

Complaints procedure Van Opstal & Partners

At Van Opstal & Partners, specialized in mediation in labor disputes, providing high-quality services is central. Our team consists exclusively of professional MfN-registered mediators who strive to provide optimal support to every client. Despite our efforts, it may happen that a client is dissatisfied with the services provided, or a specific employee.

Van Opstal & Partners encourages clients to discuss any dissatisfaction directly with the relevant mediator or employee. After all, mediators are expected to deal with feedback well and resolve any problems quickly and effectively. If a conversation is not possible or does not lead to a satisfactory solution, the management will take over the handling of the complaint. This is done both to accommodate the customer where possible, and to continuously improve our services.

This complaints procedure describes how complaints are handled, and which steps you can expect.

General

1. Purpose of complaints procedure

Van Opstal & Partners believes it is important to take complaints seriously and to handle them confidentially and carefully. By handling complaints, we hope to improve our services and prevent similar complaints from recurring.

2. Definition of a complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about the performance of a mediator in that capacity, made known in writing by or on behalf of the complainant. These complaints regulations apply to complaints submitted in writing.

3. Disclosure

All clients of Van Opstal & Partners are informed of the existence of these complaints' regulations. The regulations will be sent on request and can be downloaded from the Van Opstal & Partners website.

Procedure

Submission of complaint

4. A complaint can be submitted in writing or by e-mail.
5. The complaint must be submitted **within twelve months after the end of the mediation.**
6. The complainant may be represented or assisted by a third party.

Confirmation of receipt

7. Within seven calendar days of receipt of the complaint, the complainant will receive written confirmation of receipt with an explanation of the further procedure.

Handling of the complaint

8. The complaint will initially be handled by a designated complaints officer who has no direct involvement in the case.
9. If the complaint concerns a partner or employee, this person will initially contact the complainant to discuss the complaint.
10. If this conversation does not lead to a solution, a second complaints officer will be appointed to conduct further investigations and achieve a solution.

Investigation and principle audi alteram partem

11. The complaints officer applies the principle of audi alteram partem. Both the complainant and the defendant are given the opportunity to respond in writing and orally.
12. If necessary, a complaint handling meeting will be organised. This meeting will be led by an independent discussion leader who is accepted by both parties.

Completion and decision making

13. The complaint will be handled **within six weeks**. If an extension is necessary, the complainant will be informed of the new term. The extension will be a maximum of four weeks.
14. The complaints officer formulates a provisional conclusion and gives both parties the opportunity to respond to it.
15. The final decision will be taken by the Management of Van Opstal & Partners. This decision is binding.

Involvement of an external complaints handler

16. If the complaint cannot be resolved internally, Van Opstal & Partners will engage an external complaints officer. This external complaints officer will issue advice on the further handling of the complaint **within one month**.
17. The final decision-making will take place **within 14 calendar days** after receipt of the external advice.

Communication and confidentiality

18. Complaints and the manner in which they are handled will be treated confidentially.
19. Complaint files are kept for **five years** and are only accessible to the management and the secretariat.

Exclusion of complaints

20. Complaints about payment obligations will not be dealt with within these complaints regulations.

21. A complaint about an event that is reported **more than twelve months after the end of the mediation** will not be processed.

These complaints regulations have been drawn up to ensure transparency and quality in our services. Van Opstal & Partners strives to handle complaints carefully and to learn from feedback in order to continuously improve our services.

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