

31st December 2024

BY EMAIL

Our Ref: FOI 2339

Dear [REDACTED]

Your request for information was received on 18th October 2024 and was dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please be advised that the Business Services Organisation (BSO) has now completed its search for the information you requested in relation to the Directorate of Legal Services.

Firstly, please accept my apologies for the delay in this matter. Please find the response below:

1. Since the Directorate of Legal Services (DLS) provides legal representation to all the public Health and Social Care Bodies in Northern Ireland, according to the Law Society of Northern Ireland, its Solicitors are required to have their own in-house complaints procedure, and this should be available from the DLS upon request, therefore, please confirm if the DLS operates such an in-house complaints procedure.

BSO's relationships with its customers (which are HSC public bodies) is governed by Service Level Agreements between BSO and its customers. These SLAs set out arrangements to deal with any complaints from BSO customers regarding the provision of services, including legal services, by BSO. BSO Legal Services does not provide legal services to the public. BSO Legal Services does not therefore have a complaints policy which can be accessed by members of the public since they are not clients of BSO Legal Services.

2. If this is the case, please provide me with a copy of the DLS In-House Complaints Procedure Complaint Form 'as soon as ever possible' (digital/electronic version will suffice).

Please refer to above response.



#3. If this is not the case, please explain why, contrary to the rules of the Society, that this is not the case?

Please refer to above response.

I hope that this information provided assists you. If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter, as the BSO, along with all other public authorities are not obliged to accept internal review requests after this period has lapsed.

In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to

Information Governance Manager,
2 Franklin Street,
Belfast,
BT2 8DQ

If, following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision-making panel, you remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request, you may make a complaint under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the BSO has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act.

You can contact Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office – Northern Ireland
10th Floor
Causeway Tower
9 James Street South
Belfast
BT2 8DN

Telephone: 0303 123 1114

Email: ni@ico.org.uk

In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. However, the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Yours Sincerely,



Karen Bailey
Chief Executive