Complaints Procedure

We are committed to providing high-quality legal advice and client care and we are keen to resolve matters as soon as possible and in order to do this, will follow our complaints handling procedure.

This policy aims to ensure that you are fully aware of our procedure, the relevant timeframes and other avenues for redress that may be available to you should we be unable to resolve the matter ourselves. Rest assured that we will handle your complaint promptly, fairly and free of charge. The complaint handling is monitored by our Director, Ms Fernanda Stefani Araujo who will oversee the process.

What will happen next? Step 1: If you have not already done so, please let us know the full nature of the problem. Ideally, we would prefer your complaint in writing in order that any scope for misunderstanding can be avoided. If you are setting out your concerns in writing please e-mail Ms Araujo on hello@stefanisolicitors.com or writing to her at Stefani Solicitors Ltd, 25 Wilton Road, Victoria, London SW1V 1LW.

Step 2: We will write to you acknowledging your complaint within ten working days. In this letter, we shall confirm what happens next.

Step 3: We will then investigate your complaint. Complaints are investigated by our Director. She will investigate the matter by reviewing the matter file and speaking to the member of staff concerned within fifteen working days of acknowledging receipt of your complaint. If, for some reason, the matter cannot be investigated in this timeframe, then I will write to you notifying you of this together with the reason why and giving a revised timescale. Once the investigation has been completed, if appropriate and necessary, she will invite you to discuss the issue(s) you have raised and hopefully resolve the complaint. This could be a meeting, video conference call or telephone call and we can discuss your preference and what may be suitable at that time. This process of engagement will take place within ten working days of our concluding the investigation of the matter. She will write to you within five working days of any meeting or call to confirm the discussion and the solution agreed upon and/or any final redress that is offered. Alternatively, if you do not want to or are unable to attend such a meeting or you would prefer to continue to correspond by letter or email (or if a meeting is not required), she will send you a detailed, written response, including the proposed solution, within fifteen working days of concluding her investigation. Step Four: If you are satisfied with the response following the above steps, that will be the end of the matter. However, if you are not satisfied, you should contact Ms Araujo again and she will review his decision or, depending on the circumstances, will arrange for another Senior Solicitor who is unconnected with the matter to review her decision. We will write to you within ten working days of receiving your request with confirmation of the firm's final position in relation to your complaint, outlining the reasons and any final redress that is offered. Step Five (other avenues): You must always try complaining to us first. In most cases you will not be able to take your complaint further without allowing us the opportunity to put things right.
Legal Ombudsman: We are permitted a period of eight weeks to consider the complaint. If for any reason we are unable to resolve the problem between us within

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that timeframe, then you may ask the Legal Ombudsman to consider the complaint. You are free to refer any complaint about our work, fees or level of service but there are some conditions and time limits. Please be aware that any complaint to the Legal Ombudsman must usually be made within six months of you having received a final written response from us about your complaint. Complaints to the Legal Ombudsman must usually be made within one year of the act or omission about which you are complaining occurring or from when you should have known about or become aware that there were grounds for complaint. For further information, please contact the Legal Ombudsman on 0300 555 0333 or visit www.legalombudsman.org.uk. The Legal Ombudsman may be contacted at PO Box 6167, Slough SL1 0EH.

Solicitors Regulation Authority: If you think a solicitor might be dishonest or you have concerns about their ethics or integrity or that they have breached professional rules, you also have the right to notify our regulator, the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA). There are no time limits for making a report but there are limits on what the SRA will consider. Please note that the SRA is not able to deal with issues of poor service (complaints of this nature should instead be referred to the Legal Ombudsman). For further information about the SRA's role, please contact the SRA or visit www.sra.org.uk

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