

OFFICE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE VALEGIS ADVOCATEN

Article 1 – Definitions

- Complaint: any written expression of dissatisfaction by or on behalf of a client towards the lawyer or the person(s) working under his/her responsibility regarding the conclusion or execution of a client engagement for professional services (*overeenkomst van opdracht*), the quality of services provided or the amount invoiced, excluding, however, a complaint within the meaning of paragraph 4 of the Netherlands Law on the Attorney Profession (*Advocatenwet*);
- Complainer: the client or the representative filing a complaint;
- Complaint officer: the lawyer who is charged with handling the complaint.

Article 2 – Application

1. This office complaints procedure applies to every engagement for professional services between Valegis Advocaten and the client;
2. All lawyers of Valegis Advocaten are responsible that complaints are handled according to the office complaint procedure.

Article 3 – Objectives

The objective of this office complaint procedure is:

- a. To lay down a procedure to handle clients' complaints in a constructive way within a reasonable period of time;
- b. To lay down a procedure for establishing the cause of a client complaint;
- c. To maintain and improve existing client relationships by means of properly handled complaints;
- d. Training client-focussed employees responding to complaints;
- e. To improve the quality of the services by resolving and analysing complaints.

Article 4 – Information - commencement employment agreement

1. This office complaints procedure has been made public. Before entering into an agreement of assignment the client shall be informed that there is complaint procedure in place and that this procedure will apply to the services provided;
2. Valegis Advocaten has included a clause in the general terms and conditions that the complaints procedure shall apply.

Article 5 – Internal complaint procedure

1. If the client approaches the office with a complaint, the complaint shall then be forwarded to the complaint officers, Mr A.H.C. van der Maas and Mrs C. Brederije.
2. The complaint officer will inform the person against whom the complaint has been made about the filing of the complaint and will give the complainant and the person against whom the complaint has been made the opportunity to explain the complaint.
3. The person against whom the complaint has been made will try to resolve the issue together with the client, whether or not involving the complaint officer;
4. The complaint officer shall resolve a complaint within 4 weeks after receipt of the complaint, or shall inform the complainant, stating grounds of any deviation of this term, indicating the term within which an opinion of the complaint shall be given;

5. The complaint officer shall inform the complainant and the person against whom the complaint has been made in writing about the opinion on the merits of the complaints, whether or not with recommendations;
6. If the complaint is handled satisfactory, the complainant, the complaint officer and the person against whom the complaint has been made will sign the opinion of the merits of the complaint.

Article 6 – Confidentiality and free of charge complaints handling

1. The complaint officer and the person whom the complaint has been made shall observe strict confidentiality with regard to the handling of the complaint;
2. The complainant shall not owe any compensation with respect to the costs involved in handling of the complaint.

Article 7 – Responsibilities

1. The complaint officer shall be responsible for handling the complaint promptly;
2. The person against whom the complaint has been made shall keep the complaint officer informed about any contact with the complainant and a possible solution;
3. The complaint officer shall keep the complainant informed about the handling of the complaint;
4. The complaint officer shall keep records of the file.

Article 8 – Complaint registration

1. The complaint officer shall register the complaint indicating the subject of the complaint;
2. A complaint can be divided into several topics.
3. The complaint officer shall report periodically about the handling of the complaints and shall make recommendations in order to prevent new complaints arising as well as to improve procedures;
4. Any reports and recommendations will be discussed and presented for approval at the office at least once a year.

Article 9 – Judge

1. If the clients' complaint is not handled satisfactory, the client can decide to commence the complaint before the competent judge in Amsterdam.
2. Valegis and the client could, contrary to the procedure as defined in this office complaints procedure, at any moment decide together not to continue handling the complaint, in which case the client shall commence the complaint before the competent judge in Amsterdam.