

## **Complaints Procedure for Milestone Advocaten**

### **Article 1 definitions**

The following definitions apply in this complaints procedure:

- *complaint*: Any written expression of dissatisfaction from or on behalf of a customer directed to an attorney-at-law or employee working under their responsibility regarding the formation and performance of a contract for professional services, the quality of the services provided, or the amount of a fee statement, other than a complaint as referred to in Section 4 of the Counsel Act (Advw);
- *complainant*: the client or their representative who communicates a complaint;
- *complaints officer*: the attorney-at-law who conducts the complaints procedure.

### **Section 2 area of application**

1. This complaints procedure is applicable to all contracts for professional services between Milestone Advocaten and the client.
2. Every attorney-at-law at Milestone Advocaten is responsible for handling complaints in accordance with the complaints procedure for the firm.

### **Section 3 objectives**

The objectives of this complaints procedure are:

- a. to record a procedure for handling complaints from clients within a reasonable period of time and in a constructive manner;
- b. to record a procedure to establish the causes of complaints from clients;
- c. to maintain and improve existing relationships through effective complaints handling;
- d. to train employees to respond to complaints in a client-oriented manner;
- e. to improve the quality of services provided through complaints handling and complaints analysis.

### **Article 4 information at the commencement of services**

1. This complaints procedure is openly available. An attorney-at-law will draw the client's attention prior to entering into the contract for professional services to the firm's complaints procedure and its applicability to the services to be provided.
2. Milestone Advocaten has inserted in its general terms and conditions to which independent party or instance a complaint that remains unsolved may be submitted.
3. Any complaints as referred to in Article 1 of this complaints procedure that remain unresolved at the end of the procedure will be brought before the district court.

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

1. Any complaint with which a client approaches the firm will be referred to Caroline van der Zwet, who will act as complaints officer.
2. The complaints officer informs the person who is the subject of the complaint that a complaint has been lodged and gives the complainant and the person who is the subject of the complaint an opportunity to comment on the complaint.
3. The person who is the subject of the complaint will attempt together with the client to arrive at a solution, possibly with the intervention of the complaints officer.
4. The complaints officer will handle the complaint within four weeks of receipt, or will notify the complainant, stating the reasons, of the deviation from this period, and specifying the period within which an opinion on the complaint will be given.
5. The complaints officer will inform the complainant and the person who is the subject of the complaint in writing of the opinion regarding the validity of the complaint, together with any recommendations.
6. If the complaint is handled to the client's satisfaction, the complainant, the complaints officer and the person who is the subject of the complaint will sign the judgement on the soundness of the complaint.

### **Section 6 confidentiality and no-fee complaints handling**

1. The complaints officer and the person who is the subject of the complaint will observe confidentiality regarding the handling of the complaint.
2. The complainant will be charged no fee for the complaints officer's handling of the complaint.

**Section 7 responsibilities**

1. The complaints officer is responsible for the timely handling of a complaint.
2. The person who is the subject of the complaint will duly inform the complaints officer of any contact and any potential solution.
3. The complaints officer will inform the complainant of progress on the handling of the complaint.
4. The complaints officer will maintain the complaints file.

**Section 8 complaint registration**

1. The complaints officer registers the complaint and notes the substance of the complaint.
2. The substance of a complaint may fall into more than one category.
3. The complaints officer reports on a regular basis on the progress of handling complaints and makes recommendations to prevent recurrence of complaints and to improve the procedures.
4. The reports and the recommendations are discussed in the firm at least once a year and submitted for decision.