

COMPLAINTS POLICY

NEW BAILEY
CHAMBERS

Revised February 2014

1. Our policy

Our aim is to give all of our clients the best possible service. However we recognise that there may be occasions when, for whatever reason, we do not always meet expectations and that complaints may arise as a consequence. When this occurs we have a procedure in place for investigating complaints and, so far as possible, resolving them to our clients' satisfaction. We review our procedure periodically, to ensure that it meets the requirements of changing circumstances, and we rely on the results of our investigations and enquiries to show us how we can improve our services and reduce the risk of future complaints.

2. Who can complain?

We accept complaints from anyone who is a client of Chambers, or has an issue relating to the conduct of any of our barristers. Clients include (but are not limited to):

- (a) Solicitors who have instructed a barrister in these Chambers;
- (b) Intermediaries who have instructed a barrister under the Licensed Access Rules;
- (c) Members of the public who have instructed a barrister under the public access scheme;
- (d) Members of the public for whom a barrister in these Chambers has acted.

If you are a member of the public who is unhappy with the services provided for you by a barristers in these Chambers you can complain directly to us; there is no need for you to go through a Solicitor.

3. When to complain

All complaints must be received within 12 months of the act or conduct complained of.

4. How to make a complaint

We will accept a complaint in whatever form is most convenient for you. You can complain by:

- (a) letter addressed to the Senior Clerk at the Chambers address;
- (b) telephone to 0151 236 9402;
- (c) fax addressed to the Senior Clerk on 0151 231 1296;
- (d) email to clerks@newbailey.com

Whichever way you contact us, if you explain that you want to make a complaint our staff will ensure that the Complaints Procedure is operated.

5. How the procedure works

Chambers' Senior Clerk is the Complaints Officer, who is the person in these Chambers with responsibility for ensuring that the Complaints Procedure operates satisfactorily. Most complaints are investigated by the Complaints Officer, although in exceptional circumstances the Chambers Management Committee may appoint a barrister within Chambers to carry out the investigation. When you tell Chambers that you wish to make a complaint, the Complaints Officer will be told about it and given any details of the complaint which you have supplied. The Complaints Officer will write to you within 7 days, acknowledging receipt of your complaint and asking for further information if it is required to process it.

One of two options will then follow:

- (a) Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Barrister concerned may wish to address the complaint directly in writing, to place on written record their response, a copy of which will be sent to you for consideration.
- (b) In the alternative if option (a) is not appropriate, or if you are not satisfied with the response, the Complaints Officer will carry out a full investigation into your complaint, getting any necessary information from you, from the person complained about and from any other person involved.

All aspects of the complaint will be considered to ensure it is dealt with to your satisfaction and the root cause of the complaint is properly identified. If the investigation is lengthy the Complaints Officer will keep you informed as to its progress.

Once the investigation has been completed you will be written to, to tell you whether your complaint has been found to be justified. If it has been found to be justified, you will be told what action will be taken to put matters right. If it has been found not to be justified you will be told the reason for this.

6. Record of complaints

Written records are kept of all complaints, including all communications and documents produced during the course of the investigation.

These records are confidential, and will only be disclosed (with adequate safeguards to preserve confidentiality so far as possible) for the purpose of (i) investigation of the complaint, (ii) internal Chambers review to assist in improving standards, and (iii) to comply with any requirement of the Bar Standards Board.

7. Complaining to the Legal Ombudsman

The Legal Ombudsman will deal with the complaints relating to the service provided by a barrister. Please note that usually the Ombudsman is not able to consider your complaint until it has first been investigated by Chambers. The Ombudsman will accept complaints within 6 years from the date of the complained of act or omission or 3 years from when the complainant should have known about the complaint.

Legal Ombudsman

**PO Box 6806,
Wolverhampton,
WV1 9WJ
Tel: 0300 555 0333
Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
www.legalombudsman.org.uk**

8. Further information

If you would like any further information please contact Chambers as suggested in paragraph 4 above.