

VIRTUS LAW - COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY



SUMMARY

Virtus Law are committed to providing a professional and efficient service to each of our clients, however, if at any time a client is unhappy with the service provided, we are keen to ascertain what the issues are and attempt to rectify the same as quickly as possible. This will in turn assist us to maintain and improve the quality of our service.

POLICY STATEMENT

If a client telephones with a complaint about the service they are receiving or have received, in the first instance, the fee earner with conduct of the file should endeavour to resolve any issues the client may have during this telephone call. If the client is happy with the advice provided, the fee earners must confirm in writing the agreed actions/final response to the client.

If a client does not wish to discuss their complaint with the fee earner with conduct of their case or the fee earner cannot resolve the verbal complaint, the client should be referred to the Director/Principal or in her absence a nominated complaints manager. The manager who took the call is responsible for sending out the final response letter.

If a client writes or e-mails with a complaint about the service they are receiving or have received, the complaint must be referred to the Director/Principal or in her absence a nominated complaints manager. The Director/Principal or nominated complaints handler is responsible for sending out the final response letter.

RESPONSIBILITY

Director/Principal

PROCEDURE

1. Complaint Handlers

Director/Principal or those nominated by the Director/Principal in her absence.

2. Verbal Complaints

If a client telephones and speaks to the **fee earner** with conduct of their file of papers to advise them that they are dissatisfied with a particular aspect of their case or the service they have received, the fee earner should initially attempt to provide the client with the necessary information to deal with and diffuse the complaint. This should be done in a calm, professional manner even where the client does not remain so.

If the client requests to speak to a **supervisor**, they should be transferred immediately to the nominated complaints handler.

All actions agreed during this conversation must be confirmed to the client in a letter the same day or as soon as practicable. This letter must provide clients with the correct LeO signposting.

A comprehensive attendance note of the discussion with the client must be prepared and a copy passed with the letter to the Director/Principal who will check the letter and log the complaint. This must be done on the same day as the complaint is received or as soon as practicable.

When the complaint handler is satisfied that the complaint has been resolved, they should ensure the case management system is fully updated and the necessary complaint closure memo be passed to Director/Principal to be retained in the central complaints file.

3. Written Complaints

Written complaints will be identified by Director/Principal when checking incoming post.

All written complaints are to be acknowledged, by the Director/Principal or in her absence a nominated complaints handler, on the day of receipt and a letter of acknowledgment confirming that the complaint is receiving attention sent to the client.

The Director/Principal or nominated complaints handler will as soon as practicable review the relevant file of papers and speak with the fee earner with conduct of the file to ascertain the merits of the complaint. This review will be followed up by a telephone call to the client to listen to the clients concerns and attempt to resolve the issue(s) raised, offering appropriate explanations/solutions.

The Director/Principal or nominated handler will meet with the fee earner with conduct of the file and ascertain whether any further training, increased supervision or indeed disciplinary proceedings are necessary.

The Director/Principal or nominated handler must respond to the client within eight weeks of the receipt of the complaint.

If the client's concerns have been fully addressed and the client is once more happy to continue with their claim, the Director/Principal or nominated complaints handler must write to the client as soon as practicable confirming the content of the telephone conversation and listing all agreed actions for absolute clarity. The letter must include the correct LeO signposting.

All copy documentation relating to the complaint, i.e. complaint letter, response, telephone attendance notes, final response letter must be passed to the Director/Principal to be retained in the central complaints file.

If the client is still not happy with the advice provided by the Director/Principal or nominated complaints handler, the final response letter will include the LeO signposting advising the client of their rights to complain further to the LeO and the appropriate deadlines.

4. Legal Ombudsman Complaints

All complaints received from the Legal Ombudsman must be immediately passed to the Director/Principal along with the relevant file of papers.

MONTHLY COMPLAINTS MEETINGS

Each month the COLP will meet with fee earners to discuss

CONTACT INFORMATION

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RELATED INFORMATION

- **INTERNAL DOCUMENTS**

Policy leaflet for clients

Virtus Law reserves the right to amend and update this policy at any time

NAME.....
SIGNED.....
DATED.....