

National Blindness Professional Certification Board (NBPCB)

Guidelines and Procedures for Processing Complaints

Alleging Code of Conduct Violation

Policy Guidelines

The National Blindness Professional Certification Board (NBPCB) maintains a Code of Conduct which is intended to provide standards for ethical behavior of Structured Discovery professionals and training facilities certified by our organization. This Code of Conduct and our Guidelines and Procedures for Processing Complaints can be found on our website, www.nbpcb.org or by request at admin@nbpcb.org.

Structured Discovery Professional Certificants and certified training organizations are required to cooperate with the procedures outlined within these Guidelines as part of the acceptance of NBPCB certification/recertification. Failure to cooperate may result in sanctions, up to and including, permanent revocation of certification. This cooperation includes maintaining current contact information on file with NBPCB.

NBPCB has sole jurisdiction to consider whether an individual or training facility has violated its Code of Conduct but only if the individual, or facility holds current certification by our organization. In the event that NBPCB receives a complaint concerning an individual or facility who may not possess such certification, the Complainant shall be notified that the issue is outside of NBPCB's jurisdiction and may refer the Complainant to an appropriate authority. Should any certificant relinquish certification during the course of any case, NBPCB reserves the right to continue the matter for a final and binding resolution according to these Guidelines.

NBPCB shall accept complaints from any person who has a reasonable belief that a certified individual or training facility has violated our Code of Conduct within the past five years. NBPCB reserves the right to act as the Complainant when there is a reasonable suspicion to proceed with an investigation, or to extend the reporting period when the alleged violation is particularly egregious.

NBPCB will accept only written and signed complaints. The complaint form can be found on the NBPCB website or can be requested by either verbal or electronic

means. If the NBPCB receives an incomplete form, the complainant will be notified of the need for additional information before the complaint will be presented to the Board. If the Complainant does not respond within 30 days, the file may be closed.

The timelines set forth in these standards are guidelines established to provide a framework for processing complaints and may be modified at NBPCB's discretion.

NBPCB shall grant an extension of a deadline requested by a Complainant or Certificant only when it deems the extension to be justified by unusual circumstances. NBPCB may, in its discretion, delay, or postpone its review of any case. Delinquent filings made by any party may also be disregarded at the Board's discretion. NBPCB reserves the right to refer any complaint to an impartial third party.

Grievance Procedures

Once a complaint of an alleged violation to the Code of Professional Ethics is received, the president shall appoint a three-person grievance committee with No member having a conflict of interest in the case. The responsibility of the Grievance Committee will be to investigate the complaint and gather relevant documentation. This information will be used in the committee's deliberation and recommendations to the entire Board.

1. The President shall appoint a three -member Grievance Committee within 15 days of receiving a completed complaint.
2. The Grievance Committee will have 15 days to review the complaint and determine if additional information or evidence is necessary to make a determination if any provision of the Code of Conduct has been violated. Once satisfied that all relevant information has been gathered and it has found that it is likely that a violation has occurred, the Grievance Committee will inform the certificant in writing of the complaint and request a response to be submitted 15 days from the date of the notification. If the Certificant fails to respond the Committee may still report to the full Board along with a recommendation for discipline on the basis of the complaint alone.

3. Once the Grievance committee receives the certificant's response to the complaint, it will have 15 days to prepare a report to the full Board along with a recommendation for discipline.

The options for discipline recommendations are:

A. No discipline is recommended because of insufficient evidence of violation of Code of Conduct.

B. A letter of reprimand to be placed in the Certificant's permanent file.

C. Suspension of certification for a 1-to-3-year period.

D. Permanent revocation of certification.

4. Once the Board has been presented with the facts in the case, all members who do not have a conflict of interest shall vote to accept or deny the Grievance Committee's recommendation.

5. Both the Complainant and Certificant will be notified in writing of the Board's decision and both will have 15 days to request an appeal.

6. If either the Complainant or the Certificant wish to appeal the Board's decision, the request must be made in writing. NBPCB will consider any additional information and consult with either legal counsel or an impartial ethics professional and make a final binding decision on the appeal of the case within 30 days of the request.

7. The Board will use discretion in determining if, and when, other organizations will also be notified if a suspension or revocation of certification results. This may include the previously certified individual's employer, other certification or license boards, schools, colleges, or institutions of higher education, vocational rehabilitation agencies, groups, programs, volunteer organizations, or membership organizations, protective agencies, or law enforcement.

8. If the Grievance Committee completes its investigation and reports to the entire Board that it believes that there is insufficient evidence in the case that a violation has occurred, all members of the Board who do not have a conflict of interest, will have the final discretion as to whether discipline will be imposed on the certificant. If the Board

agrees that there is insufficient evidence that a violation has occurred, the complainant will be notified of these findings and the appeals process in writing.

Click here to file a complaint

Contact our office for more information or for questions

NBPCB Office

admin@nbpcb.org

www.nbpcb.org