

Chantelle Dallas

Employee

822138

[Agreement Date: 16 August 2021](#)

Decision - Agreement

Outcome: Regulatory settlement agreement

Outcome date: 16 August 2021

Published date: 13 September 2021

Firm details

Firm or organisation at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: National Accident Law Limited

Address(es): Bevan House, Kettering Parkway, Kettering Venture Park,
Kettering, NN15 6XR

Firm ID: 655606

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by agreement.

Decision details

1. Agreed outcome

1.1 Chantelle Dallas (Ms Dallas), a former employee of National Accident Law Limited (the firm) agrees to the following outcome to the investigation of her conduct by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA):

- a. to the SRA making an order under section 43 of the Solicitors Act 1974 (a Section 43 Order) in relation to Ms Dallas that, from the date of this agreement:
 - i. no solicitor shall employ or remunerate her in connection with her practice as a solicitor
 - ii. no employee of a solicitor shall employ or remunerate her in connection with the solicitor's practice
 - iii. no recognised body shall employ or remunerate her
 - iv. no manager or employee of a recognised body shall employ or remunerate her in connection with the business of that



- v. no recognised body or manager or employee of such a body shall permit her to be a manager of the body
- vi. no recognised body or manager or employee of such body shall permit her to have an interest in the body
- b. to the publication of this agreement
- c. she will pay the costs of the investigation of £300.

except in accordance with the SRA's prior permission.

2. Summary of Facts

2.1 Ms Dallas was employed by the firm as a paralegal in its Claim Preparation Team.

2.2 The firm regularly review reporting data which shows the volume of calls received and made by each fee earner. All inbound/outbound calls made or received by fee earners are logged by the telephony system even if the outcome is no answer or engaged. It was noted that the number of units charged on a daily basis on the Case Management System by Ms Dallas, appeared high against the low volume of telephone calls made by her as logged by the telephony system. This prompted a thorough review of her time recording.

2.3 The firm collated Ms Dallas's time recording data from three randomly selected weeks between October 2020 and December 2020. It found that there was no corresponding phone call on 83 out of 323 time entries logged in that period. These phone calls had been logged on the Case Management System as part of the firm's automated billing process, this could have resulted in clients being billed for calls that did not take place if it had not been identified and addressed by the Firm.

2.4 The firm reported their concerns to the SRA on 14 January 2021.

2.5 Following an internal investigation conducted by the firm, Ms Dallas was dismissed on 25 January 2021.

3. Admissions

3.1 Ms Dallas makes the following admissions which the SRA accepts:

- a. she logged calls on the firm's case management system that had not been made
- b. the conduct was repeated over a protracted period
- c. her conduct set out above was dishonest
- d. as a result of her actions in relation to legal practice, she has been involved in conduct which is of such a nature that it is undesirable for her to be involved in legal practice.

4. Why the agreed outcome is appropriate

Section 43 Order

4.1 The SRA's Enforcement Strategy and its guidance on how it regulates non-authorised persons, sets out its approach to using section 43 orders to control where a non-authorised person can work.

4.2 When considering whether a section 43 order is appropriate in this matter, the SRA has taken into account the admissions made by Ms Dallas and the following mitigation:

- a. Ms Dallas has fully admitted the misconduct to the SRA and co-operated with its investigation
- b. Ms Dallas received no financial benefit from her conduct.

4.3 The SRA and Ms Dallas agree that a section 43 order is appropriate because:

- a. Ms Dallas is not a solicitor
- b. her employment or remuneration at the firm means that she was involved in a legal practice
- c. Ms Dallas has occasioned or been party to an act or default in relation to a legal practice because she falsified her claimed outgoing calls and therefore misled the firm. This could have resulted in inflated invoices being raised.

Ms Dallas's conduct in relation to that act or default makes it undesirable for her to be involved in a legal practice because it demonstrates she has behaved dishonestly and has a propensity to mislead others. If such conduct were to be repeated in future, it would pose a risk to clients and public trust.

4.4 The SRA considers it appropriate that this agreement is published in the interests of transparency in the regulatory and disciplinary process.

5. Acting in a way which is inconsistent with this Agreement

5.1 Ms Dallas agrees that she will not act in any way which is inconsistent with this agreement such as, for example, by denying responsibility for the conduct referred to above.

6. Costs

6.1 Ms Dallas agrees to pay the costs of the SRA's investigation in the sum of £300. Such costs are due within 28 days of a statement of costs due being issued by the SRA.

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