

Complaints Handling Policy for Clients

At Davisons Law, we are committed to providing a high-quality service to all of our clients. Whilst we strive to ensure that your experience with us is a positive one, we understand that sometimes things don't always go the way you would like. This policy outlines our procedure for dealing with client concerns and handling service complaints.

We keep a record of all the complaints we receive, and we are committed to making this process as fair and transparent as possible, in order to provide you with a quick and fair resolution.

How to make a complaint

If you are not happy with the service that you have received, please notify the member of staff that you are dealing with. They will attempt to understand the reason for the dissatisfaction and resolve it with you. If they are not able to, or if you are uncomfortable raising this with them directly, then you may wish to phone or write to their supervisor, who will do their best to resolve your concerns.

If the concern cannot be resolved with the Supervisor, please write to the firm's complaints department:

Complaints Department
Davisons Law
54 Calthorpe Road
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 1TH

Or contact them by email: Complaints@davisons.law

If you are unable to make your complaint in writing and require a different way in which to raise your concerns, please let us know so that we can discuss making any reasonable adjustments.

Next steps

1. If you write to us, or we cannot satisfactorily resolve your concerns over the phone, we will aim to send you an acknowledgement letter no later than five working days from receiving your complaint;
2. This acknowledgement letter will confirm our understanding of the complaint and ask you to confirm your agreement;
3. We will then investigate your complaint. Normally, this will involve reviewing your file and discussing the matter with the member(s) of staff who acted for you. If we need anything from you, we may ask you for further comments, or to provide further information;
4. We will endeavour to issue our response to your complaint as soon as possible and by 20 working days from us first receiving it. Our response will set out our findings, conclusions, and if any, our offer to resolve your complaint.

5. If we feel that we need to take any further steps to resolve the complaint, we will let you know any proposals that we have.
6. There are occasions where, depending on the complexity of the complaint, the availability of the file, and other factors that may arise, it may result in us taking longer than 20 working days to respond to your complaint. The Legal Ombudsman explains that we have up to eight weeks to resolve your complaint or provide our final response.

Escalating your complaint

If you are dissatisfied with our response to your complaint, then we may decide to arrange a telephone call or meeting with you in the hope of resolving any outstanding concerns you may have. This may involve which aspects of your complaint are still unresolved.

Alternatively, if you request for your complaint to be considered by someone else, we will arrange for your complaint to be reviewed by the Firm's Complaints Manager. If the Complaints Manager has already investigated your complaint and issued the initial response, then this will instead be carried out by a Director of the Firm.

If we need to alter any of the timescales above, we will let you know and explain why. However, we aim to resolve all complaints within eight weeks of first receiving them.

Escalation to the Legal Ombudsman

In the unfortunate event that we have not resolved matters within eight weeks of you making your complaint, or if we inform you that you have reached the end of our complaints handling process, you are free to take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman.

The Legal Ombudsman aims to reconcile complaints and to assist clients and their solicitors reach a fair resolution.

You can contact the Legal Ombudsman:

- By email at: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk;
- By phone on: 0300 555 0333;
- By post at: Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ;
- Online: www.legalombudsman.org.uk.

Referrals to the Legal Ombudsman should be made:

- Within six months of receiving a written response to your complaint; and
- Within six years of the date of the act/omission; or
- Within three years from when you reasonably should have known that there was cause for complaint.

The Legal Ombudsman may decide not to investigate your complaint if you complain to them outside of these time limits.

Please note that the Legal Ombudsman has announced significant changes to their scheme rules;

- From **1 April 2023**, the **Legal Ombudsman** will only accept complaints that are no later than;
 - **one year** from the date of the act or omission being complained about; or
 - **one year** from the date when the complainant should have realised that there was cause for complaint
- Other changes to the scheme rules can be found on their website:
 - <https://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/information-centre/news/changes-to-the-legal-ombudsman-s-scheme-rules/>

Alternative Dispute Resolution

In line with the EU Directive for Alternative Dispute Resolution, alternative complaints bodies (such as ProMediate: www.promediate.co.uk) exist, which are able to deal with complaints about legal services, should both you and our firm wish to use such a scheme. We do not generally agree to use any such scheme due to existence of the Legal Ombudsman.

What to do if you're unhappy with our behaviour

The Solicitors Regulation Authority can help if you are concerned about our behaviour. 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.

Visit their website to see how you can raise your concerns with the Solicitors Regulation Authority (<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/>).

Complaining about a bill

If you have a complaint about your bill, then you may be entitled to apply to the court for an assessment of the bill under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974. If you wish to take advantage of this procedure, you should be aware that there are strict time limits applicable and you may wish to seek independent legal advice. You should also be aware that:

- Within 1 month from the date of our invoice your right to a detailed assessment is unconditional. However, if you delay beyond a month then the court may impose restrictions;
- After 1 year from the date of the invoice you will lose the right to a detailed assessment, unless there are special circumstances;
- The Legal Ombudsman may not consider a complaint about a bill if you have applied to the court for such an assessment.

Please note that references to "Director", "Managing Director" and "the Company" are in relation to the Company known as *Davisons Solicitors Limited t/a Davisons Law*.