



How a Complaint is Resolved

The steps below are for general information only – exceptions may apply.

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 discipline hearing, the Discipline Committee will determine the resolution.¹

INQUIRY PROCESS

(Normally confidential)

STEP 1

CSHBC Receives a Written Complaint

CSHBC investigates all complains related to the conduct or competence of audiologists, hearing instrument practitioners, and speech-language pathologists.

Complaints that are trivial, frivolous, vexatious, or made in bad faith, or do not give rise to concerns about a registrant's competence or fitness to practice are dismissed.

STEP 2

Preliminary Evaluation by the Registrar

Certain types of complaints may be resolved by the Registrar. The Registrar may dismiss the complaint or offer the registrant a consensual resolution. Both dismissals and informal resolutions by the Registrar are subject to the approval of the Inquiry Committee.

STEP 3

Inquiry Committee Review

If the complaint is not dismissed or resolved through early resolution, the Inquiry Committee reviews the complaint and decides next steps, if any, including appointing an Inspector to investigate the complaint.

Notice of the complaint and a copy of the complaint letter are forwarded to the registrant.

Extraordinary Action

During an investigation or before a discipline hearing, the Inquiry Committee may impose limits or conditions on a Respondent's practice or suspend the Respondent. The Inquiry Committee only takes such actions if the allegations are serious and it considers them necessary to protect the public.

The Inquiry Committee consists of audiologists, hearing instrument practitioners, speech-language pathologists, and public representatives.

STEP 4

Inquiry Committee Investigation

The Inspector gathers all relevant information and prepares a report summarizing the findings for the Inquiry Committee.

The Inquiry Committee provides the respondent with an opportunity to respond to the investigation report.

STEP 5

Inquiry Committee Decision

The Inquiry Committee reviews the summary report and the registrant's response and makes a decision.

Once the Inquiry Committee has completed its investigation and reviewed the summary report, it may dispose of the complaint in one of four ways:

take no further action (e.g., where the registrant's conduct or competence is satisfactory);

resolve the complaint informally (e.g., provide the registrant with guidance or criticism concerning their conduct, or request that they commit to remedial activities);

resolve the complaint by consent agreement (e.g., request that the registrant formally consent or undertake to any action that it specifies);

direct that the Registrar issue a citation, which is the basis for a formal hearing before the Discipline Committee.

The registrant and the complainant are notified of the Inquiry Committee's disposition in writing.

DISCIPLINE PROCESS

(Normally public)

STEP 6

Inquiry Committee Directs the Registrar to Issue a Citation

Citations are typically issued for very serious matters in which efforts by CSHBC to obtain a consensual resolution have not succeeded.

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

After a citation is issued, the registrant may still make a proposal to the Inquiry Committee to resolve the citation.

STEP 7

Discipline Committee Conducts a Discipline Hearing

Discipline hearings are formal adjudicative processes before Discipline Committee panels that must follow established rules of law.

The registrant is entitled to appear with legal counsel at a hearing of the Discipline Committee.

Discipline Committee panels consist of audiologists, hearing instrument practitioners, speech-language pathologists, and public representatives.

¹Originally adapted from the College of Dental Hygienists of British Columbia, with thanks.