

BLAKE LAPTHORN

WRITTEN COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

At Blake Lapthorn we are dedicated to the continual improvement of our services. However just occasionally things do not run as smoothly as we would wish and, if that happens, we would want to know about it.

If you have concerns regarding our service, or a bill that you have received, and wish to raise it with us as a formal complaint, then we will do all we can to resolve it in accordance with the procedure set out below. We will aim to resolve your complaint fairly, openly, effectively and promptly, and in any event within eight weeks of it first being referred to us.

1. Initially, you should raise your concerns, either by telephone or in writing, with the person with whom you have been dealing.
2. If it is not possible to rectify the situation immediately your complaint will be reported to the Partner with overall supervision of your matter. He/she will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days and aim to provide a substantive written response to your complaint within 14 days of the acknowledgement.
3. There may be times when they require a longer period of time to respond, but they will let you know and inform you of their proposed timescales.
4. If after consideration by the supervising Partner your complaint has not been resolved you can ask for your complaint to be referred to our Complaints Handling Officer, Karen Kirk. Either she, or a member of the firm's Risk & Compliance team, will review the complaint and will aim to respond to you with their conclusions within 14 days.
5. In certain instances we may require further time to consider and respond to the issues raised but we shall alert you to any extension of time proposed subject always to the overall 8 week time limit.
6. If at either of the 8 week stage or when our response is final, we are unable to resolve your complaint ourselves, the Legal Ombudsman may be able to help you. They will look at your complaint independently and it will not affect how we handle your matter, if it is ongoing. Before accepting a complaint for investigation the Legal Ombudsman will check that you have tried to resolve the complaint with us first. If you have then you must take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:
 - a. Within 6 months of receiving the final response to your complaint; and
 - b. No more than 1 year from the date of the act or omission; or

c. No more than 1 year from when you should reasonably have known there was a cause for complaint.

7. If you would like more information about the Legal Ombudsman, please contact them:

Visit: www.legalombudsman.org.uk

Call: 0300 555 0333 between 9.00 to 17.00.

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH

8. The SRA can help you 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. You can raise your concerns with the [Solicitors Regulation Authority](#).

9. If your complaint is about a bill you have the right to complain to LeO and/or apply to the Court for the assessment of the bill under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974. However if you have already applied to the Court for an assessment of your bill LeO may not deal with your complaint.

Risk and Compliance Team

Updated April 2023