

## EA Law - east Anglian Chambers complaints procedure

Our aim is to provide an excellent service at all times. However, if you have a complaint then please let us know as soon as possible. It is not necessary for lay clients to involve solicitors in order to make a complaint but you are free to do so if you wish.

Chambers has a Complaints Panel, but in the first instance your complaint should be directed to the Senior Clerk, Fraser McLaren or, if it relates to the Senior Clerk, then directly to the Head of Chambers. **Please note that Chambers will only consider complaints that are raised within six months of the date of the conduct complained about or the date when you should reasonably have become aware that there was cause for complaint.**

Complaints may be made by telephone or in writing. If you wish to make a telephone complaint you should contact (as appropriate) either the Senior Clerk, Fraser McLaren, or the Head of Chambers on 01473 214481 to discuss the matter. The person you contact will make a note of the details of your complaint and what you would like done about it. If the matter is resolved he will record the outcome, check that you are satisfied with the outcome and record that you are satisfied. You may also wish to record the outcome of the discussion in writing.

If the matter is not resolved on the telephone you will be invited to write to or e-mail us about it within 14 days so that the matter may be investigated formally. If you decide that this is what you want to do please be sure to provide the following details:

- your full name and address
- the name of the person about whom you are complaining
- the names of the parties to the case, and the date and place of hearing (if any)
- the exact nature of the complaint; and
- what you would like done about it.

There is a form (downloadable from the 'Contact Us' page of our website) which outlines the information we need to deal with your complaint. Please send the completed form by post or email to:

East Anglian Chambers, 5 Museum Street, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 1HQ

Fraser McLaren - Senior clerk - [fmclaren@ealaw.co.uk](mailto:fmclaren@ealaw.co.uk)

Graham Sinclair - Head of Chambers [gs@ealaw.co.uk](mailto:gs@ealaw.co.uk)

Complaints directed to other members of Chambers will be referred internally to the Senior Clerk or Head of Chambers as appropriate.

We will wherever possible acknowledge written complaints within 48 hours of receipt and you will at that time be advised of the action to be taken and the timescale for a response. All written complaints will also be logged. Serious complaints will always be acknowledged in writing but more minor matters may be dealt with by telephone response. If the latter then the Senior Clerk or Head of Chambers will discuss your concerns with you and aim to resolve them with you. If the matter is resolved he will record the outcome, check that you are satisfied with the outcome and record that you are satisfied. You may also wish to record the outcome of the discussion in writing.

If the matter is not resolved then a member of the Complaints Panel will be appointed to investigate your complaint formally and you will then be advised in writing of their name. They will then write to you, normally within seven days of being appointed, and if you have not already provided it ask you for the information listed above and advise you that the report of his findings will be sent to you within 28 days. If at any stage it becomes apparent that this will not be possible you will be advised in writing of the reasons for the delay and be given an alternative date for completion of the report. The report will explain how the matter has been investigated, the conclusions reached and (if your complaint is upheld as justified) the proposals for resolving it.

If it appears at any stage that the matter can be dealt with appropriately without a formal written report the nominated panel member may do so with your agreement. In these circumstances a full note will be kept of the discussions which take place and any agreement reached.

If the complaint involves the potential for a finding of professional negligence or the imposition of a financial liability (going beyond the waiver of some or all of the fee) the matter will have to be passed to the subject's professional indemnity insurers, who will then deal with the matter. You will be advised of this in writing within the above time scales.

All conversations and documents relating to the complaint will be treated as confidential and will be disclosed only to the extent that it is necessary. Disclosure may be to the Head of Chambers, other members of the Complaints Panel, the Management Committee and anyone involved in the complaint and its investigation, including the barrister or member of staff about whom you have complained and the person who is investigating the matter. The Bar Standards Board is also entitled to inspect documents and seek information about the complaint when discharging its auditing and monitoring duties. As part of our commitment to client care we keep a written record of all complaints and retain documents for a period of six years. Our Management Committee reviews anonymised records of complaints regularly with a view to improving services.

If you are not satisfied with the final outcome of your complaint you may refer the

matter to the Legal Ombudsman, the independent body dealing with complaints about lawyers :

Legal Ombudsman  
PO Box 6806  
Wolverhampton  
WV1 9WJ

Tel : 0300 555 0333

E : [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)

**Please note that the Legal Ombudsman is not able to consider your complaint unless it has first been investigated by Chambers, and there is also a time limit from the date of the act or omission about which you are complaining within which you must make your complaint.**