

RWV Advocaten – Complaints Procedure

Article 1. Definitions

- A complaint: any written expression of dissatisfaction by or on behalf of a client regarding a lawyer or a person working under the lawyer's responsibility and concerning the establishing or performing of a contract of engagement, the quality of the services or the amount of the invoice, other than a complaint as referred to in subsection 4 of the Dutch Act on Advocates [*Advocatenwet*].
- The complainant: The client of RWV Advocaten, or the representative of the client, submitting a complaint to RWV Advocaten.
- Complaints procedure: the procedure set out here for handling complaints.
- Complaints officer: the lawyer responsible for handling complaints at RWV Advocaten and not involved in the services provided to the complainant.

Article 2. Scope of application

1. This complaints procedure applies to all contracts of engagement agreed between RWV Advocaten and the client.
2. Every lawyer at RWV Advocaten must ensure that complaints are handled in accordance with the complaints procedure.

Article 3. Objectives

The objectives of this complaints procedure are to:

- a. establish a procedure for handling clients' complaints constructively and within a reasonable period of time;
- b. establish a procedure for determining the causes of clients' complaints;
- c. retain and improve existing relationships by ensuring that complaints are handled properly and effectively;
- d. train staff to respond to complaints in a client-focused manner;
- e. handle and analyse complaints in a manner that improves the quality of the services provided.

Article 4. Information provided at the start of the relationship

1. This complaints procedure is made publicly known. Before the contract of engagement is entered into, the lawyer informs the client that RWV Advocaten has a complaints procedure and that this applies to the services to which the contract relates.
2. RWV Advocaten states in its general conditions the name of the independent party or body to whom an unresolved complaint may be submitted for a binding ruling and makes this known when confirming the engagement.

3. Complaints as referred to in Article 1 of this complaints procedure and that are not resolved through this procedure are submitted to the District Court of The Hague.

#### Article 5. Internal complaints procedure

1. If a client notifies RWV Advocaten of a complaint, the complaint is passed to the lawyer, Mr F.M.L. Dekkers, who acts as the complaints officer.
2. The complaints officer must give the person to whom the complaint relates the opportunity to comment on the complaint.
3. The person to whom the complaint relates and the client will attempt to resolve the complaint, whether through the complaints officer or otherwise.
4. The complaints officer must handle the complaint within four weeks of receipt or notify the complainant of any longer period of time that may be needed for a decision, stating the reasons for this.
5. The complaints officer must notify the complainant and the person to whom the complaint relates as to whether the complaint is considered justified and may include recommendations in this notification.
6. If the complaint is satisfactorily resolved, the complainant, the complaints officer and the person to whom the complaint relates must sign the decision reached in this respect.

#### Article 6. Confidentiality and handling of complaints free of charge

1. The complaints officer and the person to whom the complaint relates must handle the complaint confidentially.
2. The complainant is not required to pay any fee for the complaint to be handled.

#### Article 7. Responsibilities

1. The complaints officer is responsible for handling the complaint promptly.
2. The person to whom the complaint relates must notify the complaints officer of any contact with the complainant and any possible solution.
3. The complaints officer must keep the complainant informed of the handling of the complaint.
4. The complaints officer must keep the complaint file up-to-date.

#### Article 8. Complaints registration

1. The complaints officer must register the complaint and the subject to which it relates.
2. A complaint may be classified as relating to various subjects.

3. The complaints officer must report periodically on the handling of complaints and make recommendations for preventing new complaints and improving procedures.
4. The reports and recommendations must be discussed by RWV Advocaten and submitted for decision-making at least once a year.

Article 9. How to submit a complaint

- 9.1 The complainant must submit the complaint to RWV Advocaten in writing and marked for the attention of the complaints officer. Any complaint submitted must be submitted within three months after the complainant became aware of or could reasonably be expected to have become aware of the act or omission that led to the complaint.
- 9.2 The complaint must include at least:
  - a. the complainant's name and address;
  - b. the date;
  - c. a description of the act or omission that led to the complaint;
  - d. a signature.
- 9.3 RWV Advocaten may decide not to handle a written complaint if the complaint does not meet the requirements of Article 9.2. If a complaint does not meet the requirements of Article 9.2, the complainant must be notified and given the opportunity to provide the missing details within two weeks after the date of notification. If no such supplementary details are received, RWV Advocaten may decide not to handle the complaint.