

The Psychological Association of Manitoba (PAM) Complaints Process Summary

The purpose of this summary is to provide information on the common procedures followed by PAM's Complaints Committee in reviewing and adjudicating complaints. [By-law #1](#), which governs this process, is available on the PAM website. In cases of discrepancy between this document and the By-Law, the By-Law prevails.

The Complaints Committee is comprised of registered psychologists, a psychological associate and members of the public. It is represented by legal counsel who is consulted on an as needed basis. The Committee deals with complaints relating to the professional conduct, competence and ethical behaviour of PAM members.

Email is generally used to communicate with both complainants and PAM members. Canada Post is used if the individual does not have an email address.

The following is an overview of the common procedures followed in reviewing complaints. The steps may vary depending on the specifics of a matter.

1. Concerns are received initially by the PAM Registrar, who determines whether PAM has jurisdiction in the matter. If so, the Registrar informs the individual raising the concerns of two possible courses of action:
 - a. the individual can speak directly with the PAM member to address concerns informally, or
 - b. a formal complaint to the Complaints Committee can be made by putting the concerns in writing using the [Complaints Form](#). A signature is required on all complaints.
2. Upon receipt of a formal, written complaint, the Complaints Committee generally:
 - a. emails the complainant to acknowledge receipt of the complaint;
 - b. emails the PAM member to notify them of the complaint, forward the relevant information; and inform them that they may respond to the complaint in writing to the Complaints Committee within a specified time frame;
 - c. forwards the member's response to the complainant for any additional comments;
 - d. requests further information from either the complainant or the PAM member, as needed; and
 - e. after reviewing all material, determines whether or not further investigation is warranted.
3. Depending on the nature of the issues raised and information received, a more formal investigation or an expert opinion may be necessary to obtain. In such cases, the Complaints Committee appoints an individual with the relevant expertise to act as an Investigator or an Expert.
4. An investigator conducts a thorough and comprehensive review of the complaint and gathers any additional information required to do a complete assessment of the issues. Under [By-law #1](#), an investigator has powers to request information from and interview members. The Complaints Committee may investigate any additional matters concerning the professional conduct or competency of the PAM member that arise in the course of the investigation. Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator submits a report to the Complaints Committee.
5. An expert's role is different in that they assess the issues to determine if the appropriate standards, code provisions, and/or any other relevant authorities have been met. But they similarly provide a report to the Complaints Committee after their work is complete.

6. The Complaints Committee then reviews all the information before it – including the information received from the complainant, the information received from the member, and any investigator or expert report, and renders a decision on the matter. The potential dispositions available to the Committee are set out in By-Law No. # and include:
 - a. laying charges of professional misconduct and referring of the matter to the Inquiry Committee for the purposes of conducting a disciplinary hearing;
 - b. dismissing the complaint;
 - c. accepting the voluntary resignation of the PAM member;
 - d. censuring the member;
 - e. referring the matter for mediation, if both parties agree;
 - f. entering into an agreement with the member that allows for one or more of the following: assessing the member’s fitness to practice, counselling for the member, monitoring of the member’s practice, supervision of the member, requiring the member to complete some form of academic training or remediation, placing conditions on the member’s right to practice psychology; or
 - g. taking any other action it deems appropriate that is not inconsistent with either the By-Laws/Regulations or *The Psychologists Registration Act*.

Note: The Complaints Committee is not authorized to order the refund of fees or the revision of reports.

7. The Complaints Committee provides both the complainant and the member with written notice of its decision and reasons for decision.
8. If the Complaints Committee’s decision is anything other than a referral to the Inquiry Committee or to mediation, the complainant may appeal the decision by filing a Notice of Appeal with the Registrar (within 30 days of notification of the initial disposition). A review is then conducted by an Appeal Panel. Details of this process are available on the PAM website (www.cpmb.ca).
9. When the Complaints Committee lays charges of professional misconduct, the matter is referred to the Inquiry Committee, a separate body that is independent from both the Complaints Committee and PAM Executive Council. Specifics regarding the Inquiry Committee and Disciplinary Hearings can be found in By-Law #1 Sec. 30-44.

If you have questions or wish to discuss your concerns, you may e-mail the Registrar at registrar@cpmb.ca or call (204) 487-0784.

Submitting a Complaint:

1. **REGULAR MAIL ONLY (no couriers or registered mail)**
The Registrar
The Psychological Association of Manitoba
1661 Portage Ave., Suite 307
Winnipeg MB R3J 3T7
2. Email to registrar@cpmb.ca
If submitting by email signature must be included in the fillable form