

Note: If the complaint involves the possible impairment of a health care professional due to a substance use and/or mental health disorder, BPL may refer the licensee to the Health Professional Recovery Program (HPRP). The HPRP is designed to protect the public while helping the health care professional address his or her issue.

- 2. The complaint is investigated.** A BPL investigator will interview witnesses and collect evidence related to the complaint. If the evidence does not support the complaint, the case will be closed.
- 3. An Administrative Complaint** is filed if the evidence supports that a violation of the Public Health Code has occurred.
- 4. A Settlement Conference may be held.** This is similar to a plea bargain in a court case and is an opportunity for the health care professional to reach a settlement without having to address the issue at an administrative hearing. This may result in a health care professional being sanctioned, which could include being fined, placed on probation, or suspended from practice. If an agreement is reached, the proposed settlement must be approved by the disciplinary subcommittee (DSC) of the appropriate licensing board before it becomes final. If a settlement is not reached or if the DSC rejects the proposed settlement, the case proceeds to an administrative hearing.
- 5. An Administrative Hearing** is held to determine the facts of the case, what laws or rules apply, and whether the health care professional violated the Public Health Code. After the hearing, the administrative law judge submits a Proposal for Decision (PFD) regarding the hearing for review and determination by the appropriate DSC.

6. The Disciplinary Subcommittee takes action. After reviewing the administrative law judge's PFD, the DSC has the option of dismissing the Administrative Complaint or taking the disciplinary action against the health care professional as provided under the Public Health Code.

Q. Is the DSC's decision final?

A. The health care professional may appeal the DSC's decision with the Michigan Court of Appeals.

Q. How can I find out if disciplinary action has been taken against a health care professional?

A. Disciplinary action taken against a health care professional is public information. You can obtain information about disciplinary actions by:

- **WEBSITE:** www.michigan.gov/bpl Click on "Health License Disciplinary Action Reports" under "Quick Links" on the Bureau of Professional Licensing home page.
- **LOCAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES:** Ask your local public library for a copy of the annual Disciplinary Action Report of the Legal Affairs Division.
- **SUBMIT A WRITTEN REQUEST TO:**
Department of Licensing & Regulatory Affairs
Freedom of Information Coordinator
BPL/Legal Affairs Division
P.O. Box 30670
Lansing MI 48909-8170
- **FAX YOUR WRITTEN REQUEST TO:**
(517) 241-2635

A Citizen's Guide To Filing a Complaint Against a Health Care Professional

Bureau of Professional Licensing Investigations & Inspections Division Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs

BPL/IID-100 (12/16)

Printed under authority of P.A. 79 of 1993, as amended.
Total copies: Total Cost: Unit Cost: \$0.00

At some point, everyone will require and benefit from the services provided by a health care professional. Unfortunately, there will also be occasions when a health care professional may fail to provide the quality care that you expect and are entitled to as a resident of the state of Michigan.

The mission of the Investigations & Inspections Division within the Bureau of Professional Licensing (BPL) is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Michigan through implementation and enforcement of laws involving the licensing and regulation of health professionals. As part of that mission, BPL has prepared this Citizen's Guide to answer the questions that consumers frequently ask when filing a complaint against a licensed or registered health care professional.

BPL distinguishes between complaints and Administrative Complaints. A complaint is filed when someone alleges that a health care professional violated the Public Health Code. This is the first step in a possible disciplinary action. The complaints, typically filed by consumers, involve health care professionals providing substandard care or practicing outside the scope (area of expertise) of their license.

The State files an Administrative Complaint against a health care professional when the State believes there is enough evidence to prove that the individual violated the Public Health Code and that disciplinary action should be taken against their license or registration.

BPL hopes that you will find the following information useful.

Q. What health care professions are regulated by BPL?

A. BPL regulates the following health care professions in Michigan:

Acupuncture
Athletic Trainers
Audiology
Chiropractic
Counseling
Dentistry

Marriage and Family Therapy
Massage Therapy
Medicine
Nursing (RN, LPN)
Nursing Home Administrators
Occupational Therapy
Optometry
Osteopathic Medicine & Surgery
Pharmacy
Pharmacy Technicians
Physical Therapy
Physician's Assistant
Podiatric Medicine & Surgery
Psychology
Respiratory Care
Sanitarians
Social Work
Speech-Language Pathology
Veterinary Medicine

NOTE: BPL's authority is limited to granting licenses or registrations for these professions or taking disciplinary action against licensees/registrants for violations of the Public Health Code. BPL does not have the authority to resolve fee disputes or conflicts between patients and their health care providers.

Q. How do I file a complaint (a consumer complaint)?

A. All complaints must be in writing. You can obtain a Complaint Form by calling BPL or accessing our website. The Complaint Form will describe the information you need to provide so that BPL can process your complaint. For a Complaint form you can write, call, or e-mail:

**Department of Licensing & Regulatory Affairs
BPL/Investigations & Inspections Division
P.O. Box 30670
Lansing MI 48909-8170
Phone: (517) 373-9196**

BPLhelp@michigan.gov

The Complaint Form is also available for download on the BPL website at:

<http://www.michigan.gov/bpl> (Under "File a Complaint" click on "Health License Complaint Application.")

Q. What information is required?

A. The person filing the complaint must include:

- Your **name** and **contact** information;
- The **name** and **profession** of the licensee or registrant;
- A detailed **description** of the alleged problem or incident, including dates and locations; and,
- **Names** and **addresses** or **phone numbers** of anyone who can provide supporting information.

NOTE: The name of the person filing the complaint will be kept confidential, to the extent possible, unless he or she is required to testify at a hearing (*see step 5*).

Q. What happens after a complaint is filed?

A. The complaint is reviewed to determine if a violation of the Public Health Code has occurred.

1. The review process begins.

Based on this review, BPL will either request authorization to investigate the complaint, close the complaint with no further action, or close and refer the matter to another state agency if the matter is outside our jurisdiction.