

Westhoff Van Namen Complaints procedure

1. Definitions

- *complaint*: any written expression of dissatisfaction by or on behalf of the client towards the lawyer or the persons working under his responsibility regarding the conclusion and execution of an agreement for services, the quality of the services provided or the amount of the fee, not being a complaint as referred to in paragraph 4 of the Lawyers Act;
- *complainant*: the client or client's representative making a complaint;
- *complaints officer*: the lawyer in charge of handling the complaint;
- *WVN*: the private limited company Westhoff Van Namen B.V..

2. Applicability

- 2.1. This office complaint scheme applies to any assignment agreement between WVN and the client.
- 2.2. Every lawyer at WVN shall ensure complaint handling in accordance with the office complaint scheme.

3. Objectives

The purpose of this office complaint scheme is to:

- Establishing a procedure to deal constructively with client complaints within a reasonable period of time;
- Establishing a procedure to identify the causes of client complaints;
- maintaining and improving existing relationships through proper complaint handling;
- train staff in client-centred response to complaints;
- Improving service quality through complaint handling and complaint analysis.

4. Information at start of service

- 4.1. This office complaint scheme has been made public. Before entering into the contract of engagement, the lawyer informs the client that the firm has an office complaints procedure and that it applies to the services provided.
- 4.2. Complaints not resolved after treatment in accordance with Article 5 of these complaint rules may be submitted by the Complainant or WVN to the competent court.

5. Internal complaint procedure

- 5.1. If a client approaches the firm with a complaint, the complaint will be directed to Mr L. Westhoff, who thus acts as complaints officer.
- 5.2. The complaints officer shall notify the person complained about of the filing of the complaint and give the complainant and the person complained about an opportunity to explain the complaint.
- 5.3. The person about whom a complaint has been made tries to reach a solution together with the client, whether or not after the intervention of the complaints officer.
- 5.4. The complaints officer shall settle the complaint within four weeks of receiving the complaint or notify the complainant of any deviation from this deadline, stating the time limit within which an opinion on the complaint will be given.
- 5.5. The complaints officer shall notify the complainant and the person complained against in writing of the opinion on the merits of the complaint, whether or not accompanied by recommendations.
- 5.6. If the complaint is settled satisfactorily, the complainant, the complaints officer and the person complained against sign the judgment on the merits of the complaint.

6. Confidentiality and free complaint handling

- 6.1. The complaints officer and the person complained about shall observe confidentiality in handling complaints.
- 6.2. The complainant is not liable to pay any compensation for the costs of handling the complaint.

7. Responsibilities

- 7.1. The complaints officer is responsible for the timely resolution of the complaint.
- 7.2. The person complained about will keep the complaints officer informed about any contact and possible resolution.
- 7.3. The complaints officer will keep the complainant informed about the handling of the complaint.
- 7.4. The complaints officer maintains the complaint file.

8. Complaint registration

- 8.1. The complaints officer will register the complaint along with the complaint subject.
- 8.2. A complaint can be divided into several topics.
- 8.3. The complaints officer reports periodically on the handling of complaints and makes recommendations to prevent new complaints, as well as to improve procedures.
- 8.4. At least once a year, reports and recommendations are discussed at the office and submitted for decision.