

SEVERIJN HULSHOF

A D V O C A T E N

Office Complaints Procedure of Severijn Hulshof Advocaten (version of January 2015)

Article 1 Conceptual definitions

In this office complaints procedure, the concepts below shall be defined as follows:

- *Complaint*: any written expression of dissatisfaction from or on behalf of the client regarding the attorney or persons working under his supervision or a contract for professional services, the quality of the services or the amount of the invoice, not being a complaint as intended in Section 4 of the Counsel Act
- *Complainant*: the client or his representative expressing a complaint
- *Complaints officer*: the attorney responsible for handling the complaint

Article 2 Scope of application

1. This office complaints procedure applies to any contract for professional services between Severijn Hulshof and the client.
2. Every attorney at Severijn Hulshof shall ensure that complaints are handled according to the office complaints procedure.

Article 3 Objectives

This office complaints procedure serves the following purposes:

- a) Establish a procedure to handle complaints from clients constructively within a reasonable time frame.
- b) Establish a procedure for determining the causes of complaints from clients.
- c) Maintain and improve existing relations by processing complaints well.
- d) Train staff members to consider the client in responding to complaints.
- e) Improve service levels based on processing and analysing complaints.

Article 4 Information upon commencement of services

1. This office complaints procedure has been publicized. The attorney informs the client prior to signing the contract for professional services that the firm maintains an office complaints procedure, and that this procedure applies to the services.
2. In the contract for professional services Severijn Hulshof Advocaten has listed the independent party or agency where a complaint that has not been handled satisfactorily may be submitted for a binding decision and has made this known upon confirming the instruction.
3. Complaints as intended in Article 1 of this office complaints procedure that remain unresolved after processing shall be presented to the competent court in The Hague.

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Article 5 Internal complaints procedure

1. If a client contacts the office regarding a complaint, this client shall be put in touch with Mr L.C. van den Berg, Esq., acting as complaints officer in this case.
2. The complaints officer shall notify the person the complaint concerns that a complaint has been submitted and shall enable the person the complaint concerns to elaborate on the complaint.
3. The person the complaint concerns shall try to find a solution together with the client, with or without involving the complaints officer.
4. The complaints officer shall process the complaint within four weeks of receiving the complaint or shall explain the reasons for deviating from this term to the complainant, indicating the term within which an opinion about the complaint will be provided.
5. The complaints officer shall notify the complainant and the person the complaint concerns in writing regarding the opinion as to whether the complaint is justified, possibly including recommendations.
6. If the complaint has been handled satisfactorily, the complainant, the complaints officer and the person the complaint concerns shall sign the opinion as to whether the complaint is justified.

Article 6 Confidentiality and processing complaints free of charge

1. The complaints officer and the person the complaint concerns shall keep the complaint process confidential.
2. The complainant shall not be required to pay any compensation for processing the complaint.

Article 7 Responsibilities

1. The complaints officer shall be responsible for handling the complaint in a timely manner.
2. The person the complaint concerns shall keep the complaints officer informed about any contacts and a potential solution.
3. The complaints officer shall keep the complainant informed about how the complaint is handled.
4. The complaints officer shall keep the record of the complaint.

Article 8 Complaint registration

1. The complaints officer shall register the complaint, indicating the subject the complaint concerns.
2. A complaint may comprise several topics.
3. The complaints officer shall report periodically on handling the complaints and shall present recommendations to avert new complaints, as well as to improve procedures.
