



LEGAL PROFESSION ACT 2006 - SECTION 471

IMPORTANT

- We suggest that you try to resolve your complaint yourself directly with the lawyer involved before making a written complaint.
- Please phone our Professional Standards & Ethics Solicitor for information about whether this complaint-handling procedure is appropriate to your complaint.
- The Law Society cannot provide legal advice or legal assistance, nor influence the outcome of court proceedings.
- If you do wish to make a written complaint, please read the enclosed brochure and then complete this form. If you have difficulty with this form, please contact us.
- Do NOT send original documents with your complaint. Please attach photocopies of any relevant material.
- Please sign the declaration on the last page before you submit this form.
- If you are complaining about more than one practitioner, please submit a separate complaint form about each of them. You may copy this form or ask us for another one. Please lodge all complaints at one time if possible.
- We will usually send a copy of your complaint to the practitioner during our inquiries. If this will be a problem for you, please indicate this on the complaint form and/or contact us.

Section A

1. YOUR DETAILS

Surname: Other names:

Postal Address:

.....Postcode:

Telephone: Home:Business: Mobile:

Email Address:

Are you making this complaint on behalf of another person, such as a client or relative? Yes/No

If yes, please tell us who you are making the complaint for, and why.

Complainant's name:

Address:.....

..... Postcode:

Reason:

.....

Section B

6. By making this complaint, what outcome are you hoping to achieve?

- have my documents / files transferred
- receive an apology
- resolve my dispute about fees / costs
- improve my communication with the lawyer
- improve the service provided by the lawyer
- resolve / mediate my dispute with the lawyer
- receive financial compensation
- have the lawyer disciplined
- other (specify)

Note: In general, compensation can be awarded **only if**:

- the Law Society or Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal are satisfied that you have suffered loss because of the practitioner’s conduct and it is in the interests of justice to make the order; **and**
- the Society or Tribunal finds the practitioner is likely to be guilty, or is guilty, of unsatisfactory professional conduct or professional misconduct, **and**
- you are **not** entitled to compensation from other sources, e.g. by taking private legal action or claiming on a Fidelity Fund.

You should seek independent legal advice about other possible actions you can take for compensation.

The maximum amount of compensation which can be awarded by the Society or the Tribunal is \$10,000, unless both you and the practitioner consent to an order for a greater amount. If you are claiming compensation, please set out details of the amount claimed and the reasons, in the space under 10 on the next page or on an additional page/s and supply any supporting documents which quantify your loss.

7. When did the conduct occur?

.....
If the conduct you are complaining about occurred more than three years ago, your complaint can only be accepted if the Law Society is satisfied that:

- it is just and fair to do so, considering the delay and the reason/s for it, or
- the complaint concerns an allegation of professional misconduct and it is in the public interest to deal with the complaint.

As a matter of fairness, the Law Society will only accept a complaint about conduct that occurred more than three years ago after both the complainant and the practitioner have had an opportunity to make submissions about whether the complaint should be accepted. You should explain the delay here:

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8. If your complaint involved a court case, please give details.

Case name: Case number:

Court name and courthouse location:

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Dates of hearing & judgment:

9. Please list the main issues you are complaining about.

a)

b)

c)

10. Please give full details of the complaint/s listed in question 9.

Please tell us about:

- the events that have led to your complaint
- what you say the lawyer did or did not do
- the date or dates of the conduct you are complaining about.

If you do not provide full details we may not be able to proceed with investigating your complaint

If there is not enough space on this form, please attach another page/s.

Attach **copies** of relevant documents to support your complaint, and a list of these documents.

Do not send original documents.

If there are witnesses who can provide direct **independent** evidence that will help us deal with your complaint, please provide their names and full contact details. Say why you think they could help.

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Section C: Legal Costs

* Do not complete this section unless there is a problem about legal costs / fees.

* You can only make a complaint under this part against a lawyer who was representing you or an estate or trust of which you are a beneficiary.

1. I had a written costs agreement with the legal practitioner about costs

- Yes (please attach a copy) No

2. I attach a copy of my bill(s) from the legal practitioner

- Yes No

3. The total amount of the bill(s) are:

- fees \$.....
- disbursements \$.....

My problem with the bill(s) is that:

- I was given an estimate of a smaller amount, namely \$
- I think the bill is too high for the amount of work done
- I think the bill includes work that was not done or was not necessary
- I think the practitioner handled the matter badly and I do not want to pay for this.
- Other : give details

I have paid the practitioner:

- Yes, in full : Date of Payment
- Yes, in part : Date of Payment & amounts/s
- No

Declaration

I declare that the information I have given in, and with this complaint, is true and correct.

Signed: Date:

Please send the completed form and photocopied attachments to:

The Chief Executive Officer, Law Society Northern Territory:-

**By Mail: -
GPO Box 2388
Darwin NT 0801**

**By Delivery:-
Level 3, 9 Cavenagh Street
Darwin NT 0800**