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COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

We aim to provide an excellent service at all times, and we trust that you will be satisfied with all aspects of the service you receive from Lincoln's; however, if you are dissatisfied in any way, you are invited to let us know as soon as possible. It is not necessary to involve your solicitors in order to make a complaint, but you are free to do so should you wish.

In the first instance, where a concern or problem has arisen, it is best to contact the barrister you have been dealing with to discuss your concerns as they will be best placed to resolve the problem. This helps all individual barristers to continually improve the service they are providing to each client, and it affords them the opportunity to rectify a problem before escalating it. If you still feel the issue is unresolved, we invite you to submit your concerns to us using the details and processes below.

If you should have any concerns, please raise them with our Head of Chambers, Julian Smith: jsmith@lincolnsinnfields.com. In the event that the complaint is about Julian, please refer the matter to Andrew Leonard: enquiries@lincolnsinnfields.com.

Complaints process

When contacting us to make a complaint, please provide the following information as a minimum, to allow us to deal with your concerns as efficiently and effectively as possible:

- a. Your name and address;
- b. Which member(s) of chambers or staff you are complaining about;
- c. The detail of the complaint; and
- d. What you would like done.

Acknowledgement

Within 7 days of receiving your complaint, your complaint will be acknowledged and you will be informed of the person who has been appointed to investigate your complaint. You may be asked to confirm or explain the details you have set out. If we need further information to process your complaint, this will be requested within this initial 7-day period.

Investigation

Your complaint will be investigated fully before a formal response is issued.

Reply

Within 14 days of completing the investigation, you will be sent a detailed reply to your complaint.

The reply will set out:

- The nature and scope of the investigation;
- The conclusion on each complaint and the basis for the conclusion; and
- If they find that you are justified in your complaint, the proposals for resolving the complaint.

Once you have received and read the reply, please let us know if you are happy with our suggestions and whether or not you consider the matter to be resolved.

Decision review

If, upon review of our reply, you are dissatisfied with our suggestions or investigations, you should contact us again setting out your concerns. At this point, an independent review of our decision can be arranged.

This review will be conducted within 14 days from the date you communicate your dissatisfaction with our reply.

Final position

Once the review has been completed; we will write to you with the outcome within 7 days of receiving the review outcome. This final position on your complaint will include any reasons and you will be provided with the contact details for the Legal Ombudsman. If you are still dissatisfied at this stage, you are welcome to contact the Legal Ombudsman about your complaint (see below).

Timescale

In any event, the entire process for considering your complaint and any review will not take more than 8 weeks.

Confidentiality

All conversations and documents relating to the complaint will be treated as confidential and will be disclosed only to the extent that is necessary.

Record Keeping

As part of our commitment to client care we make a written record of any complaint and retain all documents and correspondence generated by the complaint for a period of six years.

If you are still not happy with the result:

If you feel the complaint has not been resolved to a satisfactory standard, then you can have the complaint independently looked at by the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman investigates problems about poor service from lawyers.

Before accepting a complaint for investigation, the Legal Ombudsman will check that you have tried to resolve your complaint first. If so, then you must take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:

- Within six months of receiving a final response to your complaint; and
- No more than one year from the date of act/omission; or
- No more than one year from when you should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint.

If you would like more information about the Legal Ombudsman, please contact them on the following:

Web: <https://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/>

- Call: 0300 555 0333 between 9am to 5pm.
- Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
- Post: Legal Ombudsman PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH

Frequently Asked Questions concerning the Legal Ombudsman can be found here:

<https://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/information-centre/faqs/>

Regulatory matters

Whilst the Legal Ombudsman will look independently at complaints about service, if you believe there have been any breaches of the rules governing barristers, then you can ask the Bar Standards Board to investigate.

You can find out more information, including how to report your concerns here:

<https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/for-the-public/reportingconcerns.html#Reporting%20a%20concern>

Alternative dispute resolution

Alternative complaints bodies, such as Promediate (<http://www.promediate.co.uk/>) exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should we both wish to use such a scheme. We agree to use Promediate.