

1. Who can make a complaint to the College?

Anyone can make a complaint against an audiologist or speech-language pathologist (also referred to as a *registrant* of the College). This includes patients, family friends, caregivers, work colleagues, the public, employers, insurers and other healthcare professionals. The College considers all complaints received regardless of the source.

2. What kind of complaints can the College investigate?

Many complaints are investigated, such as:

- communication issues;
- fees and billing;
- standard of care;
- appropriateness of services;
- supervision of support personnel such as Communication Disorder Assistants and students;
- advertising;
- boundaries and sexual abuse;
- confidentiality; and
- disclosure of information.

The College has a duty to protect the public interest. The College must ensure that its registrants practice their profession within a governing legal and regulatory framework which establishes the College's requirements. If you are not sure whether your complaint is covered, you can contact the College for further information.

3. How do I make a complaint?

You can make a complaint to the College in writing or through a recordable medium such as audio or video tape. You can send your complaint by surface mail, fax or e-mail to the College.

4. Can I make a complaint over the phone?

The College cannot accept a complaint by telephone. However, complaints in writing, recording, or mail are accepted. Please see question 3.

5. Can I file a complaint without giving my name?

No. If you intend to make a complaint, you must identify yourself to enable the complaint to proceed.

6. Can I file a complaint against a registrant's employer?

No. The College regulates registrants and not where they work. However, if the employer is a registrant, the College may be able to investigate their practice.

7. Can I file a complaint against someone who provides audiology or speech-language pathology services but is not a registrant of the College?

The College will investigate if you have concerns about services provided under the supervision of a registrant, such as services provided by a Communication Disorder Assistant (CDA) supervised by a

registrant. Such services are the supervising responsibility of the registrant. The College's investigation will focus on the registrant and not CDA who provided the services.

8. Is there a time limit to make a complaint?

No. However, you are advised to make your complaint as soon as possible after the occurrence of the event. As time goes by, it may be difficult to remember what happened, which may make it more difficult for you to provide accurate details. In this way, the College can also address any issues that may include a risk to other patients.

9. What happens after I file a complaint?

- You can visit the College's website at [Complaints - CASLPO - College of audiologists and speech-language pathologists of Ontario](#) to get more information on how the Complaints process works including how a complaint can be settled via an informal resolution process also known as the Alternative Dispute Resolution process.
- College staff is always available to answer any questions you may have throughout the Complaints process.

10. Can I attend the Inquiries Complaints and Reports Committee (ICRC) meeting?

No. This meeting is not open to the public nor will the ICRC meet with you or the registrant. The ICRC reviews all information collected in paper or electronic files. Staff will advise you of the ICRC's decision.

11. Can I withdraw a complaint?

You can make a written request to withdraw your complaint any time. However, if the issues raised in your complaint are serious and likely to put the public at risk, the College can decide to continue investigating the complaint even if you do not take part.

12. Can I use the ICRC decision in a court proceeding?

No. Section 36(3) of the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* does not permit information from a College proceeding to be used in a civil court.

13. What if I do not want to become involved in the Complaints process?

You do not have to be involved in the College's investigation. Once you have filed the complaint, the College will conduct a full investigation of the complaint and provide you with a copy of the ICRC's decision. If you make a report, your participation will be limited to being interviewed by the investigator, if the College decides to make inquiries based on your concerns.

14. Can I have the complaint resolved without using the Complaints process?

In some cases, the College may be able to offer a way to resolve your complaint instead of using the Complaints process. This can be done through the College's informal resolution process known as the Alternative Dispute Resolution process where a mediator will work with you and the registrant in a way to create solutions that suits both parties. The informal resolution process is confidential and if agreement is reached and approved by the College, the matter is considered resolved.

For more information, please see [Alternative Dispute Resolution - CASLPO - College of audiologists and speech-language pathologists of Ontario](#). You can also contact the College to get additional information about this process.

15. What happens if the College cannot investigate the complaint?

The College will try to refer you to another regulatory body or organization who may be able to help you.

16. Is the investigation of a complaint made public?

No. The College has a strict duty regarding confidentiality and will not share the information regarding the complaint, including your name and the name of the registrant, except with the ICRC. However, the matter may become public if it is referred to the Discipline Committee. In such cases, the Discipline Committee can ban the publication of any information that may identify you.

The College is required to post specific information on CASLPO's public register regarding the registrant, based on the ICRC's decision. This can include the following notations:

- any undertaking;
- verbal warning;
- further education;
- referral of specified allegations to the Discipline Committee;
- the result of every Discipline proceeding;
- the result of every Fitness to Practice proceeding;
- information about a registrant's criminal charges or convictions; and
- information about an interim order that may be in effect.

17. What kind of decisions can the ICRC make about a complaint?

The audiologist or speech-language pathologist may be:

- provided with advice or reminders regarding their professional obligations;
- required to appear before a panel for a verbal warning;
- required to complete further education to help the registrant improve in an area of practice;
- referred to the College's Discipline Committee;
- referred to another panel of the ICRC for further investigation if it appears that they are incapacitated. "Incapacity" means that the registrant is suffering from a physical or mental health condition that interferes with their ability to practice safely.

The ICRC may also decide that no further action against the audiologist or speech-language pathologist is required.

18. What kind of decisions cannot be made about a complaint?

- Award complainants any monetary compensation or require the registrant to refund fees.
- Require the registrant to apologize to the complainant.

- Require another administrative body or organization to change a decision about the subject matter of the complaint (e.g. alter the decision of an insurance company regarding benefits or the decision of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board).
- Require an employer to discipline a registrant.

19. What happens if I am unhappy with the ICRC's decision?

You and the registrant have the right to have the ICRC's decision regarding a complaint reviewed by the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board (HPARB) if either party is dissatisfied with the decision. HPARB is an independent board appointed by the Ontario government and reviews decisions made by the College. The College is not a part of HPARB and does not engage in the process. However, the College will provide HPARB with a record of information collected during the investigation into your complaint.