



STONEHAGE FLEMING LAW LIMITED

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Strictly Private & Confidential

Stonehage Fleming Law Limited (“SFL”) is committed to the provision of high quality legal services and client care. However, in the event of your being dissatisfied, you are entitled to complain. This will help SFL improve its standards and ensure that in future you are getting the service you deserve.

1 How do I complain?

- 1.1 If you are dissatisfied with the service you have received, please contact us with the details. You should send details of your complaint to:

Len Durham
Stonehage Fleming Law Limited
15 Suffolk Street
London
SW1Y 4HG

- 1.2 SFL will have eight weeks within which to consider your complaint. If we have not resolved it within this time you may complain to the Legal Ombudsman whose contact details are provided below:

Legal Ombudsman
PO Box 6806
Wolverhampton
WV1 9WJ

- 1.3 The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) can help you if you think a solicitor might have breached the Code of Conduct or SRA principles. Reports can be made through the SRA website. Visit the SRA for more information: <https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/>

- 1.4 If you have any form of special needs which may require a particular method of communication please let us know and we will do all we can to accommodate you.

2 What happens once SFL has received your complaint?



- 2.1 We will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint, and setting out our understanding of it, within 3 days of us having received your complaint. We will also let you know the name of the individual who will be handling your complaint. In most instances the complaint will be dealt with, in the first instance, by Len Durham (Chairman of SFL) or another director.
- 2.2 We will then begin investigation of your complaint. This will generally involve reviewing the matter file and speaking with the solicitor(s) who acted on your behalf. We may, if necessary, ask you to provide us with further details and/or information.
- 2.3 We may then invite you to a meeting to discuss and, hopefully, resolve your complaint. If we do so we will advise you within 14 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
- 2.4 Within five working days of the meeting we will write to you and confirm what took place and any solutions or further actions we have agreed with you.
- 2.5 If you do not want a meeting or it is not possible to hold a meeting we will send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including our suggestions for resolving the matter, either within 28 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter or, where we have asked for further information, within 14 days of receiving that information from you. If we require more time to investigate your complaint for any reason, we will notify you and confirm when we will next contact you.

3 What if you are still not happy with SFL's response to your complaint?

- 3.1 You should contact us again and we will arrange for someone unconnected with the matter at SFL to review the decision. We will inform you in writing of who this will be.
- 3.2 We will write to you within 14 days of receiving your request for a review confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasoning.



- 3.3 If you are still unhappy with SFL's decision you can contact the Legal Ombudsman via the details provided at paragraph 1 above.

4 Is there a timeframe within which I must complain to the Legal Ombudsman?

The Legal Ombudsman can investigate complaints up to six years from the date of the problem happening or within three years of when you found out about the problem. If you wish to refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman this should be done within six months of the date of this letter.

5 If I am not happy can I challenge a bill issued by SFL?

You can apply to the court for something known as a detailed assessment. You may wish to take legal advice before you apply to do so as you may have to pay the costs of the assessment.

If you have applied to court for an assessment, the Legal Ombudsman may not consider your complaint about the bill unless the proceedings are put on hold by the parties agreeing or by court order. The Legal Ombudsman may also dismiss a complaint about a bill if it would be more suitable for the issue to be dealt with by a court.

The court can examine the whole bill, and can either approve it or reduce it. You will have to pay further costs to use this procedure, but if the court decides to reduce the bill by more than one-fifth, you will not pay the costs of assessment.

You should apply for an order for assessment within one calendar month from the date you receive the bill. If more than one month has passed, the court may order that the bill be assessed, but if more than twelve months have passed, the court will only make an order in exceptional circumstances. If you have paid the bill in full more than one year before the application, the court has no power to make an order, even if there are exceptional circumstances.



An experienced adviser's help will usually be needed to assess whether you should challenge a solicitor's bill, for example, at a Citizens Advice Bureau.

