an assessment of our bill under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974. Please note that the Legal Ombudsman may decide not to consider any complaint you have about a bill if you have already referred it to the Court for assessment.

All complaints should be sent to Donna Wray at No 6 Colton Mill, Bullerthorpe Lane, Leeds LS15 9JN or by email donna.wray@emsleys.co.uk.

1. She will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within three working days, enclosing a copy of this procedure and will tell you how long it will take us to investigate your complaint. This is usually between 3 to 4 weeks but it could be less or more (either due to the unforeseen circumstances of your complaint, illness or holidays). In any event it should never be more than 8 weeks after acknowledging receipt of your complaint and you will be informed of any changes to timescales.
2. We will review your file and if necessary, talk to the individual dealing with your case or their manager. Donna will then invite you to a meeting to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. This invitation will normally be sent within 14 days of the date of the acknowledgement letter.

3. Within three days of the meeting, Donna will write to you to confirm the discussion and any agreed solutions.
4. If you do not want a meeting or it is not possible to meet up conveniently, she will send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including suggestions for resolving the matter, within 21 days of the date of the acknowledgement letter.

Step 3

1. If you are still not satisfied, you should contact Andrew Greenwood, Director at No 6 Colton Mill, Bullerthorpe Lane, Leeds LS15 9JN or andrew.greenwood@emsleys.co.uk who will review the decision.
2. Andrew will write to you within 14 days of receiving your request for a review, confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.

The Legal Ombudsman

If you are dissatisfied with our final written response (or the way the complaint has been handled) then we will have been unable to settle your complaint using our internal complaints process. If you wish to pursue your complaint further, the following options are available to you:

- i. You can contact the Legal Ombudsman about your complaint, which is an independent and impartial complaints body established by the Legal Services Act to deal with complaints about legal services. Before it will consider a complaint, the Legal Ombudsman generally requires that a firm's internal complaints procedure has been exhausted with the client. If the Legal Ombudsman is satisfied that the firm's proposals for resolving the complaint are reasonable, it may decline to investigate further. The contact details are:

Address: Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ

Tel: 0300 555 0333

E-mail: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk

The Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made to them within a year of the date of the act or omission about which you complain or within a year from the date that you should have realised that there was cause for complaint. The requirement to refer your concerns to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of our final response to you remains the same.

For further information, you should contact the Legal Ombudsman or consult their website.

Alternative Dispute Resolution

- ii. There are alternative complaints bodies that are competent to deal with complaints about legal services that you can use instead of the Legal Ombudsman, such as Pro Mediate UK Limited (www.promediate.co.uk), but the consent of both parties is required to use their services. If you prefer to use Pro Mediate's alternative dispute resolution service, please let us know as we may agree to use that scheme. For further information, you should consult their website.

Emsleys Solicitors Limited is authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (the SRA). This means that we are governed by a Code of Conduct and other professional rules, which you can access on the SRA's website (www.sra.org.uk). Our SRA registration number is 607960. If you consider that we have behaved dishonestly, illegally or in breach of the SRA's principles, you may refer the matter directly to the SRA here: <https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/>. The postal and telephone contact details are set out in our Terms of Business but appear again below:

Address: Solicitors Regulation Authority, The Cube, 199 Wharfside Street, Birmingham B1 1RN
Telephone: 0370 606 2555

Email: contactcentre@sra.org.uk

You will not be charged for using our Complaints Procedure.