
Gibson & Co.
Complaints Procedure – GDPR / Data Breaches

1. Our Policy

You have the right to complain to us in the event you consider Gibson & Co. (a trading style of Gibson & Co. Solicitors Ltd.) has breached the UK GDPR.

You will not be charged for any time spent handling your complaint.

You can request a copy of this Complaints Procedure at any time.

We will issue a copy of this Complaints Procedure:

- On request.
- When you raise a complaint.
- On our website.

We shall aim to deal with any complaint that we may receive promptly, fairly, openly, and effectively.

We will aim to issue a final response within 8 weeks of the date your complaint is received.

2. Making a Complaint

If at any point you become aware of or believe the Firm has breached the UK GDPR or any other data protection law or regulations, then you should inform us immediately so that we can do our best to resolve the problem.

You should raise your concerns with the Data Compliance Manager, who is **Jane Gibson**, by emailing jane.gibson@gibsons-law.com, or by writing to her at Gibson & Co. Solicitors, 77-87 West Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE15 6PR, or by calling 0191 273 3817. In Jane's absence, please contact the Practice Manager, Melanie Kennedy at mk@gibsons-law.com.

Making a complaint will not affect our relationship with you.

If you need to make a complaint, you should:

- Complain as soon as possible.
- Provide your full name and contact details.
- Provide us with information for us to identify you.
- Be clear on what the issue is and how you would like it to be resolved.
- Wait for an acknowledgement within 72 hours.
- Our aim is to resolve all complaints within eight weeks from the date of receipt.

If you require any help in making your complaint, we will try to help you.

3. **Handling and Resolving a Complaint**

We will write to you within 72 hours acknowledging your complaint.

We will investigate your complaint. This will usually involve:

- Reviewing your complaint.
- Reviewing any relevant documents.
- Liaising with those in the Firm who have engaged with you.

We may also need to ask you for further information or documents. If so, we will ask you to provide the information within a specified period.

We will update you on the progress of your complaint at appropriate times.

We will provide you with a written outcome following an investigation into your complaint, outlining what we have done and what we propose to do to resolve it.

We will respond to your complaint in writing within 8 weeks of the date we receive it. If you are not happy with our outcome of your complaint, or we have not acknowledged your complaint within 72 hours, or we have not responded with an outcome within 8 weeks, you can raise your complaint with the **Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)**.

Before accepting a complaint for investigation, the **ICO** will check that you have tried to resolve your complaint with us first. If you have not, they are likely to reject your complaint and refer you to us.

If you would like more information about the **ICO** and its complaints procedure, please visit their website for guidance on how to complain: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/data-protection-complaints/>.

4. **The Legal Ombudsman (LeO) and the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA)**

As a law firm, in addition to meeting the requirements of the UK GDPR, we are also required to meet the requirements of the LeO and SRA.

Therefore, if you do not wish to raise your complaint with the ICO and we have not provided you with an outcome within eight weeks, you can also contact the Legal Ombudsman, provided that you fit one of the following categories:

- an individual.
- a business or enterprise that was a micro-enterprise (European Union definition) when it referred the complaint to the authorised person.
- a charity that had an annual income net of tax of less than £1 million when it referred the complaint to the authorised person.

- a club/association/organisation, the affairs of which are managed by its members/a committee/a committee of its members, that had an annual income net of tax of less than £1 million when it referred the complaint to the authorised person.
- a trustee of a trust that had an asset value of less than £1 million when it referred the complaint to the authorised person.
- a personal representative or beneficiary of the estate of a person who, before he/she died, had not referred the complaint to the Legal Ombudsman.

They will look at your complaint independently and it will not affect how we handle your case. The Legal Ombudsman's service is free of charge and can investigate complaints about the legal service you have received from us.

Before accepting a complaint for investigation, the Legal Ombudsman will check that you have tried to resolve your complaint with us first.

The Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made to them within one year of the date of the act or omission about which you are concerned, or within one year from when you should have known about the complaint. You must also refer your concerns to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of our final response to you. The Legal Ombudsman will only extend these time limits if they determine it to be fair and reasonable to do so.

If you would like more information about the **Legal Ombudsman**, please contact them as follows:

Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk

Phone Number: 0300 555 0333 between 9am to 5pm.

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Address: Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH

For complaints that relate specifically to an alleged breach of the SRA Standards and Regulations including the SRA Accounts Rules, you should refer the matter to the **Solicitors Regulation Authority** (SRA). This could be for things like general misconduct, losing your money or treating you unfairly because of your age, a disability or other characteristic. The SRA will not investigate complaints about services provided by the Firm. They will refer such matters to the Legal Ombudsman.

Website: <https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/>

Phone Number: 0370 606 2555 between 8am to 5pm. Except Tuesday 9:30am to 5pm.

Contact page: <https://www.sra.org.uk/home/contact-us/>

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