

## **Office Complaints Procedure**

### **Article 1 Definitions**

In this office complaints procedure the following expressions have the meanings stated:

- Complaint: any written statement of dissatisfaction expressed by or on behalf of a client against the concerned lawyer or the persons working under the lawyer's responsibility regarding the formation and 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 Advocatenwet (Counsel Act).
- Complainant: the client or his representative that expresses a complaint.
- Complaints officer: the lawyer charged with handling the complaint.

### **Article 2 Scope of application**

- This office complaints procedure applies to every letter of engagement concluded between Delissen Martens and the client.
- Every lawyer at Delissen Martens will ensure that complaints are handled in conformity with the office complaints procedure.

### **Article 3 Object**

The object of this office complaints procedure is to:

- Establish a procedure for constructively dealing with a client's complaint within a reasonable period of time.
- Establish a procedure for determining the cause of a client's complaint.
- Maintain and improve existing relationships by correctly dealing with complaints.
- Train employees to respond to complaints in a client-orientated manner.
- Improve the quality of services through complaint handling and complaint analysis.

### **Article 4 Informing the client on the complaints procedure and other bodies**

- This office complaints procedure can be consulted via the website of Delissen Martens. Before entering into the letter of engagement, in the confirmation of the instructions the lawyer points out to the client that the law office uses an office complaints procedure and that this procedure applies to the services.
- Complaints as referred to in Article 1 of these office complaint regulations that are not resolved after treatment may be submitted to the Dean of the Hague Bar Association or the civil court.

**Article 5 Internal complaints procedure**

- Delissen Martens ensures that the complaint is passed on to the complaints officer.
- The complaints officer informs the person who is the subject of the complaint and gives the client and the person who is the subject of the complaint the opportunity to provide an explanation of the complaint.
- The person who is the subject of the complaint tries to find a solution together with the client, either with or without the complaints officer's intervention.
- The complaints officer deals with the complaint within four weeks after he has received the complaint or informs the client that this term will be deviated from, stating the reasons and specifying the term within which an opinion will be issued regarding the complaint.
- The complaints officer informs the client and the person who is the subject of the complaint of the opinion about the validity of the complaint in writing; this may or may not include recommendations.
- If the complaint has been satisfactorily resolved, the client, the complaints officer and the person who is the subject of the complaint will sign the opinion regarding the validity of the complaint.

**Article 6 Confidentiality and no handling fee**

- The complaints officer and the person who is the subject of the complaint will maintain confidentiality while dealing with the complaint.
- The client does not have to pay a fee for the complaint handling costs.

**Article 7 Responsibilities**

- The complaints officer is responsible for handling the complaint in the specified time.
- The person who is the subject of the complaint keeps the complaints officer informed of his/her contacts with the client and of any possible solution.
- The complaints officer keeps the client informed of the handling of the complaint.
- The complaints officer keeps the complaint file up to date.

**Article 8 Complaint registration**

- The complaints officer registers the complaint, specifying the subject matter.
- A complaint can be divided in several subject matters.
- The complaints officer periodically reports on how the complaints have been handled and makes recommendations for preventing new complaints and improving procedures.
- At least once a year, the reports and recommendations are discussed and submitted for decision-making purposes within Delissen Martens.