

Fidler and Pepper Complaints Policy



We are committed to providing a high-quality legal service at all times to all our clients. We are constantly reviewing our procedures and looking for ways to improve the service we offer to our clients. If something goes wrong, or you are not satisfied with the level of service you receive, we need you to tell us about it so that we can work with you to resolve the matter to everyone's satisfaction and also help us to improve our standards.

Our Complaints procedure

Whilst we are happy to discuss any complaint you may have, to assist us in investigating and resolving your complaint we need to receive your complaint in writing, detailing the areas you are unhappy with. This can either be by letter or email to Elaine Mimoune. You can contact Elaine at our Sutton Office, No 1 Low Street, Sutton In Ashfield, Notts, NG17 1DH or by emailing emimoune@fidler.co.uk. Please quote your account reference (if known) followed by 'Formal Complaint'. During the initial investigation of your complaint Elaine will be liaising with, the Fee Earner involved in your file and the Fee Earners immediate supervisor or Head of Department.

What sort of complaint is dealt with in this way?

A complaint is dealt with in this way when you are really unhappy with the overall service you have received. It is worth noting that if you become frustrated with a particular element of our service that you feel is slowing down the progress on your matter you should raise this in the first instance with the Fee Earner you are dealing with and/or their immediate supervisor. This is because these are the people who need to know about your frustrations and can quickly take steps to put matters right. If upon completion of your matter you are still not happy with the overall service, or if you have attempted to resolve your issues within the department but this has been unsuccessful, you should contact Elaine Mimoune as above.

A complaint can also be made by a prospective client if you have unreasonably been refused a legal service by us or persistently or unreasonably been pressured to accept a service you did not want. You will however require evidence to support this.

What will happen next?

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint, if we require any further information we will ask you for this or we may need to ask you to confirm or explain the details set out. You can expect to receive our acknowledgement letter within three working days of us receiving your complaint.
2. We will record your complaint in our central register and open a file for your complaint. We will do this at the same time as receiving your complaint.
3. We will then start to investigate your complaint. This may involve one or more of the following steps.
 - a. We will contact the member of staff who acted for you and also their immediate supervisor as part of our investigation.
 - b. We will then examine their responses to the points raised in your complaint. We may then ask them for more information.
 - c. Our investigation may take up to two weeks from the date of the acknowledgement letter.
4. Once our investigation is complete we will send you a detailed reply to your complaint. This will include our suggestions for resolving the matter. This will happen within 10 days of completing our investigation. You should therefore expect to hear from us within 28 working days. If for any reason we are unable to respond fully within this time frame we will contact you to inform you of this. It is not uncommon for us to ask you to confirm that we have resolved all aspects of your complaint. If you feel issues remain outstanding we will look into them and respond further.
5. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied you can contact us again in writing requesting a review of our decision. We will then arrange to review our decision. This will happen with the Director of People and Operations Joanne Godson discussing her own decision with the CEO and will then let you know

the outcome of this review. Unless you are informed otherwise, you will be informed of the outcome to this review within 10 working days from the date of us receiving your further letter or email.

6. Once the review has been completed we will write to you confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons. If we have to change any of the timescales above, we will let you know in writing and explain why.
7. **Continuous Improvement Process.** Once we have resolved the complaint with you, we will review our systems and processes to see if there are any changes or improvements we can make to avoid a repeat of the circumstances you have complained about.
8. We have up to 8 weeks to resolve your complaint. If after this time you have not received our final response or are not satisfied with our handling of your complaint you can contact the Legal Ombudsman to consider the complaint. Normally, you will need to bring a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of receiving a final written response from us about your complaint and 6 years from the date of the act of omission giving rise to the complaint or alternatively 3 years from the date you should reasonably have known there are grounds for complaint (Please see 10a for details).
9. If we do not acknowledge or respond to your complaint at all we would be grateful if you would contact us again - we will not ignore a complaint intentionally and it may be that we have not received it.
10. There are a number of issues you need to be aware of when dealing with the Legal Ombudsman:-
 - a. Please note the time limits imposed by the Legal Ombudsman changed on 1st February 2013. The Legal Ombudsman can only investigate complaints up to six years from the date of the problem happening or within three years of when you found out about the problem. However, this new limit will be introduced gradually so at the moment the problem must have happened on or after 5th October 2010. Or, if the problem happened earlier than that you must not have been aware of it before 6th October 2010.
 - b. The Legal Ombudsman's details are :
Opening hours: Monday to Friday between 9am and 5.00pm
Address : PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ
Telephone number: 0300 555 0333 (Calls will cost no more than those to national geographic numbers (starting 01 or 02) from both mobiles and landlines.)
From overseas: +44 121 245 3050
Minicom number: 0300 555 1777 Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk
 - c. The Legal Ombudsman aim to resolve most complaints within three months; however this can be longer if the complaint is more complex.
 - d. Finally, if you do complain to the Legal Ombudsman please note that they you should make sure you only send them copies of documents not the originals as all their incoming post is scanned and then destroyed.
11. In addition to the above, if you make a valid claim against us for a loss arising out of work for which we are legally responsible, and we are unable to meet our liability in full, you may be entitled to claim from the Compensation Fund administered by the Council for Licensed Conveyancers (from whom details can be obtained).