



IN-HOUSE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

COMPLAINT FORM

Formal complaint to **my solicitor** under the Regulation 5 of the Solicitors' (Client Communication) Practice Regulations 2008.

THIS COMPLAINT FORM SHOULD BE SENT DIRECTLY TO YOUR SOLICITOR

1.	My contact details: (Name, address, telephone & email address)	
2.	Name of solicitor in charge of case:	
3.	Name & address of firm:	
4.	Nature of work (eg Family law, Conveyancing, Administration of Estate)	
5.	Date of complaint	
6.	Date solicitor was first instructed	
7.	Date the work completed or if work is ongoing say so	
8.	Date of receipt of solicitor's bill	
9.	Amount of money paid for costs (if any)	
10.	Legal Aid received?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<p>11.</p>	<p>Date of Legal Aid certificate (if appropriate)</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>Reasons for my complaint: (set out issues in list form) Continue on a separate sheet if needed.</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Desired outcome: (What would you like your solicitor to do to help sort out this problem?) Continue on a separate sheet if needed.</p>
<p>14.(a)</p>	<p>This complaint is made under the Solicitors' (Client Communication) Practice Regulations 2008 and I wish you to deal with my complaint under those procedures. You are obliged to acknowledge receipt within 7 days and provide a detailed response within 28 days otherwise I may complain to the Law Society that you have been in breach of Regulation. You are also obliged to furnish me with a copy of your complaints procedure.</p>

<p>14.(b)</p>	<p>Tick one of the following:</p> <p>I have received a copy of that procedure already and wish you to implement it <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Or</p> <p>I have not received a copy of your procedure but wish you to follow those Procedures on receipt of this form and forward a copy of your procedures to me for information in accordance with the regulations. <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>14.(c)</p>	<p>This complaint is made voluntarily. I acknowledge it may be provided to anyone in the Firm who has been involved in my case and who may need to assist in drafting the response. I acknowledge that the signature below is my own.</p> <p>Signed: _____ Date: _____</p>
	<p>Print name: _____</p>
<p>15.</p>	<p>I authorise you to liaise with</p> <p>(name of person you wish to assist you with the complaint, if any) on my behalf in respect of this complaint.</p>



These notes are designed to assist you in completing the Complaints Form if you wish to make a complaint to your Solicitor under their Complaints Procedures under the Provisions of Regulation 5 of the Solicitors (Client Communication) Practice Regulations 2008.

THIS COMPLAINT FORM SHOULD BE SENT DIRECTLY TO YOUR SOLICITOR

1. Any formal complaint to your Solicitor about their conduct or service in handling your case must be in writing under the Society's Regulations.
2. The complaint should be made to the Solicitor either within six months of the date of the work being concluded (usually after the Bill of Costs has been delivered) or within six months of finding out that the Solicitor has done something that has cause for your concern, whichever is the later.
3. Write your complaint as if you are writing to a stranger so that you then set out the facts of the case fully and correctly. The Solicitor who handles your case may not necessarily be the person who deals with the complaint within the firm. Some firms refer their complaints out to a third party to handle rather than deal with within the firm. It is therefore important that someone seeing your file for the first time fully understands the nature of your business and thereafter your concerns arising from the Solicitor's work.
4. If you have instructed the Solicitor in a number of related issues, then you should ensure that the areas of work are fully identified at Paragraph 7 on the form. For example, if you have instructed the Solicitor in relation to a divorce there may also have been issues arising in relation to contact with your children, with the sale of family/the matrimonial home, with the distribution of other property and with the financial settlement issues. All different topics should be listed separately. (Put on a separate sheet if necessary).
5. If your complaint relates only to one or two matters which the Solicitor dealt with then you should clearly identify that at Paragraph 12 of the form. If for example you have no concerns about the way in which the sale of property was handled, specifically exclude that item from your complaint. Making it clear that you are isolating matters that you are happy with from those that you were unhappy with makes it easier for the Solicitor to address your concerns and shows that you have thought clearly about your complaint.
6. Be clear about what your reasons are for the complaint at section 12.
7. Be clear about what it is you would wish the Solicitor to do in relation to it at section 13.
8. The Complaints Regulations allow the Solicitor 28 days to give you a substantial response to your complaint. If you post the complaint then you should allow 3 or 4 days for receipt of the letter of complaint and give the Solicitor 7 days to respond from that date. The response initially should be to acknowledge receipt of the complaint. If after the expiration of 28 days you do not receive a response from the Solicitor or if the response is unsatisfactory, then it is open to you to bring the matter forward to the Society.
9. It is in the interest of both you and the Solicitor that you try and resolve any outstanding concerns about the nature of the work between you. An agreed solution is in both of your interests. Therefore you are encouraged to be open with the Solicitor and consider any request for a meeting, although you are not obliged to attend any such meeting.
10. The object of the Complaints Procedure is to ensure that all issues which give rise to concern are dealt with at once by the Solicitor. Investigating your complaint takes considerable time and effort on the part of the Solicitor. It is therefore appropriate that you should include all issues of concern that are known to you at the time you first raise the complaint to allow the Solicitor to comprehensively address your concerns. It will not be of assistance to you or the Solicitor if you only raise some matters in the course of the In-house Complaints Procedure and then attempt to raise additional matters when you bring the matter to the Society.
11. Please remember that in presenting your complaint to your Solicitor it is not about professional criticism in general, it is usually about addressing misunderstandings, delays or difficulties or resolving cost issues. These are matters which any business will normally be happy to address with the client and you should therefore feel free to raise these matters with the Solicitor knowing that they are willing to address your concerns properly.
12. If after raising the matter with the Solicitor you do not receive a response, failure to do so will be a breach of the Society's Regulations which the Society will have to consider if you make a complaint to it.