

COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY IN RELATION TO THIRD PARTY COMPLAINTS

BACKGROUND

AJJB Law always strive to provide an excellent service and deal with all individuals and organisations it engages with appropriately and professionally. However, occasionally we may not get something right. When this happens we want to know straight away so that we can avoid it happening again.

The purpose of this policy is to set out our approach and outline our responsibilities in dealing with third party complaints. A third party complaint is a complaint by a person or organisation with whom we interact but with whom we do not have a direct legal relationship. This could be for example a customer of a client from whom we are trying to collect money, or third party organisations such as a Citizens Advice Bureau. For clients for whom we are acting for we have a different policy. This is because different regulatory provisions apply. That policy is here:

<https://www.ajjblaw.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/complaintsprocedure2020.pdf>

1. DEFINITIONS

1.1 Definition of a complaint

‘Any expression of dissatisfaction, whether oral or written, and whether justified or not, from or on behalf of an eligible complainant about the conduct of :

the firm

its employees

a third party employed by the firm

1.2 Complaint Classification

- Dispute
- Denial of facts
- Expression of Dissatisfaction (“EoD”)
- Issue in relation to AJJB LAW or our clients’ processes, services or products
- AJJB LAW employee
- An unresolved EoD

- A EoD/complaint / dispute that requires investigation

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Compliance Officer is responsible for ensuring that complaints are actioned appropriately and in accordance with agreed SLAs.

The Compliance Officer is responsible for ensuring that all complaints are actioned in accordance with relevant legislation and codes of practice.

All employees are responsible for the identification and resolution of first line complaints

3. COMPLAINTS PROCESS

Complaints can be made using a number of channels

- Letters
- Email
- Telephone
- Webchat
- Website Contact

3.1 No matter the format of the complaint, AJJB LAW aim to provide a satisfactory conclusion or a final response within the same business day. This is not always possible as there may be a requirement to speak to or obtain information from third parties.

3.2 When a complaint is made, we advise the complainant of the complaints procedure.

3.3 All complaints will be investigated impartially and comprehensively. If the investigation will take some time, we will let the complainant know what is happening and why.

3.4 Attempts will be made to conclude a complaint within three business days of the complaint being received. Where this is possible, confirmation will be required from a customer to confirm they are satisfied with the resolution.

3.5 If a complaint is resolved within three business days, AJJB LAW will send the complainant a resolution summary letter within five days of the complaint being resolved.

3.6 If a complaint is not resolved within three business days, AJJB LAW will issue a 'final response' within 8 weeks of the receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant of their right to refer their complaint to the Solicitors Regulatory Authority ("SRA"). We will also point them to the webpage:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor>

3.7 Should the complainant refer the matter to the SRA, we will co-operate fully with them to help achieve a satisfactory conclusion for the customer.

3.9 If we have been forwarded a complaint by a third party to respond to, we will action the complaint within the same timescales and with the same diligence as if the complaint was made directly to AJJB LAW.

4. ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

4.1 When a complaint is made AJJB LAW use it as an opportunity to learn how to do things better. Monthly complaints reviews are carried out to recognise trends and identify areas for improvement. Feedback is provided to senior management with actions documented to ensure that errors are not repeated.

4.2 If an issue has been caused by our processes we undertake a review and identify suitable alternatives.

4.3 Where a complaint relates to conduct, appropriate disciplinary action is taken

4.4 Where human error has been the cause, retraining is undertaken to prevent the error from happening again.

5. REDRESS

5.1 Where deemed appropriate, AJJB LAW may consider financial redress to resolve/compensate a complainant.

5.2 Where redress is either advised or ordered by a regulatory body, such payment will be made within 5 working days of the order