

How BCCNM resolves a complaint

The steps below detail how BCCNM investigates and resolves complaints related to BCCNM registrants, which are licensed practical nurses (LPN), nurse practitioners (NP), registered midwives (RM) registered nurses (RN), and registered psychiatric nurses (RPN) in British Columbia. This chart is for general information only and exceptions may apply. The Health Professions Act and the college's bylaws govern the college's inquiry and discipline process.

INQUIRY PROCESS

DISCIPLINE PROCESS

STEP 1

BCCNM receives a written complaint



BCCNM investigates complaints related to the conduct or competence of LPNs, NPs, RMs, RNs, and RPNs.

All complaints must be made in writing.

In appropriate cases, the registrar may investigate the complaint and dismiss or reach a consent agreement with the registrant.

Resolution of a complaint by the registrar is subject to the approval of the Inquiry Committee.

STEP 2

Inquiry Committee review



The registrar sends complaints to the Inquiry Committee for investigation, unless the complaint is resolved by the registrar.

The Inquiry Committee consists of registrants and public representatives.

The Inquiry Committee reviews the complaint and directs further investigation. Typically, registrants are informed of the complaint at this time.

Extraordinary Action
During an investigation, the Inquiry Committee may —following a formal legal proceeding — impose interim limits or conditions on, or suspend, a registrant's registration to practice. The Inquiry Committee takes this action when it appears necessary for public protection even though allegations remain unproven.

STEP 3

Investigation



An inspector will investigate the complaint.

The inspector gathers information and prepares a report for the Inquiry Committee.

The registrant is given an opportunity to respond to the investigation report. The complainant may be asked to provide additional information. Registrants are entitled to access legal counsel or advocacy services.

STEP 4

Inquiry Committee decision



The Inquiry Committee reviews the investigation report, including the evidence and the registrant's response, and makes its decision.

The Inquiry Committee has the following options for proceeding with a complaint:

- Take no further action,
- Send a letter of expectation,
- Reach a consent agreement with the registrant, or
- Direct that a citation for a discipline hearing be issued against the registrant.

The registrant and the complainant are notified of the disposition in writing. In appropriate cases, the consent agreement will be made public.

The majority of complaints are resolved at this stage, with no further action or a consent agreement. Citations for discipline hearings are issued for a small percentage of complaints.

STEP 5

Inquiry Committee directs Registrar to issue a citation



Citations are typically issued for very serious matters where efforts by BCCNM to obtain a consensual resolution have not succeeded.

A citation is a formal document that sets out the allegations against the registrant and provides public 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. These types of resolutions are public.

STEP 6

Discipline hearing



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

Discipline Committee panels consist of registrants and public representatives.

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