

Complaints Procedure

Our complaints policy

O'Neill Richmonds Law Firm Limited 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 complaint, please contact Mr Richard Twyford

You can contact him at our Morpeth office – 25a Bridge Street, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 1PE, by telephone on 01670 339662 or by email – richard.twyford@oneill-law.com.

Rest assured, you will not be charged for any time we spend investigating and responding to your complaint.

What will happen next?

1. Within two working days Mr Twyford will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint and asking you to confirm or explain any details.
2. Your complaint will be recorded in our central register and a file opened for your complaint.
3. Your file(s) and any other documentation relevant to your complaint will be reviewed.

If it seems appropriate Mr Twyford will suggest a meeting at this stage. He would hope to be in a position to meet with you in this way no longer than 14 working days after first receiving your complaint.

If you would prefer not to meet, or if we cannot arrange this within an agreeable timescale, he will write to you fully setting out his views on the situation and any redress that he would feel to be appropriate, again within 14 working days after first receiving your complaint.

4. Within three working days of any meeting Mr Twyford will write to you to confirm what took place and any suggestions that we have agreed.
5. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, please let Mr Twyford know. He will then review his decision again. You may request that another partner in the firm carries out that review.
6. We will let you know the result of the review within five working days of the end of the review. At this time we will write to you confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.

7. We are usually able to deal with any concerns you have promptly and to your satisfaction, but if this is not the case, you will be able to make a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman provided you do so within six months of the end of our internal complaints procedure if you are still not satisfied with the outcome.

In addition, there are time limits for bringing a claim, linked to the date of the act or omission giving rise to the complaint or the date on which you should reasonably have known there were grounds for complaint. The relevant time limits are set out in the current version of the Legal Ombudsman's Scheme Rules in force from time to time and may only be extended by the Legal Ombudsman in exceptional circumstances. If you wish to bring a complaint to him, you should refer to the version which is in force at the time of your complaint.

8. Ordinarily, a complainant cannot use the Legal Ombudsman unless the complainant has first used the firm's internal complaints procedure. But a complainant can use the Legal Ombudsman if:
 - a. The complaint has not been resolved to the complainant's satisfaction within 8 weeks of first making the complaint to the firm;
 - b. or an Ombudsman considers that there are exceptional reasons to consider the complaint sooner, or, without it having been made to the firm first;
 - c. or where an Ombudsman considers that in house resolution is not possible due to irretrievable breakdown in the relationship between the firm and the complainant.
9. A complainant to the Legal Ombudsman must be one of the following:
 - d. An individual;
 - e. A micro-enterprise as defined in European Recommendation 2003/361/EC of 6 May 2003 (broadly, an enterprise with fewer than 10 staff and a turnover or balance sheet value not exceeding €2 million);
 - f. A charity with an annual income less than £1 million;
 - g. A club, association or society with an annual income less than £1 million;
 - h. A trustee of a trust with a net asset value less than £1 million;
 - i. or a personal representative or the residuary beneficiaries of an estate where a person with a complaint died before referring it to the Legal Ombudsman.

If you are not, you should be aware that you can only obtain redress by using our Complaints Handling Procedure or by mediation or arbitration, or by taking action through the Courts.

10. Legal Ombudsman Contact Details

- j. Address: PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ
- k. Telephone: 0300 555 0333
- l. Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
- m. Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk

11. Alternative complaints bodies (such as ProMediate and Small Claims Mediation) exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and our firm wish to use such a scheme. We do not automatically agree to use such a scheme.

Please feel free to contact Mr Twyford at any point to discuss your complaint.

We are extremely committed to providing an excellent level of service.