Complaints Procedure

Burnett Barker
Solicitors

We want to give you the best possible service.

In the vast majority of cases we enjoy excellent working relationships with our clients, even though we are often dealing with difficult and stressful matters.

Occasionally however something goes wrong and our service may fall below the standard you expect. If something has gone wrong, including in relation to a bill, we need you to let us know.

This procedure is your guide to making a complaint to us and explains what you should expect from us once we've received your complaint.

Our complaints procedure should help us to address your concerns, learn from our mistakes and improve our service for the future.

We'll try to address your concerns quickly and effectively.

We'll also try to find resolutions that are reasonable and acceptable.

Burnett Barker
Solicitors

Collingwood House
20 Whiting Street
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk IP33 1NX
Telephone 01284 701131
www.burnettbarker.co.uk

How do I make a complaint about your service?

In the first instance, it may be helpful to contact the person who is working on your case to discuss your concerns and they will do their best to resolve any issues. If you do not feel able to discuss your concerns with them, please contact the person responsible for the overall supervision of your matter, who will be named in the client care letter we sent you at the beginning of your matter.

If you do not feel able to raise your concerns with either of these people, or you are unsatisfied with their response, you can contact us:

- by email us at our dedicated address: complaints@burnettbarker.co.uk;
- by post (marking your letter and envelope “Complaint”) to Burnett Barker Solicitors, Collingwood House, 20 Whiting Street, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP33 1NX;
- or by speaking with our Chief Executive, Daryl Griffiths.

If you require any help in making your complaint, we will try to help you.

To help us understand your complaint and so that we don’t miss anything, please tell us:

1. your full name and contact details;
2. what you think we have got wrong;
3. what you hope to achieve as a result of your complaint, or how you feel we can put matters right; and
4. your case reference number, if you have it.

Without this information, we may not be able to consider your complaint fully or as quickly as you wish.

How will you deal with my complaint?

If we feel that your complaint can be dealt with quickly and informally, we will do so.

We will normally write to you within 5 working days acknowledging your complaint, enclosing a copy of this procedure.

We will arrange for your complaint to be investigated. This will usually involve:

- reviewing your complaint
- reviewing your file(s) and other relevant documents, and
- speaking with the person who dealt with your matter.

We may also need to ask you for further information or documents. If so, we will ask you to provide the information within a specific period of time.

We will update you on the progress of your complaint at appropriate times.

We may also, if appropriate, invite you to a meeting to discuss your complaint. You do not have to attend if you do not wish to or if you are unable to. In such cases, we will usually be happy to discuss the matter with you on the telephone.

We will write to you at the end of our investigation to tell you what we have done and what we propose to do to resolve your complaint. Where possible, we will aim to do this within 28 days of the date of our letter of acknowledgement.

What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?

We aim to resolve complaints and fully address your concerns at the end of our investigation.

We have eight weeks to consider your complaint. If we are unable to resolve your complaint within this time you may be able to complain to the Legal Ombudsman. This applies if you are an individual, a business with fewer than 10 employees and turnover or assets not exceeding a certain threshold, a charity or trust with a net income of less than £1m, or if you fall within certain other categories (you can find out more from the Legal Ombudsman). The Legal Ombudsman will look at your complaint independently and it will not affect how we handle your matter.

The Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made to them within a year of the date of the act or omission about which you are concerned (or within a year of you realising there was a concern). You must also refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of our final response to you.

You can contact the Legal Ombudsman:

- by post to PO BOX 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH
- by telephone: 0300 555 0333, or
- by email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) bodies such as ProMediate (UK) Limited exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and our firm wish to use such a scheme. We will consider entering into an ADR process with ProMediate, subject to your agreement. Further details are available on the website www.promediate.co.uk.

What will it cost?

We will not charge you for handling your complaint.

If we have issued a bill and all or some of the bill is not paid, we shall be entitled to charge interest on the amount outstanding in accordance with our Terms of Business.

The Legal Ombudsman service is free of charge. If by agreement we enter an ADR process with ProMediate, they do not make a charge to consumers.