

## **First Line Family Law Complaints Procedure**

### **Our complaints policy**

First Line Family Law is committed to providing a high quality legal service to all our clients. When something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our standards.

### **Our complaints procedure**

If you have a concern or a complaint, please contact us as soon as you are aware of the problem so this can be addressed. Please address your concerns to Richard Davies, First Line Family Law, 36 Barons Court Road, Penylan, Cardiff, CF23 9DF

### **What will happen next?**

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within five days of our receiving the complaint, enclosing a copy of this procedure. If you have special requirements due to a disability please let us know and we shall do our best to accommodate any alternative arrangements you may require.
2. We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve passing your complaint to our complaints handling partner, Richard Davies, who will review your matter file and speak to the member of staff who acted for you.
3. Richard Davies will then invite you to a meeting to discuss and, it is hoped, resolve your complaint. He will do this within 14 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
4. Within 7 days of the meeting, Richard Davies will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions he has agreed with you.
5. If you do not want a meeting or it is not possible, Richard Davies will send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including his suggestions for resolving the matter, within 21 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.



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6. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact us again to explain why you remain unhappy with our response and we will review your comments. Depending on the matter we may at this stage arrange for another solicitor to review the decision.
7. We will write to you within 14 days of receiving your request for a review, confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.
8. If you are still not satisfied, you can then contact the Legal Ombudsman using the details shown on the previous page.
9. If we have to change any of the timescales above, we will let you know and explain why.

**Please Note before contacting the Legal Ombudsman;**

1. If your complaint is specifically about our bill, you have the right to object to it and apply for an assessment of it under part III of the Solicitors Act 1974. If you should choose to exercise this right, and the court is assessing our bill, you may be unable to use the Legal Ombudsman service.
2. If you are complaining as a business client, unless you are a “micro business” (as defined by the European Union), you may not be able to use the Legal Ombudsman scheme, and should check the guidance on Legal Ombudsman’s website.
3. If you refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman as a trustee/personal representative (executor/administrator) or beneficiary of the estate/trust of a person who, before they died, had not referred the complaint to the Legal Ombudsman the period runs from when the deceased should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint; and when the complainant (or the deceased) should reasonably have known there was a cause for complaint will be assessed on the basis of the complainant’s (or deceased’s) own knowledge, disregarding what the complainant (or the deceased) might have been told if he/she had sought advice.
4. If the ombudsman considers there are exceptional circumstances (e.g. serious illness or you were still within the time limits when you made your initial complaint to them) then he/she may extend any of the above time limits to the extent that he/she considers fair.