

# Complaint Management and Investigations Procedure

## 1. Introduction

The Safety Codes Council (Council) is responsible for sound management and diligence in administering its duties under the *Safety Codes Act* (Act). This includes accrediting organizations and certifying or designating individuals to administer the Act within communities across the province.

The Council supports the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Minister) in the administration of the safety codes system, as prescribed in the Act, its regulations and outlined in its Mandate and Roles Document. Under the Mandate and Roles document, the Council has been given the authority to investigate complaints about safety codes officers, master electricians, and permit issuers.

The Council will manage and investigate complaints, subject to the standards and criteria stated in the Complaint Management and Investigations Policy.

## 2. Purpose

This procedure sets out the actions required to submit, manage, and investigate complaints in a consistent and comprehensive manner.

## 3. Definitions

**accredited organization:** means a municipality, regional services commission, corporation, or agency accredited to administer all or part of the Act.

**Alberta Safety Codes Authority (ASCA):** means a division of Council who oversees safety codes services in the unaccredited municipalities throughout Alberta.

**competence:** means demonstrated knowledge and ability.

**complainant:** means the **person** who makes a complaint.

**conduct:** means professional and ethical behaviour.

**Coordinator:** means the individual at the Council, or designate, that is the first point of contact for all complaints and responsible for the initial assessment of complaints submitted to the Council.

**directly affected person:** means a **person** who has requested the services of an **accredited organization**, safety codes officer, master electrician, or permit issuer in their roles of administering the Act.

**employee:** means a **person** engaged by the Council to perform a service in accordance with an employment agreement.

**Investigator:** means the individual at the Council assigned responsibility for investigating a complaint.

**performance:** means actions taken in the delivery of safety codes services under the Act.

**person:** means an individual, organization, corporation or other legal entity.

**respondent:** means a **person** against whom a complaint has been made.

#### 4. Procedure

##### Advice on Potential Complaints

- 4.1. A **directly affected person** with a concern about an **accredited organization**, safety codes officer, master electrician, or permit issuer may call the Council to determine if their concern can be resolved prior to filing a complaint.
- 4.2. There will be a review of the concern by the **Coordinator**, who will contact the **complainant** regarding their enquiry and next steps.
- 4.3. If the **Coordinator** determines that the issue falls within an unaccredited municipality, the complaint may be forwarded to **ASCA**.

##### Complaint Submission and Consideration

- 4.4. A **directly affected person** who wishes to file a complaint regarding the **competence, performance, or conduct** of an **accredited organization**, safety codes officer, master electrician, or permit issuer, may initiate the complaint process by completing and submitting the *Complaint Investigation Form*, along with supporting evidence, to the Council.
- 4.5. The **Coordinator** will review the complaint and assess whether the complaint meets the standards and criteria established in the Complaints Management and Investigations Policy and this procedure to determine if an investigation is merited.
- 4.6. The **Coordinator** may request additional information or evidence from the **complainant** to determine if an investigation is merited.
- 4.7. The **Coordinator** may determine that the complaint is out-of-scope, outside of the time-limit for submission, or does not meet other criteria established in the policy and procedure, and recommend to the Manager, Operations Planning and Support (Manager) that the complaint be closed.

- 4.8. The **Coordinator** may determine that the complaint meets criteria established in the policy and procedure, and recommend to the Manager that a complaint investigation be initiated.
- 4.9. The Manager will notify the **complainant**, in writing, about whether the complaint will be proceeding to the investigation stage or that the complaint will not be investigated, including the reason(s) for this decision.
- 4.10. If it is determined that the complaint will be investigated, the Manager will assign the file to an **Investigator**.

#### Complaint Investigation

- 4.11. Upon being assigned a complaint to investigate, the **Investigator** will conduct an investigation in accordance with steps established in the investigation plan template.
- 4.12. The **Investigator** will notify the **complainant** and **respondent(s)** in writing to confirm that an investigation has been initiated, explain the investigation process, and request any relevant records or other information.
- 4.13. The **respondent(s)** will also be asked to provide a written response to the complaint.
- 4.14. After reviewing the submitted documentation, the **Investigator** will conduct interviews with the **complainant** and **respondent(s)**.
- 4.14.1. Follow-up interviews with the **complainant** or **respondent(s)** may be conducted at the discretion of the **Investigator**.
- 4.14.2. The **Investigator** will provide the **complainant** and **respondent(s)** with written summaries of their respective interview(s).
- 4.14.3. The **Investigator** may request approval to conduct a site visit from the Manager to obtain additional information.
- 4.15. The **Investigator** may consult individuals with technical or other subject matter expertise during the course of an investigation.
- 4.16. Before completing a draft report, the **Investigator** will contact, in writing, the **complainant** and **respondent(s)** to request that any outstanding documentation or information that they wish to have considered as part of the investigation.
- 4.17. The **Investigator** will prepare a draft report and submit the draft to the Manager for review.
- 4.18. The Manager will review the report with the **Investigator**, who may be asked to

provide additional clarification, or attempt to obtain additional information.

- 4.19. After the report is reviewed by the Manager, the report will be submitted to the Administrator of Accreditation or Certification, as appropriate.

#### Administrator Review

- 4.20. The relevant Administrator(s) will review the report, clarify any outstanding issues, and decide what, if any, corrective or other action is required.
- 4.21. The Administrator(s) will inform the **complainant(s)** and **respondent(s)**, in writing, of the results of the investigation within 60 days of the receipt of the report from the Manager.

### **5. Authority**

This procedure is established under the authority of Corporate Governance Policy 1.4, which delegates authority to the President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to establish policies and procedures for the management and operation of the Council regarding appeals, corporate operations, and operating programs and Policy 1.7, which delegates responsibility for program and services planning and activities to the President and CEO.

### **6. Scope**

This procedure applies to Council **employees**.

### **7. Related Policies and Procedures**

- 2.2.1 Complaint Management and Investigations Policy
- 1.130 Accreditation General
- 1.20 Municipal Accreditation
- 1.30 Corporate Accreditation
- 1.40 Agency Accreditation
- 1.50 Regional Services Commission Accreditation
- 4.100 Certification General Requirements
- 4.130 Master Electrician Program
- 7.10 Designation of Powers General

**8. Version History**

Date	Notes
September / 01 / 2019	New procedure

**VERSION 1****Effective Date:** September / 01 / 2019**Approved Date:** August / 13 / 2019