

## Terms of Engagement and Client Care

Thank you for choosing to instruct Wilson McKay, we are pleased to be acting on your behalf. This letter sets out our terms of engagement with you.

### Rules of Conduct and Client Care for Lawyers

The Lawyers and Conveyancers Act (Lawyers Conduct and Client Care) Rules 2008 provides that whatever legal services a lawyer provides, he or she must:

- act competently, in a timely way, and in accordance with instructions received and arrangements made:
- protect and promote your interests and act for you free from compromising influences or loyalties:
- discuss with you your objectives and how they should best be achieved:
- provide you with information about the work to be done, who will do it and the way the services will be provided:
- charge you a fee that is fair and reasonable and let you know how and when you will be billed:
- give you clear information and advice:
- protect your privacy and ensure appropriate confidentiality:
- treat you fairly, respectfully, and without discrimination:
- keep you informed about the work being done and advise you when it is completed:
- let you know how to make a complaint and deal with any complaint promptly and fairly.

Those obligations are subject to other overriding duties, including duties to the courts and to the justice system. If you have any questions, please visit [www.lawsociety.org.nz](http://www.lawsociety.org.nz) or call 0800 261 801.

Our duty is owed to you and not to any other person. This is because you are our client and we consider your particular situation and needs when we give you advice. No one else can rely on our advice unless we agree to this in writing.

### Instructions on behalf of a Company

When you instruct us to act on behalf of a company in your capacity as a director and there are two or more directors of the company, you represent to us that you have authority to instruct us on behalf of the company. We shall not be required to verify your authority with any other director nor communicate with any other director unless you specify otherwise in writing at the commencement of our engagement.

### Instructions on behalf of a Trust

When you instruct us to act on behalf of a Trust in your capacity as a trustee and there are two or more trustees of the Trust, you represent to us that you have authority to instruct us on behalf of all other trustees. We shall not be required to verify your authority with any other trustee nor communicate with any other trustee unless you specify otherwise in writing at the commencement of our engagement.

### Who is Responsible for Your Work?

The person who will be primarily acting on your behalf, and the supervising partner will be confirmed prior to or at our first meeting. However, if you have any concerns or questions, you are welcome to contact any of the partners at any time.

### Our Charges

Unless agreed otherwise our fees are based on our hourly rates adjusted in appropriate cases for the range of factors outlined by the New Zealand Law Society, including expertise, importance, urgency and results achieved. Our current hourly rates(s) are:

Partners	- \$450.00 per hour plus GST	Senior Solicitors	- \$290.00 - \$320.00 per hour plus GST
Consultants	- \$310.00 - \$390.00 per hour plus GST	Solicitors	- \$175.00 per hour plus GST
Senior Associates	- \$300.00 - \$350.00 per hour plus GST		

These rates may change from time to time, and a full list of the rates of any lawyers working for you is available at any time.

We also charge an estimated fee for standard disbursements (photocopying, postage, printing, etc) and the actual costs of large one-off disbursements (court fees, document registrations, duties/levies etc) as well as travel expenses incurred on your behalf. These will be itemised separately, and in some cases need to be paid for in advance. You will also be charged GST at the rate required by law unless you are exempt.

In every company and real estate transaction there will be an agency fee for every document registration and title or Companies Office search which will be charged by our agency company Wilson McKay Registration Limited. The current agency fee for a title search is \$23.50 (GST inclusive), post registration title search \$18.40 (GST inclusive), e-dealing registration agency fee \$36.00 (GST inclusive), Companies Office searches \$11.50 (GST inclusive). These agency charges may change from time to time and a full list of these charges may be obtained from any lawyer working for you at that time.

### Wilson McKay Trustee Company

Where we provide a professional trustee company service there will be annual fees and Companies Office disbursements for filing the annual return at the Companies Office. Our fee and the Companies Office disbursement may change from time to time and the current charges can be obtained from the lawyer for you at any time.

### Billing and Payment Arrangements

Payment terms unless otherwise stated are upon settlement or within 7 days of invoice. We may deduct from funds held on your behalf any fees, disbursements or expenses for which we have provided an invoice. We may also issue interim accounts, while work is in progress, with a final bill on completion.

### Lien

Where work has been done by us, but we have not been paid by you then as a general rule we have the right to retain original documents and correspondence on your file until such time as all outstanding fees, disbursements and other expenses have been paid. This is known as a lien.

#### PARTNERS

#### CONSULTANTS

#### SENIOR ASSOCIATES

## **Estimate**

We are happy to provide an estimate of our costs and disbursements upon request. This will be provided separately.

## **Professional Indemnity Insurance and The Lawyer's Fidelity Fund**

We hold Professional Indemnity Insurance that meets or exceeds standards specified by The New Zealand Law Society. The Lawyers' Fidelity Fund also provides a limited form of cover up to specified maximums in certain circumstances, generally excluding investment monies.

## **Complaints**

If you have any concerns or complaints that you prefer not to raise with the author involved or the partner supervising your file, please contact Colin McKay who is the partner charged with investigating complaints. He may be contacted either by letter, by email [colinmckay@wilsonmckay.co.nz](mailto:colinmckay@wilsonmckay.co.nz), or by telephone directly (09) 523 0756. We are committed to resolving any issues as soon as possible. You can also contact The New Zealand Law Society's Lawyers' Complaints Service, P O Box 5041, Wellington 6145, telephone (04) 472 7837 or (0800) 261 801 or facsimile (04) 473 7909.

## **Retention of files and Documents**

You authorise us (without further reference to you) to destroy all files and documents (other than any documents that we hold in safe custody for you) 7 years after our engagement ends, or earlier if we have converted those files and documents to an electronic format.

## **Copyright**

Unless otherwise agreed, when we prepare any document for you, you are free to use that document as you see fit, but only as our licensee. Ownership of the copyright shall at any time remain with us unless otherwise agreed.

## **Taxation and Accounting Advice**

We do not provide taxation and accounting advice and strongly recommend you consult a taxation and accounting expert. We shall not be liable in any way for any taxation and or accounting advice which may be provided to you.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

We have procedures in place to identify and respond to conflicts of interest. If a conflict of interest arises we will advise you of this and follow the requirements and procedures set in the *Rules of Conduct and Client Care for Lawyers of the New Zealand Law Society*. If you become aware of a conflict of interest you must tell us immediately.

Where you are borrowing moneys from a bank or lending institution we may be instructed by the lender to act on the lender's behalf in the preparation and registration of the security documents. In these circumstances we will be acting for more than one party in the transaction and will owe a duty of care to the lender. This may prevent us from disclosing information to you that we obtain from the lender and may prevent us from giving you advice that conflicts with the interest of the lender. Our costs for this work are payable by you and are included in our fees estimate (if any). Unless you advise to the contrary, your instructions will be taken as your informed consent to us also acting for the lender.

## **Trust Account**

We maintain a trust account for all funds which we receive from clients (except monies received for payment of our invoices). If we are holding significant funds on your behalf we will normally lodge those funds on interest bearing deposit with our bank. In that case we will charge commission of 5% of the interest derived when we receive money or property from you or from other people on your behalf, and when we distribute any of that money or property, these are the procedures that we will follow, unless you instruct us otherwise:

- Any money that you pay to us for settlement or other purposes should be in cleared funds, and paid either by bank cheque or direct credit, made payable to "Wilson McKay Trust Account". Any certificates that you provide to us should be delivered to Wilson McKay offices and we will give you a receipt.
- If we receive money or property from other people on your behalf, we will hold it in trust for you unless you instruct us otherwise. Wilson McKay will follow your instructions as to how money or property that we hold on your behalf is to be applied or distributed. If money has not been provided to us in cleared funds we may delay distributing it until we have received confirmation that the funds have been cleared.
- Wilson McKay will keep records of all money and investment property that we hold on your behalf for at least the period that is legally required. During our normal office hours we can provide you with details of any financial transactions that relate to you. We will not provide you with receipts unless you specifically ask for them.
- Money that we hold in our trust account on your behalf will not be audited. Similarly, property that we hold on your behalf and distribute will not be audited.
- Wilson McKay cannot withhold from you, nor use for our own benefit, any money or property that we hold in trust on your behalf, except for money that we use to pay fees and expenses that we incur through acting as your lawyers, or for money that we deduct as our commission from the interest received on money that we hold on your behalf, or when we are legally required to withhold the money from you.

## **Our Obligations under the Investment Advisers (Disclosure) Act 1996**

This Act requires us to inform you that we are not investment advisers and do not have qualifications or expertise in the provision of investment advice. We shall not be liable in any way for investment advice which may be provided to you.

## **What Law Governs These Terms?**

These terms and any other agreement we have with you are governed by New Zealand Law and are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the New Zealand Courts. You may not assign or transfer any rights or obligations under these terms or any other agreement that we have with you.

## **Acceptance of Terms of Engagement**

By instructing us to provide you with legal services you are deemed to have accepted these terms of engagement on your own behalf personally and also on behalf of every Trust in which you are a Trustee and Company in which you are a Director if work is carried out by us on behalf of any such entities.

## **Conclusion**

We value your instructions and look forward to working with you. We also look forward to an on-going relationship with you, so please retain this letter as the core basis of our relationship and our commitment to you to attend to your affairs diligently, with an efficient, effective and professional service.