

## **Hilco Appraisal Limited Complaints Handling Policy**

This Complaints Handling Policy sets out how Hilco Appraisal Limited will receive, investigate, respond to and learn from complaints in a fair, transparent, timely and professional manner. It is intended to align with the RICS professional standard on complaints handling and the requirements applicable to RICS-regulated firms, including the need to maintain a complaints-handling procedure, a complaints log, and access to an approved alternative dispute resolution mechanism where required.

### **Purpose and Scope**

This policy applies to all directors, employees, consultants and other representatives of Hilco Appraisal Limited involved in delivering services to clients or other persons to whom the firm owes a duty of care. It applies to complaints relating to the services provided by the firm, whether received from consumers, business clients or other eligible complainants.

### **Definition of a Complaint**

For the purposes of this policy, a complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether oral or written, about the service provided by Hilco Appraisal Limited, or about the conduct of any person acting on its behalf, where a response or resolution is expected. Minor issues may be resolved informally where appropriate, but any matter that is not resolved promptly or which could reasonably be regarded as a complaint must be recorded and handled under this policy.

### **Policy Principles**

- Complaints will be treated seriously, courteously and without delay.
- Complaints will be investigated impartially by a person with appropriate seniority who is not the subject of the complaint, where possible.
- Complainants will be kept informed of progress and given clear information about timescales and next steps.
- The firm will aim to resolve complaints at the earliest appropriate stage and in a manner proportionate to the issues raised.
- The firm will maintain appropriate records, including a complaints log, and use complaints as an opportunity to improve service quality, training and risk management.

- Where a complaint could give rise to a negligence claim or other insured event, the matter will be considered promptly for notification to the firm's professional indemnity insurers in accordance with the policy terms.
- The complaints process will be made available to clients and provided on request.

## Responsibility for Complaints

The Board is responsible for approving this policy and ensuring that appropriate systems, controls and resources are in place for effective complaints handling. Day-to-day responsibility for administering complaints under this policy will sit with the Managing Director Finance & Operations. All staff must promptly report any complaint or potential complaint they receive so that it can be logged and managed appropriately.

## Complaints Handling Procedure

### Stage 1 – Internal Review

Complaints should be submitted in writing wherever possible so that the details can be fully understood and fairly investigated. The address to send written complaints to is:

Hilco Appraisal Limited  
99 Gresham Street  
London  
EC2V 7NG

Complaints can also be emailed to: [hilco@hilcoglobaladvisors.co.uk](mailto:hilco@hilcoglobaladvisors.co.uk)

If a complaint is received verbally, the recipient should make a written record and confirm the substance of the complaint with the complainant where appropriate.

The firm will acknowledge receipt of a complaint promptly and normally within 7 calendar days of receipt. The acknowledgement will identify the person responsible for investigating the complaint and explain the next steps in the process.

The complaint will be investigated objectively and with due regard to all relevant information, including the instruction documents, file notes, correspondence, reports and any relevant internal discussions. The investigator may seek further information from the complainant or from relevant personnel within the firm.

The firm will aim to provide a substantive written response within 28 calendar days of the complaint being acknowledged. If that is not possible, the complainant will be updated as soon as reasonably practicable, with an explanation for the delay and a revised timeframe. The response will summarise the complaint, set out the findings of the investigation, and explain any proposed resolution, remedial action or redress considered appropriate.

## **Stage 2 – Independent Review / Alternative Dispute Resolution**

If the complainant remains dissatisfied after Stage 1, or if the complaint cannot be resolved internally, the complainant will be informed of the appropriate independent redress or alternative dispute resolution mechanism available to them, in line with the firm's regulatory obligations and the nature of the client relationship. Hilco Appraisal Limited will maintain access to an ADR provider approved by RICS where required and will provide relevant contact details at the point of escalation.

## **Complaints Log and Record Keeping**

All complaints, whether formal or informal, must be recorded in a central complaints log. The log records the date received, complainant details, the subject matter of the complaint, the person assigned to investigate, actions taken, key dates, outcome, any redress offered, whether the matter was referred to insurers, and any lessons learned.

Relevant records are retained in accordance with the firm's document retention policy and its legal or regulatory obligations.

## **Insurance, Regulatory and Legal Considerations**

Where a complaint raises issues of possible professional negligence, breach of duty, fraud, dishonesty, misconduct or any matter that may trigger a notification obligation under the firm's professional indemnity insurance, the complaint must be escalated immediately to the Executive Director for consideration of insurer notification and legal advice. No admission of liability should be made without appropriate authority and, where relevant, insurer consent.

## **Accessibility, Fairness and Confidentiality**

The firm will take reasonable steps to make the complaints process accessible and easy to understand. Where needed, reasonable adjustments will be considered to support complainants in using the process. Complaints will be handled confidentially and information

will be shared only with those who need it for the purpose of investigating, resolving or reporting on the matter subject to legal, insurance and regulatory requirements.

### **Monitoring, Training and Review**

The firm will monitor complaint trends and outcomes to identify recurring issues, improve service delivery and strengthen risk management. Relevant personnel receive training on recognising, escalating and handling complaints appropriately.

This policy is reviewed at least annually and sooner if required by changes in law, regulation, RICS requirements or changes to the firm's business operations.