

Complaints Procedure

Office Complaints Procedure Sjöcrona Van Stigt Advocates

Article 1 Definitions

In this Office Complaints Procedure, the following definitions apply:

- *Complaint*: Any written expression of dissatisfaction by or on behalf of the Client against a Lawyer or persons working under his/her responsibility, regarding the conclusion and performance of an engagement letter, the quality of the services provided, or the amount invoiced, other than a Complaint as referred to in Article 4 of the (Dutch) Act on Advocates;
- *Complainant*: The Client or his/her representative filing a Complaint;
- *Complaints officer*: The Lawyer in charge of handling the Complaint.

Article 2 Scope

1. This Office Complaints Procedure applies to every engagement letter between Sjöcrona Van Stigt Advocates and the Client.
2. Every Lawyer at Sjöcrona Van Stigt Advocates will ensure that Complaints are handled in accordance with the Office Complaints Procedure.

Article 3 Purpose

The purpose of this Office Complaints Procedure is:

1. to lay down a procedure for dealing with Complaints from Clients within a reasonable period of time and in a constructive manner;
2. to lay down a procedure for determining the causes of Complaints from Clients;
3. to continue and improve existing relationships through proper handling of Complaints;
4. to train staff to respond to Complaints in a Client-focused manner;
5. to improve the quality of services through Complaints handling and Complaints analysis.

Article 4 Information at the commencement of the provision of services

1. This Office Complaints Procedure has been made public. Prior to signing the engagement letter, the Lawyer will notify the Client that the firm has an Office Complaints Procedure in place and that it will apply to the services provided.
2. Sjöcrona Van Stigt Advocates has specified in its General Terms and Conditions the independent party or authority to whom a Complaint that has been dealt with but remains unresolved can be submitted in order to obtain a binding decision, and has made that clear in the confirmation of the engagement.
3. Complaints as referred to in Article 1 of this Office Complaints Procedure which remain unresolved after being dealt with, will be submitted to the Disputes Committee for the Legal Profession.

Article 5 Internal procedure

1. If a Client approaches the firm with a Complaint, the Complaint shall be passed on to Mr. A.J.N. van Stigt, who shall act as Complaints Officer.
2. The Complaints Officer shall notify the person against whom the Complaint is directed that a Complaint has been submitted and will give the Complainant and the person complained against the opportunity to explain the Complaint.

3. The person complained against will endeavour, together with the Client, to arrive at a resolution, with or without the intervention of the Complaints Officer.
4. The Complaints Officer will attempt to ensure that the Complaint is resolved within four weeks of receipt of the Complaint, or, if this is not possible, will inform the Complainant of the reason for the delay and of the period within which an opinion on the Complaint will be provided.
5. The Complaints Officer will notify the Complainant and the person against whom the Complaint is directed, in writing, of the opinion on the validity of the Complaint—such notification may be accompanied by recommendations.
6. If the Complaint has been resolved satisfactorily, the Complainant, the Complaints Officer, and the person complained against will sign the opinion on the validity of the Complaint.

Article 6 Confidentiality and handling of Complaints free of charge

1. The Complaints Officer and the person complained against will observe confidentiality while handling the Complaint.
2. The Complainant does not owe any fee for the handling of the Complaint.

Article 7 Duties

1. The Complaints Officer will be responsible for the timely handling of the Complaint.
2. The person subject to the Complaint will keep the Complaints Officer informed of any contact and any possible resolution.
3. The Complaints Officer will keep the Complainant informed of the handling of the Complaint.
4. The Complaints Officer keeps the Complaint file up-to-date.

Article 8 Complaints record

1. The Complaints Officer will record the Complaint and its subject matter.
2. A Complaint can be categorized according to a number of subjects.
3. The Complaints Officer periodically reports on how Complaints have been handled and makes recommendations to prevent new Complaints, and to improve procedures.