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Michael Lewin Solicitors Ltd Older and Vulnerable Client Care Procedures

1. We realise that it is important that our firm treat older clients, and their families and representatives, with additional consideration in particular being both sympathetic and sensitive to any issues they may have.

2. We always strive to ensure that our staff members treat them with dignity, compassion and respect.

3. We acknowledge that when meeting our client for the first time it is better to see them alone given the nature of the advice that we may need to give them. We are mindful that some of our clients may prefer to have a friend or relative with them in the first instance. We will endeavour to accommodate their wishes. However, we must ensure that we do meet with our client alone during our instructions and we will ensure that they feel at ease and explain to them why we need to see them alone.

4. Where our client's first language is not English or they are hearing or sight impaired, we will suggest that an independent interpreter be present or a person that our client trusts can attend the meeting to help them to understand.

5. We keep a written record of our meetings with clients and this includes details of any third parties who are present. Should a client decide not to have anyone present then this will also be noted in our records. We will provide confirmation of our meeting which will be sent out to the client by letter and will include details of their instructions provided.

6. If required, we will ensure that our correspondence and any necessary documentation is produced in large print.

7. We will try to make ourselves aware of any potential capacity or physical limitations such as mobility, continence, hearing or visual impairment in our communication with older clients and allow extra time during our meetings.

8. During each meeting the pace and duration of each meeting is directed by our client's needs.

9. Where appropriate, we will offer to visit our client at home. But if a client visits our offices, we will let them know what disabled facilities there are, including parking, access and toilets. Our offices are situated in a building which is wheelchair accessible, and there is lift access to other floors as required. Our client meeting rooms are on the ground floor and we have designated client car parking at the rear of the building. There are also several on street parking spaces just outside the building.

10. We are aware that legal terminology can be confusing and we will take care that our client has fully understood what has been said. We will not continue until we are satisfied that our client fully understands and is comfortable to proceed.

11. We are sensitive to the fact that older clients may be embarrassed if they do not have a current passport or driving licence for money laundering purposes. We take extra care to ask for other forms of identification to ensure that the requirements for proof of identification are met.

12. We ask for proof of Identification from any person who signs as an attorney for our client for identity verification purposes.