

**CLEARY GOTTlieb STEEN & HAMILTON LLP (LONDON OFFICE)  
COMPLAINTS POLICY**

The London Office operates an internal complaints policy for any clients of the Firm who are dissatisfied with the manner in which work has been carried out, any bill delivered in respect of work carried out, or the behaviour of any member of its professional staff.

This procedure is only available, however, where the complaint is made within six months of the client first becoming aware of the act or omission to which the complaint relates. It is also only available to clients of the Firm and not to third parties, whether affiliated with a client of the Firm or otherwise. This procedure is not available to a client who has commenced legal proceedings against the Firm in relation to the matter.

**Our Procedure**

The Partner responsible for your matter, identified in the engagement letter you received from us, has overall responsibility for our services to you. Any complaint should initially be communicated to this partner, who will aim to acknowledge and resolve your grievance promptly and to your satisfaction.

At any time, either you or this partner can refer your complaint to a complaints handling partner (the "Complaints Handling Partner") who will be a senior partner in the Firm independent from the matter concerned and with experience in handling disputes. Once such a referral is made, the following approach will in appropriate cases be taken:

- (i) Firstly, the Complaints Handling Partner will acknowledge your complaint in writing within fourteen days of the matter being referred to him or her. This correspondence will set out, in outline, the timetable within which he or she expects to deal with your complaint and how he or she proposes to handle it. Ordinarily, the process should take no longer than eight weeks from the date of referral.
- (ii) Once your complaint has been acknowledged, the Complaints Handling Partner will, if appropriate, consult with the relevant parties concerned until he or she has obtained relevant comments from both sides and understands the material facts relating to your complaint. This will involve the lawyers concerned responding to your comments and you, in turn, responding to theirs.
- (iii) Once this information gathering process has been completed, the Complaints Handling Partner will, if appropriate, prepare a written response including proposals for redress (if any). This will be sent to you and the lawyers concerned for consideration.
- (iv) Following publication of the report, the Complaints Handling Partner will, if appropriate, discuss any material comments you have.

- (v) The London Office will take any commercially reasonable action recommended by the Complaints Handling Partner within fourteen days of the publication of his or her written response.

## **Legal Ombudsman**

If for any reason we are unable to resolve the problem to your satisfaction within eight weeks, then you may have recourse to the complaints and redress scheme provided by the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made to them within one year of the date of the act or omission about which you are concerned, or within one year of you realising that there was a concern. You must also refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of our written response to you. For more information, visit [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk). You can also contact the Legal Ombudsman at the following address:

Legal Ombudsman  
PO Box 6167  
Slough  
SL1 0EH

Tel.: 0300 555 0333

Email: [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)

## **Challenging a Bill**

If you are unhappy about a bill which you have received from us, please contact the Partner with overall responsibility for your matter. You also have an independent right to challenge the amount of that bill by applying to a Court for an assessment under part III of the Solicitors Act 1974. You do not have to wait until our own internal processes are completed before making that application. Indeed, there are time limits for applications for an assessment of costs and you should consult with legal advisers promptly. Please note that a challenge to a bill does not free you of the liability to pay interest on any unpaid fees which are found to be due to us.