



## **LSRA report shows 655 complaints received and 671 complaints closed in six month period**

***Regulator welcomes operation of new independent Tribunal for misconduct complaints***

**Press Release: Wednesday 27 September 2023**

The Legal Services Regulatory Authority (LSRA) today publishes its second complaints report for 2023 which shows it received 655 complaints about legal practitioners in a six month period, with 671 complaints closed.

The report provides details of the number and nature of complaints about legal practitioners (solicitors and barristers) received and investigated during the reporting period of 4 March 2023 to 1 September 2023.

The main areas of legal services that attracted complaints were litigation, conveyancing, family law, and wills and probate.

### **Total complaints received**

- The LSRA's Complaints and Resolutions Unit received a total of 655 complaints in the reporting period. A total of 624 complaints related to solicitors and 31 to barristers, reflecting the higher number of solicitors and their greater level of contact with consumers. Multiple complaints may be brought against an individual legal practitioner.
- A total of 427 complaints (65%) alleged misconduct, with 203 complaints (31%) related to legal services of an inadequate standard. A further 25 (4%) came under the category of excessive costs (overcharging).
- The LSRA's Complaints and Resolutions staff received a total of 1,602 phone calls and e-mails requesting information and/or complaints forms. A total of 867 files were opened initially as queries.

### **Total complaints closed and outcomes**

- A total of 671 complaints were closed during the reporting period.
- Of these, 299 complaints (44%) were found to be inadmissible, 133 (20%) were resolved with the assistance of the LSRA, 114 were determined by the LSRA and 60 (9%) were withdrawn or could not proceed. A further 21 complaints were referred to the Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal (LPDT) for further investigation. The LPDT is a separate body to the LSRA which hears complaints of alleged misconduct.



- The 133 complaints resolved with the assistance of the LSRA included 19 complaints resolved between the parties in the LSRA's Informal Resolution process with the help of trained mediators.
- The 114 determined complaints comprise 50 upheld complaints and 64 complaints which were not upheld.

Overall, legal practitioners were directed to pay a total of €31,862 in compensation to complainants in the reporting period.

**On publishing today's report, the LSRA's Chief Executive Dr Brian Doherty said:**

*"Today's report shows a sustained high level of consumer complaints to the LSRA over the past six months about inadequate legal services, excessive costs and alleged misconduct. Misconduct complaints continue to account for some two thirds of the total complaints received. While the LSRA's Complaints Committee investigates misconduct complaints and can sanction legal practitioners, it does not itself make findings of misconduct. Instead, it refers more serious matters to the Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal, which is a separate body to the LSRA.*

*"I very much welcome the fact that the Tribunal recently started holding public inquiries into complaints brought to it by both the LSRA and the Law Society of Ireland. The setting up of the Tribunal is yet another milestone for the independent complaints handling regime which the LSRA has been operating for almost four years now. The LSRA has a duty to publish the Tribunal's findings and we plan to begin this in the coming months. This is an important transparency measure for legal practitioners and consumers alike."*

**Note to Editors:**

The Legal Services Regulatory Authority is an independent statutory body set up under the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015 with a range of functions. These include regulating the provision of legal services by legal practitioners (barristers and solicitors) and ensuring the maintenance and improvement of standards in the provision of legal services. The LSRA began receiving and investigating complaints about legal practitioners on 7 October 2019.

Today's report is available to download here: [Independent Complaints Handling: Complaints about solicitors and barristers, Report 2-2023](#)

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