

# Information you should expect to receive from your solicitor

You can download a summary of the information on this page in our leaflet, *Thinking of using legal services? What to expect* (PDF, 4 pages, 511K) [[globalassets/documents/consumers/thinking-using-legal-services.pdf?version=4964af](#)].

We also have a shortened version of *Thinking of using legal services? What to expect* (PDF, 2 pages, 498K) [[globalassets/documents/consumers/shortened-consumer-leaflet.pdf?version=496487](#)].

If your first language is not English, you can view "Thinking of using legal services? What to expect" in other community languages [[consumers/choosing/what-to-expect/community-languages](#)].

This page contains information about

- what you should be able to expect from any solicitor or firm regulated by the SRA [[#expect](#)]
- what you need to know about referrals [[#referrals](#)]
- fairness, equality and adjustments for disabilities [[#equality-disability](#)]
- how to complain about a solicitor if something goes wrong [[#complain](#)]

Initially, your solicitor should gain an understanding of the matter you need advice about, and explain what is likely to be involved in acting for you, if they agree to do so.

Once your solicitor has agreed to act for you, you will need to agree on a number of issues and you will be given a lot of information. Take the time to make sure you understand this and ask questions where you are unsure. Read our information on getting the best from your solicitor [[consumers/choosing/get-best-solicitor](#)].

Effective communication from the very beginning is essential to make sure everything goes smoothly and you don't get any nasty surprises later on. You can communicate with your solicitor in person, by telephone, by email, or any combination of these. It is important that you establish from the start what means of communication you will ordinarily use. This may happen during an initial interview [[consumers/choosing/#narrowing](#)].

Your solicitor will tell you who will be handling your matter and give you the name of a supervisor, if your work is being supervised. Most importantly, he or she will tell you if the person handling your matter is a solicitor. If this person isn't a solicitor, you will be told what their status is—for example, a legal executive or a trainee. This information must be given to you in writing once they have agreed to act for you.

## *What you should expect from a solicitor regulated by us*

If you use a solicitor or a firm [[consumers/using-solicitor/legal-jargon-explained#firm](#)] regulated by the SRA, you should

- receive all the information you need to make a well-informed choice about the service you need, and who should provide it to you;
- know how much it will cost [[consumers/instructing/costs-legal-aid](#)] or how the cost will be calculated, and be given a clear explanation at the end of the transaction, and at any time on request, of the charges; receive a good level of service from appropriately trained and qualified people

who comply with the law and our requirements;

- receive advice and services from advisers who put your best interests first and respect the confidentiality of your situation;
- be able to make a complaint [#complain] if things go wrong—to the firm itself or to the Legal Ombudsman—and the complaint should be dealt with fairly and quickly;
- receive compensation if it is found that things went wrong and you are entitled to make a claim—either from the firm's own resources or from its insurer;
- where the solicitor or firm refers you on to another adviser, you should be able to rely on them only referring you to someone who is right for the job, and you'll be told if either party gets any benefit (financial or otherwise) from that referral;
- feel assured that the SRA takes action where the solicitor or firm are found not to meet standards.

## *What you need to know about referrals*

Sometimes you may be referred to a solicitor by an organisation such as a trade union, insurance company or claims management company, or your solicitor may refer you to another organisation that may be able to help you. If this happens, the solicitor must always tell you if they get any benefit, financial or otherwise, from that arrangement.

## *Equality and reasonable adjustments for disabilities*

Solicitors and firms are under the same duties under the Equality Act 2010 [<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>] as any other service provider, as well as being bound by the SRA Code of Conduct [[/secure/ui/cms/content/solicitors/handbook/code](https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/about/secure/ui/cms/content/solicitors/handbook/code)] to make sure they treat you fairly and without discriminating against you on the grounds of

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion and belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

If you have specific needs because of a disability that require a solicitor or firm to provide reasonable adjustments to accommodate you, make sure you tell them what they are as soon as possible to give them the best chance to make these adjustments.

You may find it useful to contact the following organisations for extra help in accessing legal services

- Citizens Advice [<http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/index/getadvice.htm>]
- The Disability Law Service [<http://www.dls.org.uk/>]

## *How to complain about a solicitor*

Sometimes things go wrong and you don't get the outcome that you want as a result. You won't always win your case, but any solicitor or firm should do their best for you and let you know if this is likely to happen, or it's not in your best interest to take a course of action. However, if something does go wrong and you think your solicitor or firm is at fault, you can complain.

**The first thing you must always do is complain to the solicitor or firm.**

If the solicitor or firm fails to resolve the complaint to your satisfaction, you can take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman [<http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/>]. The Legal Ombudsman deals with poor service and can refund or reduce your legal fees, order the firm to apologise or order the firm to pay you compensation.

If you think your solicitor has breached one of the SRA Principles, you can report them or their firm to us [[consumers/problems/report-solicitor/](#)][—this page also contains further information about](#)

- how to make a complaint to your solicitor, including helpful tips and links to further help with making complaints
- when to take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman and more about what they do; and
- when and how to report a solicitor or firm to us.