



Office complaints procedure Hoff Advocaten (with effect from 1 January 2015)

Article 1 - Definitions

In this office complaints procedure, the following definitions shall apply:

- *complaint*: any written expression of dissatisfaction by or on behalf of the client towards the lawyer or the persons working under his responsibility regarding the performance and execution of an agreement for services, the quality of the services provided or the amount of the fees, not being a complaint as referred to in paragraph 4 of the Legal Counsel Act (*Advocatenwet*);
- *plaintiff*: the client or client's representative making a complaint;
- *complaints officer*: the lawyer in charge of handling the complaint.

Article 2 - Scope of application

1. This office complaints procedure applies to every agreement for services between Hoff Advocaten and the client.
2. Each lawyer at Hoff Advocaten shall ensure complaint handling in accordance with this office complaints procedure.

Article 3 - Objectives

The purpose of this office complaints procedure is to:

- a. Establish a procedure to deal constructively with client complaints within a reasonable period of time;
- b. Establish a procedure to identify the causes of client complaints;
- c. maintain and improve existing relations through proper complaints handling;
- d. train staff in client-centred responsiveness to complaints;
- e. Improve service quality through complaints handling and complaints analysis.

Article 4 - Information at the start of service provision

1. This office complaint procedure has been made public. Before entering into the contract of engagement, the lawyer advises the client that the firm has an office complaints procedure and that it applies to the services provided.
2. Through its general terms and conditions, Hoff Advocaten has designated which independent party or body will hear and bindingly determine a complaint that is not resolved through this procedure and has identified such party or body in the engagement letter.
3. Complaints as referred to in Article 1 of these office complaints procedure that are not resolved through this procedure will be submitted to the District Court of Noord-Holland, Haarlem place of session.



Article 5 - Internal complaint procedure

1. If a client notifies the firm with a complaint, the complaint will be directed to Mr. J.M.K.P. Cornegoor, who acts as complaints officer.
2. The complaints officer shall notify the person complained about of the filing of the complaint and afford the plaintiff and the person complained about an opportunity to express their views concerning the complaint.
3. The person about whom a complaint has been made shall try to reach a solution together with the client, whether or not upon the intervention of the complaints officer.
4. The complaints officer shall review the complaint within four weeks of receiving the complaint or notify the plaintiff of an extension of this deadline, advising the plaintiff of the reasons and stating the time limit within which an opinion on the complaint will be provided.
5. The complaints officer shall notify the plaintiff and the person complained about in writing of the opinion on the merits of the complaint and may at the same time provide recommendations.
6. If the complaint is dealt with satisfactorily, the plaintiff, the complaints officer and the person complained about will sign the opinion on the merits of the complaint.

Article 6 - Confidentiality and costs

1. The complaints officer and the person complained about shall observe confidentiality in handling complaints.
2. The plaintiff is not liable to pay any compensation for the costs of handling the complaint.

Article 7 - Responsibilities

1. The complaints officer is responsible for the timely resolution of the complaint.
2. The person complained about will keep the complaints officer informed about contacts with the plaintiff and possible resolutions of the dispute.
3. The complaints officer will keep the plaintiff informed about the handling of the complaint.
4. The complaints officer maintains the complaint file.

Article 8 - Complaint registration

1. The complaints officer records the complaint along with the complaint subject.
2. A complaint can be divided into several topics.
3. The complaints officer reports periodically on the handling of complaints and makes recommendations to prevent new complaints, as well as to improve procedures.
4. At least once a year, reports and recommendations are discussed at the office and submitted for decision.