

Office complaints procedure of Straatman Koster Advocaten B.V.

Article 1 definition of terms

In this office complaints procedure the terms below have the following meanings:

- *complaint*: every written expression of dissatisfaction by or on behalf of the client towards the lawyer or any persons working under his responsibility concerning the formation and performance of a letter of engagement, the quality of the services or the amount of the invoice, not being a complaint within the meaning of subsection 4 of the Counsel Act (*Advocatenwet*);
- *complainant*: the client or its/his representative making a complaint;
- *complaints officer*: the lawyer charged with handling the complaint.

Article 2 scope of applicability

1. This office complaints procedure applies to every letter of engagement between Straatman Koster Advocaten B.V. and the client.
2. Each lawyer at Straatman Koster Advocaten B.V. will handle the complaint in accordance with the office complaints procedure.

Article 3 objectives

The objectives of this office complaints procedure are:

- a. to lay down a procedure for handling clients' complaints in a constructive manner, within a reasonable period of time;
- b. to lay down a procedure for determining the causes of clients' complaints;
- c. to retain and improve existing relationships by means of good complaint handling;
- d. to train associates in responding to complaints in a client-focused manner;
- e. to improve the quality of the services by handling and analysing complaints.

Article 4 information on commencement of the services

1. This office complaints procedure has been published for general inspection. Prior to concluding a letter of engagement, the lawyer will draw the client's attention to the fact that the firm has an office complaints procedure and that this procedure is applicable to the services.
2. The general terms and conditions of Straatman Koster Advocaten B.V. state to which independent party or body a complaint that has not been resolved through the complaints procedure can be submitted in order to obtain a binding decision and this has been made clear in the engagement letter.

3. Complaints within the meaning of Article 1 of this office complaints procedure that have not been resolved through the complaints procedure may exclusively be submitted to the competent court in the district of Rotterdam (in accordance with Article 13 of our General Terms and Conditions).

Article 5 internal complaints procedure

1. If a client submits a complaint to the firm, the complaint will be passed on to Mr M. (Thijs) Straatman, who will act as complaints officer. If the complaint concerns Mr Straatman, Mr J.F. Nouhuys, will act as complaints officer.
2. The complaints officer will inform the person against whom a complaint has been made of the complaint having been made and will give both the complainant and the person against whom a complaint has been made the opportunity to respond to the complaint.
3. The person against whom a complaint has been made will endeavour to come to a solution together with the client, whether or not after mediation by the complaints officer.
4. The complaints officer will resolve the complaint within four weeks of receiving the complaint or will inform the complainant, stating reasons, of a deviation from this period, stating the period within which an opinion will be given on the complaint.
5. The complaints officer will inform the complainant and the person against whom a complaint has been made in writing of the opinion on the merits of the complaint, whether or not accompanied by recommendations.
6. After the complaint has been handled satisfactorily, the complainant, the complaints officer and the person against whom a complaint has been made will sign the opinion on the merits of the complaint.

Article 6 confidentiality and complaint handling free of charge

1. In handling the complaint, the complaints officer and the person against whom a complaint has been made will observe confidentiality.
2. The complainant will not have to pay for the costs of the complaints procedure.

Article 7 responsibilities

1. The complaints officer is responsible for handling the complaint promptly.
2. The person against whom a complaint has been made will keep the complaints officer informed of any contact and of a possible solution.
3. The complaints officer will keep the complainant informed of progress in handling the complaint.
4. The complaints officer is responsible for the complaint file.

Article 8 complaint records

1. The complaints officer will keep a record of the complaint, stating the subject of the complaint.
2. A complaint can be classified in several categories.
3. *The complaints officer will present a periodic report on the handling of the complaints and will make recommendations to prevent new complaints and to improve the procedures.*
4. *At least once a year the reports and recommendations will be brought up for discussion at the firm and acted upon as required.*