

As part of the College of Registered Nurses of Alberta's (CRNA) complaints management process, complaints sometimes require an investigation to ensure that all aspects are being considered before determining an outcome.

We recognize that being the subject of a complaint can feel overwhelming, uncertain and stressful. This guide is designed to help you understand what to expect, what is required and how the complaints management process works. We are committed to conducting every investigation in a fair and respectful manner, in accordance with the principles of administrative justice.

If you have questions, you are encouraged to reach out to us or to your workplace representative for support.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the CRNA conducting an investigation?

- ☐ Anyone can submit a complaint to the CRNA, and under the *Health Professions Act* (HPA), the regulator must respond.
- ☐ The investigation will collect the evidence required to support the finding of unprofessional conduct or dismissal of the complaint

What should I expect during an investigation?

- ☐ The Conduct Department may experience high volumes periodically, which could cause a delay in commencing an investigation. You will be provided with updates approximately every 60 days.
- ☐ You will be contacted by an investigator when your file has been assigned.
 - During the initial call, the investigator will confirm your information and answer any questions you have.
- ☐ You will be asked to provide specific documentation and to name direct witnesses, if any, who can provide information relevant to the complaint,
- ☐ The investigation may take months to complete. You will be contacted and updated on the status of the investigation every 60 days (after your initial contact from the investigator).

- ❑ Once the investigator has gathered all the relevant documents and evidence, and interviewed the direct witnesses, you will be contacted to set up a formal interview.
 - The Investigator will record the interview, for the purpose of retaining an accurate record of information obtained. Recordings and/or transcripts will not be appended to the Investigation Report but will be retained for a period of ten years in compliance with the *HPA*, sec 121.
 - Registrant interviews are conducted using a virtual meeting platform – except in extenuating circumstances. A video and audio-enabled laptop or desktop computer with reliable internet connection is required.
 - The interview will be a full disclosure of witness testimony and documentary evidence collected during the investigation.
 - You will be given the opportunity to respond to the comments of others, view the documents, and describe your version of the alleged events.
- ❑ Following the formal interview, the investigator will submit the completed report to the Complaints Director for review and decision.
 - You will be notified of the decision.
 - The decision process may also take months to complete. You will be updated on the status of the decision process every 60 days after you have been notified the report has been submitted.

What documents do I need to provide?

- ❑ You will be asked to submit the completed Agency Choice Form (ACF) indicating the United Nurses of Alberta (UNA) or Canadian Nurses Protective Society (CNPS) as your agent in the CRNA's proceedings.
 - You will receive an ACF after you are notified that there will be an investigation.
 - Alternatively, if you have retained legal counsel, there is no need to complete the Agency Choice Form. You can just provide your lawyer's name and contact information to procond@nurses.ab.ca
- ❑ A current resume.
 - The investigation includes background information about the registrant, so it is important to provide a summary of your work experience and career highlights.
 - This does not have to be submitted immediately but should be submitted prior to the investigation interview.
- ❑ A list of recent education or courses completed in the last two years.
 - If you are employed by Alberta Health Services, a copy of your My Learning Link summary can be used but also include any other education or courses you think would be relevant to your investigation.

What witnesses should I provide?

- ☐ Direct witnesses to the alleged incidents.
 - You are encouraged to provide names and contact information to the investigator, for the purpose of investigation. You can do this without the witnesses' consent.
 - You are obligated to maintain the confidentiality and integrity of the investigation by not discussing the details of the complaint or investigation with potential witnesses.

Do I have to provide a list of witnesses?

- ☐ No. Some situations may not have witnesses.
 - It is your right to name witnesses but your choice to do so.
 - Character references are not required but if you would like them to include them have the character reference sent directly to the investigator by the person providing it.

Will I lose my practice permit?

- ☐ Complaint investigations are unbiased and objective. If there is a finding of unprofessional conduct, the goal is remediation of practice, not cancellation of your practice permit, though under some circumstances, cancellation of a practice permit can occur.

What is the difference between the CRNA and UNA? How do I find UNA?

- ☐ The CRNA is the regulatory body for registered nurses and nurse practitioners in Alberta.
- ☐ United Nurses of Alberta (UNA) is your workplace representative and can help you navigate this process.
 - 1-800-252-9394
 - nurses@una.ca

What if I just retire?

- ☐ Any registrant that has a complaint about their practice is required under the HPA to cooperate with an investigation.
- ☐ In specific circumstances, the registrant can discuss other options with the CRNA legal counsel.

Can I apply for, or accept, another job while under investigation?

- ☐ Yes. The allegations have not been proven until a decision has been made based on the evidence presented in the investigation report.

Can I apply for a job in another province during this investigation?

- ☐ Please call the CRNA Registration department with any questions regarding this.