

Cook Taylor Woodhouse Complaints Procedure

We are committed to providing a high-quality legal service to our clients. When something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. This will help us sort out any mistakes or misunderstandings, and to improve our standards.

If you have a complaint, please raise the problem with the case handler dealing with your matter, or, if you prefer, our Complaints Manager, Matthew Davis who is based at our Dartford office and can be contacted via email (mdavis@ctwsolicitors.co.uk). We will attempt to deal with your complaint informally if appropriate and only with your agreement. If we cannot resolve the matter in this way, we shall follow our formal complaints procedure. It is important for you to note that the complaints procedure will take up to 8 weeks to conclude. The procedure will operate as follows:

1. The Complaints Manager will ask you to let us have details of your complaint in writing (if you have not already done so) and acknowledge receipt of your complaint in writing within 1 week of receiving it. The Complaints Manager may ask you to confirm or explain the details set out. The Complaints Manager will also record your complaint in our Central Register and open a separate file for your complaint.
2. The Complaints Manager will conduct a thorough investigation into your complaint. This will normally involve the following steps:-
 - i) He will ask the member of staff who acted for you to prepare their response to your complaint.
 - ii) The Complaints Manager will then examine their response and the information in your file and complaint files and, if necessary, a meeting with the member of staff who acted for you will be arranged.
 - iii) If the Complaints Manager feels it appropriate, in that it will assist this stage of the process, he will either invite you to a meeting in order to discuss your complaint or write to you and ask for clarification on any points that have arisen.
 - iv) If a meeting does not take place or clarification is not requested, the Complaints Manager will send you a detailed reply to your complaint. This will include suggestions for resolving the matter. This process should be completed within 6 weeks of the receipt of your formal complaint.

Sometimes it may not be possible to adhere to these time limits because of illness, holidays or the firm's closure due to bank holidays. If this is the case, then you will be contacted to confirm the delay and the reason or reasons for it.
 - v) At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you can write to us again and we can then arrange for a review of our decision which will be dealt with by at least one Director of the firm who will review the Complaints Manager's decision.
 - vi) We will let you know the result of the review within 2 weeks of the decision being made by the Complaints Manager. We will write to you

to confirm our final position on your complaint and we will explain our reasons.

3. If you remain unsatisfied, you can contact the Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton WV1 9WJ about your complaint. The Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made within one year of the date of omission about which you are concerned or within one year of realising there was a concern. Any complaint to the Legal Ombudsman must usually be made within six months of our final written response on your complaint, but for further information, you should contact the Legal Ombudsman on 0300 555 0333 or at enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk. Note that the Legal Ombudsman service cannot be used by businesses or most other organisations unless they are below certain size limits. Further details are available from the Legal Ombudsman.
4. If a complaint cannot be resolved, you may also ask for it to be referred to a process of alternative dispute resolution using a certified provider. We are not required to agree to such a request. This is not available to businesses, only consumers. We will give you more information about that right if it becomes relevant.
5. You also have the right to make a report to the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) in the event that your complaint relates to:
 - (i) A breach of a Principle of the SRA Standards and Regulations 2019 and/or;
 - (ii) Allegations of dishonesty or discrimination.

To make a report see <http://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor.page> or contact the SRA at the following address: Solicitors Regulation Authority, The Cube, 199 Wharfside Street, Birmingham, B1 1RN. The relevant telephone number is 0370 606 2555.