

Complaints Handling Statement

We appreciate that due to the nature and role of our operation some degree of dissatisfaction may occur and view complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person that has made the complaint.

We are committed to getting things right and we take any complaints very seriously. This statement sets out our approach to the resolution of complaints to the satisfaction of our clients, the debtors and defendants to minimise recurrence by driving service improvements across the business.

What is a Complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about a service provided by us or someone acting on behalf of us.

We welcome complaints which may lead to an improvement in our working processes, however a complaint is not a complaint where we have simply gone about our legal duty.

This only includes dissatisfaction about the service provided, including the conduct of staff, or the process involved in deciding what action to take (or not to take).

The following are examples of things that are treated as complaints:

- ◆ Dissatisfaction about how we have dealt with a situation, for example, failing to follow procedure, clarity of information, confidentiality
- ◆ Claims that a member of staff has been unprofessional

It does not however, include dissatisfaction about a debts or legal instructions being passed to us to execute action, or our internal processes and actions which are in accordance with legislation. Such matters will not be addressed as a complaint and passed to our administration team to respond.

Legal Duty

We are required to act under the strict legislation and standards to which governs our actions and have built into our Code of Practice which defines how we operate. All of our staff have been comprehensively trained in accordance with our Code of Practice and we undertake monitoring of our staff to ensure that they are acting appropriately at all times.

Learning from our mistakes

Where we uphold a complaint, we will implement changes to prevent a similar reoccurrence. This can include:

- ◆ Further training and potential disciplinary action where appropriate; and
- ◆ Changes to the way we do things

How to complain

- ◆ by letter via the post - 6 Europa Boulevard, Birkenhead, Merseyside, CH41 4PE
- ◆ by email - complaint@colxgroup.com
- ◆ verbally via our Contact Centres
- ◆ through our website

All complaints and responses are logged on our system, and reviewed monthly. As we are acting on behalf of our clients, your complaint and the outcome may be shared with them.

Timescales

'Formal Stage' complaints are acknowledged within 2 days and a full response will be issued in accordance with our clients specified timescales or within 10 working days, whichever is sooner. In the event of the complaint requiring longer to investigate, we will advise you of this and provide the reasons why.

If you require help

Should you require assistance in making your complaint or require reasonable adjustments please contact us and we would be happy to assist you. We partner with the Local Authorities to work closely with local advice providers to ensure you can access basic advice and information on welfare rights issues, free of charge, near to where you live. They can help you to prioritise your debts, and can even help you with your arrangement negotiations.

Resolving Complaints

Complaint Stages

Our complaints process consists of two stages.

Informal	♦ Complaints Officer	We often find that complaints are based on a misunderstanding of the process or the actions we have taken to date. Where possible, our complaints team will try to answer queries or resolve concerns within 5 working days. If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome(s) provided or your complaint is of a serious nature, this will enter our complaint process as below and be acknowledged within 2 working days.
Formal	♦ Senior Complaints Officer or Complaints Manager	Formal complaints are investigated by our Senior Complaints Officers or Complaints Manager. They will investigate and respond to you in accordance with our clients specified timescales or within 10 working days, whichever is sooner. You will be provided with the outcome of the investigation and details on what to do if you remain dissatisfied.

During an investigation where the complaint is about a member of staff they will provide a written statement of their events. We review video footage recordings and listen to recorded telephone conversations to review actions of the case.

When a complaint is about process, we shall review alongside legislation, best practice and our policies.

The contents of our outcomes detailed on our reply will depend on the nature of the complaint and result of the investigation.

After Formal

It is important that you provide us the opportunity to exhaust our complaints process fully before seeking an independent reviews on your complaint. This will allow us to thoroughly investigate matters for you with an aim to seeking an amicable resolution in a timely manner. In the unlikely event that you remain dissatisfied with the outcomes provided to you after our Final Response, we will provide you the opportunity to seek an independent review via one the following parties where appropriate:

- ♦ **Client** - *i.e. Local Authority, HMCTS, Legal Partners*
- ♦ **Enforcement Conduct Board (ECB)** (*England & Wales*)
 - Website: [How to complain - enforcementconductboard](#)
 - Email: complaints@enforcementconductboard.org
 - Post: Enforcement Conduct Board, PO Box 7956, Wolverhampton, WV1 9US
- ♦ **Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)**, *through our client (England & Wales only)*
 - Website: [Make a Complaint](#)
- ♦ **Information Commissioners Office (ICO)** – *for all Data & Information Security matters*
 - Website: [Make a Complaint](#)
- ♦ **Society of Messenger-at-Arms & Sheriff Officers (SMASO)** (*Scotland only*)
 - Website: [How to complain - SMASO](#)
 - Email: admin@smaso.org.uk
 - Post: Administrative Secretary, Forth House, 28 Rutland Square, Edinburgh, EH1 2BW

Feedback

To determine the overall level of satisfaction with our handling of your complaint, you will be provided details of how to provide us feedback on our complaints handling process.