

## **Dirkzwager advocatuur complaints procedure**

### **Article 1 definitions**

In this office complaints procedure, the terms below are defined as follows:

- complaint: any written expression of dissatisfaction by or on behalf of a client concerning the lawyer or persons active under his responsibility in connection with the formation and performance of a contract for services, the quality of the services or the amount of the invoice, not being a complaint as referred to in paragraph 4 of the Counsel Act;
- complainant: the client or the client's representative who makes a complaint;
- complaints officer: the lawyer charged with handling the complaint;
- Dirkzwager: the public limited company Dirkzwager N.V. whose object is practising law, including the legal practice, the notarial practice and tax consultancy.

### **Article 2 scope**

1. This office complaints procedure applies to all contracts for services concluded between Dirkzwager and clients relating to the provision of services by one or more Dirkzwager lawyers.
2. All Dirkzwager lawyers handle complaints in accordance with this complaints procedure.

### **Article 3 objectives**

This office complaints procedure has the following objectives:

- a. to set out a procedure for handling complaints from clients within a reasonable period in a constructive manner;
- b. to set out a procedure for identifying the underlying causes of the client's complaint;
- c. to maintain and improve existing relationships via a satisfactory handling of complaints;
- d. to train staff how to respond to complaints in a client-orientated manner;
- e. to improve the quality of the services on the basis of complaints handling and complaints analysis.

### **Article 4 information upon commencement of the provision of services**

1. This office complaints procedure has been published. The lawyer informs the client before conclusion of the contract for services that the firm applies an office complaints procedure and that it applies to the services.
2. If so desired, complaints as referred to in article 1 of this complaints procedure that have not been resolved after they have been handled may be submitted to the Disputes Committee for the Legal Profession, with which Dirkzwager is affiliated, by the complainant or Dirkzwager.

### **Article 5 internal complaints procedure**

1. In the event a client contacts the firm with a complaint, the complaint will be forwarded to complaints officer P. Bergkamp (PO Box 55, 6500 AB Nijmegen; e-mail address: [bergkamp@dirkzwager.nl](mailto:bergkamp@dirkzwager.nl); direct dial number: +31 (0)24-3813153.

2. The complaints officer notifies the person in respect of whom a complaint was submitted of the submission of the complaint and affords the complainant and the person in respect of whom the complaint was submitted to provide an explanation concerning the complaint.
3. The person in respect of whom a complaint was submitted will attempt to find a solution in consultation with the client, with or without intervention on the part of the complaints officer.
4. The complaints officer will attempt to find a solution that is acceptable to both the complainant and the person in respect of whom a complaint was submitted.
5. The complaints officer does not act as arbiter and can only mediate and make recommendations.
6. The complaints officer handles the complaint within four weeks after receipt of the complaint or notifies the complainant of a deviation from this term while stating the reasons therefore and indicating the term within which an opinion will be provided concerning the complaint.
7. The complaints officer notifies the person in respect of whom a complaint was submitted in writing of the opinion concerning the validity of the complaint, which opinion may or may not be accompanied by recommendations.

#### **Article 6 confidentiality and complaints handling free of charge**

1. The complaints officer and the person in respect of whom a complaint was submitted will observe confidentiality as regards the internal complaints handling.
2. The complainant does not owe a fee in connection with the costs of handling the complaint.

#### **Article 7 responsibilities**

1. The complaints officer is responsible for the timely handling of complaints.
2. The person in respect of whom a complaint was submitted keeps the complaints officer informed of direct contact with the complainant concerning a possible solution.
3. The complaints officer keeps the complainant informed of the handling of the complaint.
4. The complaints officer maintains a complaints file.

#### **Article 8 complaints registration and recommendations provided by the complaints officer**

1. The complaints officer registers the complaint stating the subject of the complaint.
2. A complaint may be classified in different subjects.
3. The complaints officer reports to the Dirkwager board on a regular basis regarding the handling of complaints and makes recommendations for the purpose of preventing new complaints and to improve procedures.
4. The reports and recommendations of the complaints officer are discussed within Dirkwager at least once per year.