

## **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

### **1. Our Approach**

- 1.1 We are committed to providing the highest quality legal service to all our clients. If something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. This will enable us to address the problem as a priority and, where appropriate, offer a suitable remedy. It will also help us to make any improvements.
- 1.2 We will usually open a separate file for your complaint and record this on a central register. We do not make any charges whatsoever for dealing with a complaint.

### **2. How to raise your concerns**

- 2.1 If you have any concerns about the service you receive, please contact the person who is handling your matter in the first instance and/or the Partner with overall responsibility for your matter (the Partner's details were set out in the letter we sent to you when we accepted your instructions but you can ask for them again at any time). Many issues can be resolved at this early stage.

### **3. Formal review**

- 3.1 If that person or the Partner is unable to resolve the problem, or it is not appropriate for them to deal with the complaint, please contact our Complaints Manager, Jacqueline Seale (telephone: 020 8799 1826 email: [jseale@prince-evans.co.uk](mailto:jseale@prince-evans.co.uk)), or ask for the matter to be referred to her.
- 3.2 Jacqueline will acknowledge your complaint within 4 working days and send you a copy of this Complaints Policy.
- 3.3 Your complaint will be investigated fairly and independently. This will normally involve one or more of the following steps:
  - Reviewing the file and any relevant documents
  - Interviewing those concerned within the firm
  - Seeking any further clarification from you
  - Arranging a meeting to discuss matters with you
- 3.4 Jacqueline will then write to you to report her findings and make any proposals for resolving your complaint. She will aim to do this within 21 days of acknowledging your complaint. If there is any delay (for example, because further information is awaited), she will explain why and try to agree a revised date.

### **4. Final Review**

- 4.1 If you do not accept Jacqueline's findings or proposals for resolving the matter, you may request a final review of our decision by our Managing Partner, Anthony Best. Your request should be in writing and clearly set out your concerns.

4.2 Anthony will aim to review our decision within 10 working days of receiving your request but will let you know if more time is needed. He will write to you confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.

## **5. Legal Ombudsman**

5.1 If you are unhappy with the outcome of your complaint you can ask the Legal Ombudsman to become involved. Their contact details are:

Address: PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ  
Email: [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0300 555 0333  
Website: [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk)

5.2 Ordinarily, you can ask the Ombudsman to look at your complaint if the problem (or when you found out about it) happened after 5 October 2010 and you are within:

- Either six years of the problem happening or three years from when you found out about it; and
- Six months of our final response.

5.3 If you miss the time limit the Ombudsman may not be able to investigate your complaint.

5.4 Alternative complaint bodies such as ProMediate exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services, but we consider the service offered by the Legal Ombudsman to be the most appropriate means of resolving any dispute.

## **6. Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA)**

6.1 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. Their contact details are:

Address: The Cube, 199 Wharfside Street, Birmingham B1 1RN  
Email: [contactcentre@sra.org.uk](mailto:contactcentre@sra.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0370 606 2555  
Website: [www.sra.org.uk](http://www.sra.org.uk)

## **7. Independent legal advice**

7.1 If at any stage of the complaints procedure it becomes appropriate, we will notify you of your right to obtain independent legal advice from another solicitor as to whether we have been negligent. If a complaint may constitute a claim for professional negligence we will generally have to refer the matter to our insurers. In those circumstances, this Complaints Policy may not be applicable.