

Policy and Procedures Related to Submitting Complaints

July 2023



National Commission on Recognition of
Dental Specialties and Certifying Boards

Introduction

- A complaint is defined by the National Commission as one alleging that a National Commission recognized specialty sponsoring organization or certifying board may not be in compliance with the *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties and National Certifying Boards for Dental Specialists* or National Commission policy.
- An appropriate complaint is one that directly addresses an organizations compliance with the *Requirements for Recognition* or National Commission policy.
- An inappropriate complaint is one that does not address the *Requirements for Recognition* or National Commission policy and/or there is no evidence to support the complaint.
- The National Commission can not consider complaints against specific individuals or issues that are outside of the *Recognition of Dental Specialties and National Certifying Boards for Dental Specialists* or National Commission policy.
- Any interested party may submit an appropriate, signed, formal complaint to the National Commission regarding any of the National Commission's recognized specialty sponsoring organizations or certifying boards.



Introduction

- The National Commission will only consider written, signed complaints that present evidence and documentation in support of the complaint. Complaints that are verbal, anonymous, and/or do not present evidence and documentation in support of the complaint will be not be considered by the National Commission.
- The policy and procedures on complaints does not apply to applicants for specialty or certifying board recognition, as the determination of whether an applicant meets the *Requirements for Recognition* is determined through the application policies and processes.
- The National Commission's role in the complaint process is to investigate whether the specialty sponsoring organization or certifying board is in compliance with the *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties and National Certifying Boards for Dental Specialists* or National Commission policy.
- It is not the role of the National Commission when investigating a complaint to:
 - Act as a mediator.
 - Intervene on the behalf of any organizations and/or individuals.
 - Act as an arbitrator between disputing organizations.



Investigative Procedures for Complaints

- When an inquiry about filing a complaint is received by the National Commission office, the inquirer is provided with a copy of the *Recognition of Dental Specialties and National Certifying Boards for Dental Specialists* document, along with a copy of the National Commission's policy and procedure on complaints.
- If the inquirer makes the determination to submit a complaint, the complaint must be a written, signed statement that specifically identifies which *Requirement(s) for Recognition* or National Commission policy the complainant believes the specialty sponsoring organization or certifying board is not in compliance with.
- It is the responsibility of the complainant to identify which *Requirement(s) for Recognition* or National Commission policy they believe the organization is not in compliance with. It is not the role of the National Commission to make this determination.
- Submission of documentation that supports the noncompliance is mandatory. If no supporting documentation is included, the complaint will not be investigated and will be returned to the complainant.
- The complaint and supporting documentation will be reviewed by the Director and Legal Counsel of the National Commission for completeness. This initial screening is completed within thirty (30) days of receiving the complaint.



Investigative Procedures for Complaints

- If the complaint is deemed to not contain the proper evidence/documentation, the complaint will be returned with the request to submit the requested documentation. The complainant will have ten (10) days to resubmit the complaint. If the requested documentation is not submitted within ten (10) days, the complaint will become null and void.
- If the complaint is deemed to be complete, the complaint becomes the property of the National Commission and may not be withdrawn by the complainant.
- Initial investigation of a complaint may reveal that the National Commission is already aware of the non-compliance and is monitoring the specialty sponsoring organization or certifying board progress to demonstrate compliance. In this case, the complainant is notified that the National Commission is currently addressing the non-compliance issue noted in the complaint.
- If the complaint is related to an alleged non-compliance of which the National Commission is not aware of the appropriate Review Committee will be convened within thirty (30) days of the determination of complaint completeness to review the complaint and documentation.



Investigative Procedures for Complaints

- If the Review Committee contains a member appointed by the same specialty sponsoring organization as the specialty sponsoring organization or certifying board identified in the complaint, the committee member will be recused from all discussions and recommended actions concerning the complaint. The National Commission Director in conjunction with the National Commission Chair will appoint a replacement for that Review Committee member.
- If the Review Committee determines the complaint does not provide sufficient evidence of non-compliance with the identified *Requirement(s) for Recognition* or National Commission policy, the complainant is so advised, and no further action is taken.
- If the Review Committee determines there is sufficient evidence of non-compliance with the identified *Requirement(s) for Recognition* or National Commission policy, the chief administrative officer/executive director of the specialty sponsoring organization or certifying board is advised in writing that the National Commission has received a complaint with evidence indicating that the organization may no longer be in compliance the identified *Requirement(s) for Recognition* or National Commission policy.



Investigative Procedures for Complaints

- The specialty sponsoring organization or certifying board will be provided with:
 - A redacted copy of the complaint to ensure anonymity of the complainant and evidence submitted by the complainant
 - A copy of the *Requirements for Recognition*
 - A copy of the National Commission's policy and procedure on complaints
 - Formal communication from the National Commission requesting the organization address compliance with the identified *Requirement(s) for Recognition* in question and submit a written response with appropriate documentation/evidence within thirty (30) days.
- If the chief administrative officer/executive director of the specialty sponsoring organization or certifying board anticipates difficulty in submitting the requested documentation within the thirty (30) day period, a written request for extension prior to the date on which the documentation is due is required. Requests for extension must specify a submission date no later than thirty (30) days beyond the initial deadline date.



Investigative Procedures for Complaints

- If the sponsoring organization or certifying board fails to comply with the National Commission's request for information, it will be assumed that the sponsoring organization or certifying board no longer wishes to participate in the recognition process. In this event, the National Commission will immediately notify the organization of its intent to withdraw recognition at its next scheduled meeting. (See Policy on Failure to Comply with Request for Information and Missed Deadlines)
- Receipt of the organizations written compliance report and documentation will be acknowledged by the Director of the National Commission.
- The Review Committee will consider the organization's written report and documentation within thirty (30) days of its receipt in the National Commission office.



Final Considerations and Actions

- After consideration of the organization's response, the Review Committee may make one of the following recommendations to the Board of Commissioners:
 - The recognized specialty sponsoring organization or certifying board continues to comply with the requirement(s) or National Commission policy in question and no further action is required.
 - The recognized specialty sponsoring organization or certifying board is not in compliance with the requirement(s) or National Commission policy in question.
- If the Review Committee determines the specialty sponsoring organization or certifying board is non-compliant, the Review Committee will describe the scope and nature of the non-compliance and recommend the required corrective action to the Board of Commissioners.
- Within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the Review Committee recommendation, the National Commission Board of Commissioners will meet to consider the complaint and response from the specialty sponsoring organization or certifying board and make a final determination.
- The specialty sponsoring organization or certifying board and the complainant will be informed of the National Commission's decision within one (1) week of its action on the results of the investigation.



Final Considerations and Actions

- If the National Commission Board of Commissioners determines that the recognized specialty sponsoring organization or certifying board continues to comply with the *Requirement(s) for Recognition* or National Commission policy in question, both the organization and the complainant will be informed that no further action is required at this time.
- If the National Commission Board of Commissioners determines that the recognized specialty or certifying board is not in compliance with the *Requirement(s) for Recognition* or National Commission policy in question, the National Commission will:
 - Inform the specialty sponsoring organization or certifying board of the scope and nature of the non-compliance, the required corrective action, and the submission date for the report and documentation of corrective action.
 - The National Commission will make a change to the organization's recognition status (See Recognition Status Definitions on National Commission website <https://ncrdscb.ada.org/policies-and-procedures>)
 - Inform the complainant of the scope and nature of the non-compliance and that the National Commission does provide a reasonable amount of time for the organization to come into full compliance with the *Requirements for Recognition* or National Commission policy.

