

SOUTH BANK LEGAL: COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY

Complaints policy

This policy explains how we will deal with any complaint you make. We are confident of providing you with high quality legal advice delivered to high standards of service. However if things do go wrong we will be committed to putting the matter right.

How to complain

If you have a complaint, which may concern things like that way you have been dealt with, the quality of advice you have received or the amount of any invoice received, you can let us know your concerns in writing, by e-mailing them to our Managing Director, Michael Czechyra (michael@southbanklegal.com) or by posting them to our office.

What happens next?

Once your complaint is received, we will handle it as follows:

1. On receipt of your complaint we will write to you acknowledging your complaint and might invite you to a meeting to discuss your concerns. We will look to acknowledge your complaint within three business days of receiving it.
2. After reviewing your file that relates to the work we have been doing for you and performing any other necessary investigations, we might invite you to a meeting or write to you to ask for further information. Alternatively we might write to you setting out our views on the situation and proposing any redress that would seem appropriate. We will aim to write to you with our views and any suggestions within two weeks of completing our investigations.
3. Where we feel that we have failed in our standards we could offer an apology, a reduction of any bill or a repayment in relation to any payment received.
4. If, by this stage, you are still not satisfied, please let us know. It would be helpful if you could do so within the next 21 days, but there is no obligation on you to do so. We will then arrange to review our decision in the light of any comments that you make. We would generally aim to do this within 10 days of hearing from you.
5. We will let you know the result of the review within seven days of the end of the review and will do so by writing to you to confirm our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.
6. You may, if you wish, approach the Legal Ombudsman who provides a service examining complaints against lawyers, including solicitors' firms. He will usually expect firms to have concluded their examination of complaints within eight weeks of their being notified of them and will require complaints to be referred to him within six months of the end of our complaints handling process as set out above. The services provided by the Legal Ombudsman are limited to individuals and smaller organisations – for more details of his service see his website and the terms of business first provided to you when you instructed us.

7. The full details of how to contact the Legal Ombudsman's office are as follows:

Telephone: 0300 555 0333
Minicom: 0300 555 1777
E-mail: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk
Address: Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton WV1 9WJ

8. You should note that the Legal Ombudsman will not be able to accept your complaint if:

- more than six years have elapsed from the date of the alleged act or omission giving rise to your complaint;
- more than three years have elapsed since the time that you should have known about your entitlement to make a complaint if later than above; or
- the date of the alleged act or omission giving rise to your complaint was before 6 October 2010.

9. Finally, we uphold and strive to at all times meet and exceed the following Principles set down by our regulating body, the Solicitors' Regulation Authority (SRA):

We must act:

1. *in a way that upholds the constitutional principle of the rule of law, and the proper administration of justice*
2. *in a way that upholds public trust and confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons*
3. *with independence*
4. *with honesty*
5. *with integrity*
6. *in a way that encourages equality, diversity and inclusion*
7. *in the best interests of each client.*

A complaint or report should be made to the SRA directly if you think we have breached one of the above principles. Full details on how to make a report to the SRA can be found here: <https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/>.

Thank you for bringing your concerns to our attention. We will do our best to address any dissatisfaction that you have experienced in using the services of this practice. Our primary objective is to put things right.