

Formal Complaints Procedure for Clients of Maguire Family Law

At Maguire Family Law we take complaints very seriously.

It is the aim that all complaints shall be handled in a timely, openly and in an effective manner. We therefore aim to resolve the matter fairly, promptly and free of charge. We will apologise if need be and do our best to offer a practical solution.

What to do if you have a complaint

If you have a complaint please contact us with details of this setting out your reasons for the complaint. You may contact us by letter or telephone or email. Details are set out in our usual correspondence to you. Please mark any complaints for the attention of the director in charge of complaints, James Maguire. His direct dial is 01625 544650 if you wish to speak with him directly and his e-mail address james.maguire@family-law.co.uk

What will happen next?

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within three working days of us receiving the complaint, enclosing a copy of this procedure.
2. We will then investigate your complaint. This will involve passing your complaint to James Maguire who will review your matter file and speak to the member of staff who acted for you.
3. James Maguire will then invite you to a meeting to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. He will do this within 10 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
4. Within three days of the meeting James Maguire 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 then James Maguire will send you a detailed written reply to your complaint (after discussing the matter at length over the telephone with you if you require), including his written suggestions for resolving the matter within 21 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
6. At this stage if you are still not satisfied you should contact us again and we will arrange for James Maguire or someone unconnected with the firm (if you prefer) to review the decision.
7. We will write to you within 14 days of receiving your request for a review, confirming our final position to you on your complaint and explaining our reasons.
8. Under our professional regulations we have overall eight weeks to consider your complaint. If we have not resolved it within this time and to your satisfaction you can ask the Legal Ombudsman to consider the complaint. The Legal Ombudsman only accepts complaints from individuals and small businesses, charities or associations.

9. The contact details for the Legal Ombudsman are as follows:

Legal Ombudsman
PO Box 6167
Slough
SL1 0EH

Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk

10. If we are unable to resolve your complaint then you can have the complaint independently looked at by the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman investigates complaints about service issues with lawyers.

The Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made to them within one year of the date of the act or omission about which you are concerned or within one year of you realising there was a concern. You must also refer your concerns to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of our final response to you.

11. Further, if you bring a complaint and our complaints procedure has been exhausted then we will consider with you:

(a) Whether or not we can settle the complaint;

(b) The name and website address of an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) approved body which would be competent to deal with the complaint (such as Ombudsman Services: www.ombudsman-services.org / Promediate: www.promediate.co.uk / ADR Group: <http://www.adrgroup.co.uk/>); and

(c) Whether we agree to use the scheme operated by that body.

12. You also have the right to complain about or challenge the bill by applying for an assessment of the bill under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974 but please note that the Legal Ombudsman may not consider a complaint about the bill if you have applied to the court for assessment of the bill.

Please note that we cannot and do not charge you for the cost of dealing with your complaint.

If we have to change any of the time scales set out above we will let you know and explain why.

What to do if you are unhappy with our behaviour

The Solicitors Regulation Authority can help 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.

Visit the SRA website to see how you can raise your concerns:

www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/

Maguire Family Law
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