

## **RATHBONES LEGAL SERVICES LIMITED**

### **COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE**

We are committed to providing a high-quality service to our clients. However, if at any point you become unhappy or concerned about the service we have provided then you should inform us immediately, so that we can do our best to resolve the problem.

In the first instance it may be helpful to contact the director of Rathbones Legal Services who is working on, or supervising, your case to discuss your concerns and we will do our best to resolve any issues at this stage.

If you would like to make a formal complaint, this document explains how we will deal with any complaint that is referred to us. Your complaint might concern the way in which you have been dealt with, the quality of advice you have received or any invoice that you have received. Making a complaint will not affect how we handle your case.

The Solicitors Regulation Authority 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 in one of the following means of contact:

Website form	<a href="http://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor.page">www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor.page</a>
Telephone	0370 606 2555
Letter	The Cube 199 Wharfside Street Birmingham B1 1RN

#### ***Raising Your Concerns***

Should you have any concerns about the way in which your work is handled or any bill that you have received, please contact the director of Rathbones Legal Services Limited ultimately responsible for your matters who will investigate your concerns and respond to you in a timely manner.

Should you still have cause for dissatisfaction, you should write to our complaints director, Christopher Hordern, giving full particulars of the matter. You can contact him using one of the following means of contact:

Email	christopher.hordern@rathbones.com
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Telephone	020 7399 0000
Letter	FAO Mr Christopher Hordern Rathbones Legal Services Limited 8 Finsbury Circus London EC2M 7AZ

To explain to you how long this process might take we have included our target times for each stage of the process. Where, for any reason, it is not possible to observe any of these limits we will let you know and explain why.

***What will happen next?***

- 1 On receipt of your complaint our complaints director will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint, notify the Rathbones complaints team and might invite you to a meeting to discuss your concerns. We will open a file for your complaint in our system and our complaints team will examine the file that we have on the work that we have been doing for you. We would look to acknowledge your complaint within two working days of receiving it. Our acknowledgement will outline the nature of the complaint as it is understood by us and the steps that we will be taking to resolve it. If you believe that we have misinterpreted the nature of your complaint, then please contact us immediately.
  
- 2 In some cases, we may require further information from you to enable us to fully investigate your complaint. Should this be the case, we might then invite you to a meeting or we will write to you to ask for the required information.
  
3. Once we have completed our investigation, we will send you a final response to your complaint. We aim to provide this response within 8 weeks of your complaint. The final response letter will include:
  - A summary of our investigation and findings
  - A decision of whether the complaint is being upheld or not. In either case we will outline our rationale of why
  - If relevant, details of redress. We will outline the amount along with an explanation of rationale
  - The options available to you should you remain dissatisfied. This will note that you may be able to refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman or take civil action.

If you decide to refer the matter to the Legal Ombudsman Service, you must do so within six months of the date of our final response letter, in order for them to have our permission to consider your complaint.

If we have determined that redress is due to you, we will also enclose an acceptance form. To initiate this payment, we require you to complete and return the acceptance form.

***What do I do if I am not satisfied with the outcome of my complaint?***

If you are unhappy with our response, you may be able to take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman Service or take civil action. Access to the Legal Ombudsman Service is free of charge.

The Legal Ombudsman can help if you are unable to resolve your complaint with ourselves. They will look at your complaint independently and it will not affect how we handle your case.

Before accepting a complaint for investigation, the Legal Ombudsman will check that you have tried to resolve your complaint with us first. If you have, then you must take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of receiving a final response to your complaint. The Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made within one year of the date of the act or omission being complained about, or one year from the date when the complainant should have realised that there was cause for complaint.

It is important to be aware that you must bring your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of the date of the final response. They have strict time limits and if you fail to do so, it is unlikely that they will be able to investigate your complaint.

***How to contact the Legal Ombudsman Service?***

Website	<a href="http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk">www.legalombudsman.org.uk</a>
Email	enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
Telephone	0300 555 0333 between 9am to 5pm
Letter	Legal Ombudsman PO Box 6167 Slough SL1 0EH