

COMPLAINTS PROCESS

(normally confidential)

STEP 1
CDSBC Receives a Written Complaint

CDSBC investigates all complaints related to the conduct or competence of dentists, dental therapists and certified dental assistants.

Complaints that are outside the College's jurisdiction (e.g. purely financial), or do not raise issues for investigation are dismissed by the Registrar.

STEP 2
Preliminary Evaluation

The complaints team conducts a preliminary evaluation and recommends one of three options for consideration by the Inquiry Committee*:

- (a) dismissal by Registrar
- (b) early resolution (e.g. relatively simple complaints)
- (c) Regular investigation (and assignment to a Complaint Investigator)

The complaints team includes 8 dentists.

STEP 3
Inquiry Committee* Review

The Inquiry Committee reviews the complaint and decides next steps, if any.

The Inquiry Committee consists of dentists, certified dental assistants, and members of the public.

STEP 4
Investigation

The complaint letter is forwarded to the registrant, who has the opportunity to respond. The registrant's response is also provided to the complainant.

The Complaint Investigator gathers all relevant information. This step may include telephone conversations, in-person interviews, and gathering of dental records, X-rays, models, and more.

Next, the Complaint Investigator prepares a report for resolution.

For early resolution files, this step can be quite brief.

STEP 5
Complaints Team Prepares Report with Recommendations

The complaints team reviews the summary report and recommendations for resolving the complaint. Resolution options include:

- (a) close the complaint with no action taken, or with some recommendations/best practice advice; or
- (b) ask the registrant to sign an agreement to take certain steps to improve their practice (such as taking certain courses to improve skills) or to be mentored by another registrant for a period of time.

A report summarizing the complaint, investigation and recommendations for resolution is prepared for the Inquiry Committee.

This is a collaborative process with the registrant. The registrant has the opportunity to discuss any concerns identified and the proposed resolution.

The registrant:

- can agree, or
- can provide an alternative resolution proposal for the Inquiry Committee to consider (and can ask for a meeting with a panel of the Inquiry Committee.)

Each complaint is reviewed at a weekly complaints team meeting. The process is overseen by the Inquiry Committee, ensuring that there are multiple dentists reviewing each complaint file.

STEP 6
Inquiry Committee Decision

The Inquiry Committee receives the report and recommendations for resolution and makes its decision.

The majority of complaints are resolved at this stage. Complaints only proceed if the registrant asks to appear before the Inquiry Committee, or if the Committee directs that a citation be issued against the registrant.

Remedial not Punitive
If concerns about a registrant's practice are identified, CDSBC takes a remedial and collaborative approach to resolving those concerns. All complaints resolved without a citation happen by consent.

DISCIPLINE PROCESS

(normally public)

STEP 7
Inquiry Committee Directs the Registrar to Issue a Citation

Citations are issued in the rare instances where an issue is serious, an agreement cannot be reached, and/or the registrant has not responded to the complaint.

A citation is a formal document that lists the allegations against the registrant and provides notice that there will be a public hearing before the Discipline Committee.

Less than 2% of complaints reach the discipline stage. Even after a citation is issued, the registrant can make a proposal to the Inquiry Committee to resolve the citation.

* For simplicity, the terms Inquiry Committee and Discipline Committee are used here to refer to either panels or meetings of the whole committee.

A COMMITTEE-DRIVEN PROCESS

The Inquiry Committee gives direction and decides how each complaint will be resolved. In the event that a complaint proceeds to a discipline hearing, the Discipline Committee will determine the resolution.