

## Complaints handling procedure

### 1. Our complaints procedure

Sphere Legal is committed to providing a high-quality service to its clients. This includes a commitment to putting things right when they go wrong. We are grateful to you for bringing any concerns to our attention. We will do our best to address any dissatisfaction that you have experienced in using the services of Sphere Legal. Our primary objective is to put things right.

If at any point you become unhappy or concerned about the service Sphere Legal has provided then you should inform us promptly, so that we can do our best to resolve the problem as quickly as possible.

In the first instance, you should contact one of the team who is working on your matter to discuss your concerns and we will do our best to resolve any issues at this stage. Alternatively you can contact us by email at [complaints@spherelegal.com](mailto:complaints@spherelegal.com). If you would like to make a formal complaint, then you can read our full complaints policy set out here. Making a complaint will not affect how we handle your matter.

This complaints handling procedure explains how we will deal with any complaint that is referred to us. Examples can include the way in which you have been dealt with, the quality of advice you have received or any invoice that you have received.

Our complaints partner is Anjanette Pavell. You can contact her by post at 174 Hammersmith Road, work.life, London W6 7JP, or by e-mail at [anjanette.pavell@spherelegal.com](mailto:anjanette.pavell@spherelegal.com). It is helpful if you put your concerns into writing, but if you would prefer not to, or if you would find it difficult to do so, she can be contacted by phone at 07801 120 845.

If you have special needs which we should take into account due to language or disability, please let us know.

To explain to you how long our process might take we have included below our target times for each stage of the process. Where, for any reason, it is not possible to observe any of these limits we will let you know and explain why.

We will review and close your complaint within eight weeks of receiving your formal complaint.

There is no charge for us to investigate a complaint.

### 2. How we handle your complaint

#### First stage resolution

If you have a complaint which you wish to raise formally, please contact the lawyer responsible for your matter. They will work hard to resolve the issue. We call this process "First stage resolution".

#### First stage resolution – what happens next?

- 1) On receipt of your complaint, the lawyer you contacted about your complaint will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint and send you a copy of this complaints procedure within two working days of receipt.
- 2) Following acknowledgement of your complaint and within two working days, the lawyer you contacted about your complaint will invite you to a meeting or to discuss the issues by telephone.

- 3) Following that meeting or telephone call and within three working days, the lawyer you contacted about your complaint will confirm the outcome of the meeting or the telephone conversation in writing.

#### Second stage resolution

If the lawyer you contacted does not deal with your complaint to your satisfaction during the First stage resolution, please contact Anjanette Pavell using the details set out above, or if your complaint relates to her, then any other partner of Sphere Legal. You can contact them in writing by email, post or phone (using the details set out on the "[Contact us](#)" page of our website at [www.spherelegal.com](http://www.spherelegal.com)). We call this process "Second stage resolution".

#### Second stage resolution – what happens next?

- 1) On receipt of your complaint, Anjanette Pavell or one of Sphere Legal's partners will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint within two working days of receipt.
- 2) Following acknowledgement of your complaint and within fifteen working days, Anjanette Pavell or the partner who wrote to you will investigate your concerns. This will involve reviewing your matter file and discussing your concerns with the team who have been working on your matter.
- 3) We will let you know within the fifteen working day period if we require any further information from you to assist us in our investigation.
- 4) Once we have all the relevant information, we will write to you within three working days of our investigation being complete, setting out our views on the situation and suggesting any redress that we feel to be appropriate.
- 5) Where we feel that we have failed in our standards we could offer an apology, a reduction of any bill or a repayment in relation to any payment received.

#### Final review

If you are still not satisfied, please let us know within five working days of receipt of the outcome of the Second stage resolution process. We call this process "Final review".

#### Final review – what happens next?

- 1) We will then arrange to review our decision. We will do this within five working days of hearing from you. With your written agreement, we may ask an appropriate third party, independent of Sphere Legal, to consider the issue. We will be responsible for any costs of the third party if we do so.
- 2) We will let you know the result of the review within three working days of completion of our review and will do so by writing to you to confirm our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons. We will then close the complaint.

#### 3. What to do if we cannot resolve your complaint?

If you do not agree with the outcome of our complaints process, or we fail to investigate it within eight weeks, and you are an individual, a small business (less than 10 employees and annual turnover less than €2 million) or a small charity/club/association/trust (less than £1 million annual income) you may be entitled to have the complaint independently looked at by the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman will look at your complaint independently and it will not affect how we handle your case. Before accepting a complaint for investigation, the Legal Ombudsman will check that you have tried to resolve your complaint with us first. If you have, then you must usually take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:

- within 6 months of receiving our final response to your complaint, and
- no more than one year from the date of act/omission being complained about: or
- no more than one year from when you should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint.

For more information about the Legal Ombudsman and the types of complaint they can help with:

Visit: [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk)

Call: 0300 555 0333 between 9am to 5pm.

Email: [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)

Address: Legal Ombudsman PO Box 6167, Slough SL1 0EH

If your complaint is in relation to any bill, you may be entitled to apply for an assessment from the courts under part III of the Solicitors Act 1974. The Legal Ombudsman is not able to consider a complaint about our bill if you have applied to the court for assessment of the bill.

#### 4. The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA)

The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) can also help you if you are concerned as to whether we have breached any of their professional rules for solicitors or about our conduct in relation to a matter or generally. This could be for things like dishonesty, taking or losing your money or treating you unfairly because of your age, a disability or other characteristic.

Details will be found at [www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/principles](http://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/principles) and the SRA can be contacted at The Cube, 199 Wharfside Street, Birmingham B1 1RN, or by email to [contactcentre@sra.org.uk](mailto:contactcentre@sra.org.uk).

You can also raise your concerns direct with (and obtain contact details via) the SRA using the link below.

<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/>

Dated: December 2024