

Alerts

Warning: Correspondence misusing the name of Peter Ward and Goodman Derrick LLP

17 February 2023

Correspondence misusing the name of Goodman Derrick LLP and Peter Ward in relation to a dispute about a family member's estate.

What is the scam?

The SRA has been informed that unknown third parties are misusing the stationery of Goodman Derrick LLP, including using an amended version of the Goodman Derrick LLP's letterhead and an office stamp bearing the name of Goodman Derrick LLP.

The letter seen by the SRA claims to be from Peter Ward at Goodman Derrick LLP and refers to the estate of the recipient's family member. The letter misuses the name and details of a genuine firm of solicitors and a genuine solicitor (see below).

The letter provides the telephone number of '+44(0)2074041459,' the fax number of '+44(0)2074041411' and an email address of 'peterward@gdlaw.co.uk.'

Any business or transaction through the above email address, telephone number and fax number are not undertaken by a solicitors' practice or an individual authorised and regulated by the SRA.

Is there a genuine firm or person?

The SRA authorises and regulates a genuine firm of solicitors with the name Goodman Derrick LLP. The firm closed on 16 May 2022 and merged into RWK Goodman LLP. The document referred to above is not connected to the genuine firm.

The SRA authorises and regulates a genuine firm of solicitors called RWK Goodman LLP. The genuine telephone number for the firm's head office is 01225 730 100. The genuine firm of RWK Goodman LLP has confirmed that neither it or Goodman Derrick LLP have any connection to the correspondence or contact details referred to above.

The SRA authorises and regulates a number of solicitors with the name Peter Ward. RWK Goodman LLP has confirmed that Peter Ward is not connected to Goodman Derrick LLP or RWK Goodman LLP.

What should I do?

When a firm's or individual's identity has been copied exactly (or cloned), due diligence is necessary. If you receive correspondence claiming to be from the above firm(s) or individual(s), or information of a similar nature to that described, you should conduct your own due diligence by checking the authenticity of the correspondence by contacting the law firm directly by reliable and established means. You can contact the SRA to find out if individuals or firms are regulated and authorised by the SRA and verify an individual's or firm's practising details. Other verification methods, such as checking public records (e.g. telephone directories and company records) may be required in other circumstances.