

## Complaints Procedure

### Introduction

Travers Smith LLP ("**the firm**"/"**we**"/"**us**) aims to provide the best possible service to clients. This complaints procedure provides you with information about:

- a) your right to complain in the event of a problem;
- b) the person to whom you should address your complaint;
- c) the process by which your complaint will be handled; and
- d) where applicable, your right to complain to the Legal Ombudsman or the Solicitors Regulation Authority ("**SRA**") and how to do so.

Generally, if you feel that a problem exists or something has gone wrong, please raise the issue with us as soon as possible, so that we can take steps to try to address your concerns. No charge will be made to you for the investigation and handling of any complaint.

### Procedure

If, as a client, you have any concern about the quality of the service provided by us or the level of our charges, please raise that concern initially with the partner in charge of the relevant matter or with your client relationship partner. That partner will consider the issue raised and (if they are not the client relationship partner) discuss it with the client relationship partner with a view to resolving the matter as soon as reasonably practicable. In circumstances where you would prefer not to raise the issue with the partner in charge of the relevant matter or the client relationship partner, you may raise it with our Managing Partner.

Where an issue has not been resolved to your satisfaction after you have followed the above procedure, we may ask you to make a formal written complaint to the firm's Senior Partner. In making a formal complaint, please provide us with as much information as possible regarding the issue, including what you think has gone wrong and how you would like to see the issue rectified.

The Senior Partner will acknowledge the complaint as soon as reasonably practicable and inform you in writing as to:

- a) how the firm proposes to deal with it;
- b) who will be responsible for investigating the complaint (this will ordinarily be someone who was not involved in the matter leading to the complaint); and
- c) the timescales for doing so.

A separate file will be kept by the person dealing with the complaint, containing a full record of the way in which the complaint is being handled. This file may be shared with the Legal Ombudsman if you require it.

When dealing with complaints, it may be the case that we need to notify our insurers with details of the relevant issue. If the handling of the complaint is to be taken over by the firm's insurers, we will notify you.

The firm aims to provide a substantive response to all complaints within two to six weeks of a formal complaint being made, but we will keep you informed if our investigation is likely to take longer than that. All relevant details, including the impact on you of the matter complained of, will be taken into account in the course of our investigation. Our formal response to you will set out an objective assessment of the issues and evidence involved.

If a formal complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction within eight weeks, then you may, where eligible to do so, refer the matter to the Legal Ombudsman. For more information about how to complain to the Legal Ombudsman, see below.

If your complaint relates to the firm's charges, you may apply to have such charges assessed by the court. The procedure for assessment is set out in Sections 70 to 72 of the Solicitors' Act 1974. Please note, however, that the Legal Ombudsman may elect not to consider any complaint made in relation to costs where such costs have already been referred to the court for assessment.

If your complaint relates to the professional conduct of the firm or any of our partners or employees, you may contact the SRA, as further detailed below.

## **The Legal Ombudsman**

If you are a client of the firm, the Legal Ombudsman may be able to assist you if you are not happy with our work or levels of service and you have unsuccessfully tried to resolve the relevant issue with us. However, not all clients have a right to complain to the Legal Ombudsman. In general terms, only individuals and certain small businesses may do so.

Examples of matters that will be considered by the Legal Ombudsman include complaints about us not replying to e-mails, letters or calls; the amount of our charges; and us not explaining issues in a way that you can understand.

Please note that there is a time limit that applies to the referral of complaints to the Legal Ombudsman. As a general rule, the Legal Ombudsman will only look at complaints that are referred to it within six months of the firm's final response to any formal complaint. In addition, the referral must be made no later than either:

- a) one year from the relevant act or omission; or
- b) one year from when you, the client, should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint.

You can contact the Legal Ombudsman by writing to: Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH or emailing: [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk). Further details about the Legal Ombudsman, including alternative ways of getting in touch, are available at [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk).

## **The SRA**

The SRA deals with cases where firms or solicitors have breached the [SRA Standards and Regulations](#), which set out the professional standards the SRA expects of all regulated firms and individuals.

The SRA could help if you have concerns that a solicitor might be dishonest or may have engaged in other inappropriate behaviour (such as deliberate overcharging or treating a client unfairly because of their age, a disability or other characteristics). Further details about the SRA's complaints procedure are available at: [www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems.page](http://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems.page).