

Office Complaints Procedure 2022

A&S Advocaten B.V.

1. Definitions

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

- *Complaint*: every written statement of dissatisfaction expressed by or on behalf of the client against the lawyer concerned or the persons working under the lawyer's responsibility about the formation and the performance of a letter of engagement, the quality of the services provided or the amount of the fee note, not being a complaint as referred to in Section 4 of the Dutch Counsel Act (*Advocatenwet*);
- *Complainant*: the client or their representative who expresses a complaint ;
- *Complaints officer*: the lawyer who is charged with handling the complaint;

2. Scope of application

- 2.1 This office complaints procedure applies to every letter of engagement between A&S Advocaten and the client.
- 2.2 Every lawyer at A&S Advocaten ensures that complaints are handled in conformity with the office complaints procedure.

3. Objectives

The objectives of this office complaints procedure is to:

- a. establish a procedure to constructively handle a clients' complaint within a reasonable term;
- b. establish a procedure for determining the cause of a client's complaint;
- c. preserve and improve existing relationships by properly dealing with complaints;
- d. train employees to respond to complaints in a client-oriented manner;
- e. improve the quality of the services provided through complaint handling and complaint analysis.

4. Informing the client on commencement of services

- 4.1 This office complaints procedure is published on the website of A&S Advocaten. Before entering into a letter of engagement, the lawyer points out to the client that the law office uses a complaints procedure and that this procedure applies to the services provided.
- 4.2 A&S Advocaten has informed the client in the letter of engagement and by way of the general terms and conditions to which independent party or body a complaint that has been dealt with and not been resolved , can be submitted in order to obtain a binding decision .
- 4.3 Complaints as referred to in article 1 of this office complaints procedure that have not been resolved after being dealt with, will submitted to the district court.

5. Internal complaints procedure

- 5.1 If a client approaches the law firm with a complaint, the complaint is passed on to Benno Nijman, who acts as the complaints officer.
- 5.2 The complaints officer informs the person who is the subject of the complaint about the he complaint and gives the complainant and the person who is the subject of the complaint the opportunity to explain the complaint.
- 5.3 The person who is the subject of the complaint tries to find a solution together with the client, either with or without intervention by the complaints officer.
- 5.4 The complaints officer deals with the complaint within four weeks after receiving the complaint or informs the complainant that this term will be deviated from, stating reasons and specifying the term within which an opinion on the complaint will be given.
- 5.5 The complaint's officer informs the complainant and the person who is the subject of the complaint of the opinion and the validity of the complaint in writing; this may or may not include recommendations.
- 5.6 If the complaint is satisfactorily resolved, the complainant, the complaints officer and the person who is the subject of the complaint will sign the opinion regarding the validity of the complaint.

6. Confidentiality and no handling fee

- 6.1 The complaints officer and the person who is the subject of the complaint will observe confidentiality while dealing with the complaint.
- 6.2 The complainant will not have to pay a fee for the handling of the complaint.

7. Responsibilities

- 7.1 The complaints officer is responsible for the timely handling of the complaint.
- 7.2 The person who is the subject of the complaint keeps the complaints officer informed their contact with the client and a possible solution.
- 7.3 The complaints officer keeps the complainant informed about the handling of the complaint.
- 7.4 The complaints official keeps the complaints file up to date.

8. Complaint registration

- 8.1 The complaints officer registers the complaint and the related subject matter.
- 8.2 A complaint can be divided into several subject matters.
- 8.3 The complaints officer periodically reports on how the complaints have been handled and makes recommendations preventing new complaints and improving procedures.
- 8.4 At least once a year, the reports and recommendations are discussed and submitted for decision-making purposes within A&S Advocaten.

9. Applicability

- 9.1 With effect from 1 January 2022, this complaints procedure supersedes the complaints procedure applicable at A&S until that time. This complaints procedure also immediately apply to all current engagements, because as of 1 January 2022 A&S is no longer affiliated with the Disputes Committee for the Legal Profession.