

A Citizen's Guide to Filing a Complaint Against a Licensed Occupational Professional

The mission of the Bureau of Professional Licensing (BPL) is to protect, preserve, and improve the health, safety, and welfare of Michigan's citizens through the licensing and regulation of occupational and health professionals. The Bureau strives to make the regulatory system simple, fair and efficient.

BPL values and relies on complaints from patients and citizens to spur investigations into a person or business entity who is potentially violating the Occupational Code. Every complaint received by the Bureau is reviewed and analyzed by trained staff. The complaints, combined with BPL's own regulatory investigations, can potentially lead to enforcement actions against licensees.

We encourage all concerned citizens and licensed professionals to file a complaint with BPL if they are aware of behavior that may potentially violate the Occupational Code. Below are instructions on how to file a complaint and the steps that BPL takes to protect consumers after a complaint is received.

Before filling out a Statement of Complaint form, please take the time to read the following information. This will help explain the Department's functions, roles and responsibilities.

The Bureau regulates the following Occupational Code professions:

- Accountancy
- Appraisal Management Company
- Architects
- Barber
- Collection Practices
- Cosmetology
- Hearing Aid Dealers
- Landscape Architect
- Personnel Agency
- Professional Engineers
- Professional Surveyors
- Real Estate Appraisers
- Real Estate Brokers and Salespersons

What we can do:

- We investigate complaints against persons and business entities for alleged violations of licensing laws and regulations. The Department may impose administrative sanctions to enforce the licensing statute.

What we cannot do:

- We cannot act as a court of law, so we cannot order that monies be refunded, contracts be canceled, damages be awarded, etc.
- We cannot provide legal advice.
- We cannot take action in matters involving business practices. We only have jurisdiction over the licensing of the professions.

How to File a Complaint

- To file a complaint against a licensed professional, complete the following form:
https://www.michigan.gov/documents/lara/LCE-992_474650_7.pdf
- Summarize your complaint using these guidelines by:
 - o Telling us specifically what happened.
 - ✦ Real estate complaints must be filed with the Department within 18 months after the date of the alleged violation or, if the alleged violation occurs in connection with a real estate transaction, the date the transaction is completed. Include appropriate documentation confirming the date of the alleged violation and/or the date the transaction was completed, as applicable.
 - o Telling us who your complaint is against.
 - o Explaining any misrepresentations or misuse of your money.
 - o Attaching copies of all documents, such as contracts, agreements, certificates, notes, closing statements, property reports, correspondence, legible copies of the front and back of checks, prospectuses, advertising, plats, plans or specifications, etc.

Documentary evidence is especially important. Please do not send originals; we cannot be responsible for their safekeeping, and they will not be returned.

- The Department may ask you to provide other documents at a later date to support your complaint.

What Happens Next

- The Department will send you a written confirmation of receipt of the Statement of Complaint within 15 days after it has been received.
- If the Statement of Complaint alleges violations of the licensing laws and regulations, the Department will investigate.
- If the Department does not have the jurisdiction over the matter, you will be notified in writing.
- If the Department issues a Formal Complaint, you may be needed as a witness on behalf of the Department.
- The licensee may request a compliance/settlement conference prior to the contested case hearing to discuss compliance with the licensing laws and possible settlement of the Formal Complaint.
- If there is a contested case hearing, and you are needed as a witness, the Department will contact you.
- The administrative law examiner presiding over the contested case hearing will determine whether a violation of the law or rules occurred and issue a hearing report.
- The licensing board or official must accept the administrative law examiner's findings of fact and conclusions of law. The licensing board or official will make a decision and issue a "Final Order", including any penalties, which may include: license limitation, suspension, revocation, fine or probation.

Contact Information

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