

## How and When to Lodge a Complaint Regarding the Conduct of a Fellow Forest Professional

### Q: Who can lodge a complaint?

A: Anyone who has concerns about the conduct of a forest professional may lodge a complaint with the Association of BC Forest Professionals.

### Q: Why lodge a complaint?

A: To ensure that forest professionals are held accountable to our Code of Ethics and to ensure that we all act professionally and protect the public interest.

### Q: When should I lodge a complaint?

A: There are a number of ways to address professional concerns and the complaint process is just one of them. Prior to lodging a complaint members are expected to make efforts to resolve professional disagreements. A next step might be to use the Professional Accountability Process ([http://www.abcfp.ca/practice\\_development/continuing\\_competency/Documents/Non-Discipline\\_Acc\\_Process.pdf](http://www.abcfp.ca/practice_development/continuing_competency/Documents/Non-Discipline_Acc_Process.pdf)). If these efforts are not successful, a complaint may be appropriate. The ABCFP will provide members with help in resolving professional disputes and will provide confidential advice on whether a complaint is appropriate. Contact the registrar and director of act compliance ([admissions@abcfp.ca](mailto:admissions@abcfp.ca)) if you need this service.

### Q: How do I lodge a complaint?

A: A complaint must be submitted in writing and must include the particulars of the concerns. To lodge a complaint, complete the Notice of Complaint form available on the Lodge a Complaint page of the website ([http://www.abcfp.ca/regulating\\_the\\_profession/complaints/lodge\\_a\\_complaint.asp](http://www.abcfp.ca/regulating_the_profession/complaints/lodge_a_complaint.asp)). The form should then be sent to the Association of BC Forest Professionals by mail to #330-321 Water Street, Vancouver BC V6B 1B8 or e-mail your complaint to the registrar and director of act compliance at [admissions@abcfp.ca](mailto:admissions@abcfp.ca).

### Q: What will happen after I lodge a complaint?

A: Once a complaint is lodged, the ABCFP's registrar and director of act compliance will review the complaint to determine if it meets the requirements for a complaint set out in the *Foresters Act*. When a complaint is accepted, the ABCFP will review the particulars and may investigate and hold a hearing into the conduct of the member(s) involved. The person making the complaint will be informed of all decisions and may participate in a hearing to determine the guilt or innocence of the member(s) subject to the complaint. More information including a process flowchart is available on the Complaints Resolution Process page of the ABCFP website ([http://www.abcfp.ca/regulating\\_the\\_profession/complaints/complaint\\_resolution.asp](http://www.abcfp.ca/regulating_the_profession/complaints/complaint_resolution.asp)).

### Q: What about confidentiality?

A: Complaints are kept confidential by the ABCFP until we make a decision that a member is guilty of professional misconduct. Where circumstances are such that it is important to protect the identity of the person making the complaint from the person complained about, we will maintain this confidentiality as well.

**Q: Does the ABCFP publish names?**

A: Our policy is that we will only publish the names of members who are found guilty of professional misconduct. Name(s) of the member(s) lodging a complaint will not be published. See our website for details([http://www.abcfp.ca/regulating\\_the\\_profession/documents/policy\\_discipline\\_cases\\_online.pdf](http://www.abcfp.ca/regulating_the_profession/documents/policy_discipline_cases_online.pdf)).

**Q: Can I be punished for lodging a complaint?**

A: The *Foresters Act* provides whistleblower protection to anyone making a complaint. The Act makes it an offence to take punitive action against a person who makes a complaint in good faith.



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